

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of September 22

Note: The 2025 OFA "Senior Prom" is sold out! Many thanks for your interest, and to The Pines at Poughkeepsie for their support of this annual event.

FALLS PREVENTION WEEK

September 22-26th is Fall Prevention Week, which coincides every year with the first day of fall. It's a nationwide effort to raise awareness that falls are not "just one of those things" that inevitably happen as we age.

Falls can become more likely as we age, but they can also be prevented.

Unusual Findings in Falls Research

In an article this month, the *New York Times* cited a study authored by former New York City and Philadelphia Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas A. Farley, that death rates from falls among Americans older than 65 had more than tripled over the past 30 years, even as lifespans largely increased over the same time. That's more than deaths from breast and prostate cancer, and more than deaths from car crashes, drug overdoses, and all other unintentional injuries combined. Dr. Farley's study also noted that there hasn't been a similar trend in fall deaths among older adults in Japan and Europe over the same time.

Experts disagree as to the reasons. Dr. Farley pointed to more Americans being prescribed medications that affect the central nervous system and thus our balance. On the other hand, fall deaths in the U.S. were classified differently then versus now. In the *Times*, Dr. Thomas Gill of Yale University notes that many fall deaths of the 1980s and 1990s were attributed to heart failure rather than falls. Dr. Gill also noted that people are being kept alive longer, with conditions that used to be fatal - but now they're vulnerable to falls. Regardless of the reasons, we can all make choices that reduce the

likelihood of falls, as well as the likelihood of injury from falls that do happen.

The following is excerpted from OFA's Fall Prevention Checklist, available in

full at dutchessny.gov/fallprevention

- Keep all stairs and steps free from obstacles
- Keep floors in all rooms clutter-free
- Have sufficient lighting available in all walking areas, with bright lighting in the kitchen and bathrooms
- Locate pet beds and feeding/drinking areas away from walking paths
- Remove throw rugs, or use a non-slip backing so that rugs don't move when stepped on
- Keep cords and wires next to walls, not across floors
- Thresholds between rooms should be level, or beveled
- Furniture should be able to support your weight, if needed for help with balance
- Minimize the need to use a step stool by storing things used most often at waist level
- If you still need a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to

- NEVER use a chair as a step stool.

In the bathroom:

- Use non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips on the tub/shower floor
- Have grab bars installed next to and inside the tub, and alongside the toilet
- Use a shower chair and raised toilet seat when necessary

In the kitchen:

- Wear skid-free footwear
- "Clean as you go" when preparing meals
- Clean up spills promptly, especially if oily or greasy
- Cut ingredients when seated, if possible

And finally: Sign up for an OFA Exercise, Tai Chi and/or "A Matter of Balance" class. For details, see **dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise** or call OFA at **845-486-2555**.

If you'd like to volunteer as a class leader, reach out to OFA as well.

OFA provides all training.

“YOUR SMARTPHONE AND YOU” CLASS AT OFA (Tue 10/7)

Find out about new developments in mobile device technology, along with the basics of smartphone ownership, at the upcoming “You and Your Smartphone” event co-hosted by OFA and AARP, on **Tuesday, October 7th at 3:00pm** at the OFA Poughkeepsie Friendship Center, 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie.

Space is limited; register in advance by calling OFA during business hours at **845-486-2555**.

BEACON-AREA HOME DELIVERED MEALS DRIVERS WANTED

The OFA Friendship Center in Beacon at 1 Forrestal Heights needs volunteer drivers for our Home Delivered Meals Program (HDM) clients in Beacon and southwestern Dutchess County.

Typical HDM driving hours are 9:30am-12:30pm weekdays. Mileage can be reimbursed for drivers who use their own vehicles for deliveries.

For more information and a printable volunteering form, see dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer.

CITIZEN PREPAREDNESS EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER (AND A PET FIRST AID TRAINING EVENT)

Are you and your caregivers prepared for emergencies? It's okay if you think....maybe, maybe not. There are opportunities coming up to build on your knowledge, thanks to Dutchess County Emergency Response and Medical Reserve Corps as well as the Office for the Aging, plus the county's Animal Response Team.

Participants will learn how to prepare for a disaster or emergency of any kind and recover as quickly as possible. Each family attending will receive a free Citizens Preparedness Response Starter Kit, while supplies last.

- **Monday, September 29:** Pine Plains Library, 7775 South Main St., Pine Plains. **With Dutchess County OFA.** Class begins at 1pm in the community room upstairs from the library. Registration required;

visit dutchessny.gov/citizenpreparedness or call 845-486-2555. [View the event flyer \(.pdf\)](#).

- **Tuesday, October 14:** Wappinger Town Hall, 20 Middlebush Rd, Wappinger. Doors open at 6:30pm, class begins at 7pm. Registration required, visit dutchessny.gov/citizenpreparedness. [View the event flyer \(.pdf\)](#).
- **Tuesday, October 21:** Stanford Library, 6035 Route 82, Stanford. **With Dutchess County OFA.** Class begins at 6pm. Registration required, visit the [Stanford Library calendar](#) or call 845-868-1341. [View the event flyer \(.pdf\)](#).

Pet First Aid Training

The County's Animal Response Team (DCART) will teach participants life-saving skills for pets, including CPR; recognizing signs of heat stroke and hypothermia; identifying gastrointestinal issues, allergies, and poisoning; and treating injuries such as burns and eye issues.

- **Wednesday, October 22:** John Jay High School, 2012 State Route 52, Hopewell Junction. Class starts at 7pm. Registration required, visit dutchessny.gov/PetFirstAid. [View the event flyer \(.pdf\)](#).

Other news:

Seeing as it's Falls Prevention Week, here's [a free online falls-risk checkup](#) to try out, for yourself and/or someone you care about.

[The 2024-25 flu season saw far higher hospitalization](#) rates than any year since 2010-11.

In Japan, one of the oldest nations on earth, [more adults over 65 are working than ever before](#).

Trying to avoid scams? Learn what's called the "[tactical pause](#)." It can help whether the scam attempt is coming from the phone, the internet, the mail, or somewhere else entirely.

85-year-old Ringo Starr [has a new tour underway](#) and is working on a new album and art exhibit.

This week's birthdays:

9/19: Model/actress [Twiggy](#) (76)

9/20: Actress/singer [Sophia Loren](#) (91)

9/21: Author/screenwriter [Stephen King](#) (78)

9/22: Singer/songwriter/guitarist [Joan Jett](#) (67)

9/23: Singer/songwriter [Bruce Springsteen](#) (76)

9/24: NFL legend [“Mean” Joe Greene](#) (79)

9/25: Actor/producer [Michael Douglas](#) (81)

Bad Joke time!

What's a pilot's favorite kind of bagel?

Plain.