Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of November 2

Note: The Office for the Aging and Dutchess County Government offices are closed on Tuesday, November 3rd for Election Day which is a New York State state and local holiday. More information about OFA's November schedule is included in this newsletter.

Holiday Visits, Caregiving, and Dementia

We're close to family holiday gathering season; and those who haven't seen older loved ones since last holiday season can be apprehensive about the prospect, especially if the older loved one is experiencing dementia.

It can be a time when caregivers' friends and family withdraw, just when they're needed the most.

It Doesn't Have To Be Awkward

When it comes to visiting those with dementia, it's understandable for visitors to worry about what they don't know; but avoiding visits isn't the solution. Dementia may have changed the way a person communicates and makes connections - but it hasn't broken them. The positive emotions from a visit can continue even when details of the visit cannot be retained for long.

As with much of the unknown, apprehension can be addressed through preparation. Ask questions like the following ones of yourself, and of others who may be planning a holiday visit:

- What's the best time to visit, and for how long?
- What's the right size for a gathering?
- Are there any topics or questions to avoid?
- How can I respond to repetition, or redirect it?
- What activities work best?
- How can I identify when a person being visited is overstimulated or fatigued?

- Which physical interactions, if any, are most suitable - and which aren't?

If there are significant changes in a person with dementia since the last time family and friends have seen them, those guests can be prepared. The Albany Med Health System offers these tips:

- Your loved one with dementia doesn’t always remember what is acceptable or expected;
- Unusual behaviors may occur, such as wandering, hallucinations, eating with fingers, or incontinence;
- The person may not remember guests’ names or relationships but can still enjoy their company;
- Memory loss or repetitiveness is not intentional;
- Patience is appreciated; do not interrupt or correct the person;
- Consider safety: Blinking lights and loud noises can confuse or scare someone with dementia, and some decorations can be mistaken as edible; also,

- Gifts should be safe and useful, such as simple puzzles or personal care items.

Preparation can also help with the person being visited, even if dementia has affected their ability to retain information:

- Keep their routine as close to normal as possible;
- Begin showing a photo of the guest(s) to the person a week before arrival and explain the connection; and
- Your loved one may still enjoy company, or they may not. Ask them how they're doing

For more holiday-season tips and activities, subscribe to OFA's weekly Aging News e-newsletter by emailing **ofa@dutchessny.gov**.

Not online? OFA's next quarterly THRIVE60+ newsletter will be available around Thanksgiving.

Contact OFA to subscribe. Newsletters are also distributed at public libraries throughout Dutchess County, while supplies last.

AARP/OFA Caregiving Workshop

AARP New York, the Office for the Aging, and Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino present a Caregiving Workshop on Thursday, November 12th at 10:30am, at the East Fishkill OFA Friendship Center, 890 NY 82, Hopewell Junction. Use this link to sign up, or call AARP at 518-447-6711.

A Busy November for OFA

The Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response, Medical Reserve Corps of Dutchess County, Dutchess County Office for the Aging and the Town of Fishkill invite Dutchess County residents over age 60 (and their caregivers) to participate in a free Citizens Preparedness Training event on Monday, November 9th at 1:30pm, at Fishkill Town Recreation Department, 793 NY 52 in Fishkill.

Please register in advance by calling the Office for the Aging during business hours: 845-486-2555.

Participants can acquire tools and resources to better prepare for any type of disaster; learn how to respond accordingly in a disaster, and recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions;

Each household will receive a free Citizens Preparedness Starter Kit. Preparedness kits are limited to one per household, while supplies last.

OFA's regularly scheduled monthly "Navigating Medicare" classes are also taking place in November:

- Wednesday, November 11th, 4:00 pm at Starr Library in Rhinebeck (68 West Market St.)
- Wednesday, November 18th, 10:00 am at the Poughkeepsie Galleria Community Room (2001 South Rd.)

Call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555 to register for either class.

And we're not through! We're also offering a presentation on the Importance of Physical Activity on Wednesday, November 18th at 2:00 pm at Stanford Free Library, 6035 NY 82 in Stanfordville. Contact the library at 845-868-1341 to register; or use the calendar feature at www.stanfordlibrary.org to register online.

OFA November Holiday Hours

The Office for the Aging and Dutchess County Government offices are closed on the following weekdays in November:

- Tuesday, November 3rd – Election Day (New York State public holiday). State and local government offices are also closed.
- Wednesday, November 11th – Veterans Day (national holiday)
- Thursday, November 26th – Thanksgiving Day (national holiday)

OFA Friendship Centers are also closed on Friday, November 27th; but the OFA main office in Poughkeepsie will be OPEN that day.

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program receive shelf-stable meals in advance of each holiday, along with November 27th. For more about Home Delivered Meals, visit www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition.

2027 OFA Prom Theme: "A Pirate's Life for Me"

In last week's newsletter, we may have left you hanging longer than we wanted to, as to the theme of next year's OFA Senior Prom…so let's batten down the hatches on that part. Many OFA Senior Prom guests begin preparing for the following year's Prom as soon as the current year's prom ends!

So prepare your eyepatches and your sea shanties for "A Pirate's Life for Me!" The 2027 Prom is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 18th.

One note: if you're planning to bring a parrot, make it a toy bird and not a real-life parrot.

More OFA Events Near You

To register for any of the events below, contact OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555 unless a different contact method is indicated.

November:

(Monday) 9th – Navigating Medicare, Adriance Library, 93 Market St., Poughkeepsie (parking on Noxon St.) – 845-485-3445 x3380

(Tuesday) 10th – OFA Mobile Office Hours, Clinton Library, 1215 Centre Rd., Rhinebeck, 10a – 2p

(Wednesday) 11th – Navigating Medicare, Starr Library, Rhinebeck, 4pm (NOTE: OFA is closed for Veterans Day on the 11th but the library is OPEN)

See www.dutchessny.gov/calendar for a full listing of all Dutchess County Government events.

Food Repurposing Workshop with CIA, DC Division of Solid Waste

Join the Dutchess County Division of Solid Waste for an insightful, fun, and sustainable food demonstration at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park. Learn how to reduce food waste by transforming your leftovers into new meals with Jason Potanovich, CIA Class ’96, Associate Dean – School of Culinary Arts.

The demonstration takes place on Tuesday, November 10th from 6-7:30pm. Space is limited - to enter for a chance to attend, register between now and November 3rd by visiting this link or calling 845-486-2841. For questions, call the Division of Solid Waste or email solidwastemgmt@dutchessny.gov.

Winners will be notified on November 4th!

Other news:

Longevity experts have some myths about aging they'd like to share.

Some thoughts from Harvard on this season's flu and COVID vaccines.

This week's scam warning: fake gift card balance-check websites.

A NYC-based EBT/SNAP fraud operation that investigators say stole $7 million in benefits has been busted. New York State is planning to add security chips to EBT/SNAP cards in 2027, according to the governor's office.

The annual cost of caregiving for an older family member is…a lot, according to an AARP study.

This one's for the squash lovers (the vegetable, not the racquet sport).

Great news for those of us who struggle to open bags of cereal inside boxes.

Resealable bags…at least on boxes of Cheerios.

This week's birthdays:

10/31: Director/screenwriter Peter Jackson (65)

11/1: Golfer Gary Player (91)

11/2: Singer-songwriter k.d. lang (65)

11/3: Voice actor Jim Cummings (74)

11/4: 45th First Lady Laura Bush (80)

11/5: Singer/songwriter Art Garfunkel (85)

11/6: Actress Sally Field (80)

Bad Joke time!

The doctor told me “There’s no easy way to say this…I’m sending you to an otorhinolaryngologist.”