

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

## **AGING NEWS**

For the week of September 8

We've all been there: There's things that need doing, but your favorite animal companion is curled up with you. You've got your coffee and it's just right. And you're watching every single episode of *Star Trek*. And besides, it's raining.

How could you possibly find time to volunteer?

At the Office for the Aging, we have volunteering options for *everyone*. For prospective volunteers who are pressed for time, our "Friendly Calls" program requires only an hour of initial orientation for volunteer callers, at our Poughkeepsie headquarters. The rest can be done from home, or anywhere else your phone gets a signal. It's an eight-week series of once-a-week calls to an older Dutchess resident at risk of loneliness. The calls typically last 20-30 minutes. And if you'd prefer to receive a "Friendly Call" from a volunteer, OFA can arrange that as well.

See more at **[dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls](https://dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls)** or call **845-486-2555**.

## **When Your Get-Up-And-Go Got-Up-And-Went**

The "social battery" can run low even for people who seem to be overflowing with energy. We know volunteers give their time for free, and we want them to find the most fulfilling volunteering options at OFA. To make choosing an option easier, ask yourself this: *What are my strengths? How do I like to use my time? What do I do well?* This will help you narrow down your choices to the ones that play to your strengths.

Visit **[dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer](https://dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer)** for a more detailed look at the options. If you want to spend only Tuesday mornings volunteering with us, for instance, that's fine.

## **MEDICARE SEASON IS (ANOTHER) SCAM SEASON**

You may already know that skillful scammers tailor their attempts to steal your money to what's in the news; and what'll be in the news for older adults this fall is the annual Medicare Open Enrollment period from October 15th to December 7th. Sure as night follows day, the scammers will start churning out their fraud.

Here are seven ways they'll try to trick us:

### **1. "You need a new Medicare card"**

**Scam callers** pretend to be representatives of Medicare. They're trying to trick you into giving them personal details like your Medicare ID or Social Security number, which they can use to steal your identity and file fraudulent insurance claims in your name. **Medicare does NOT call you, unless you've already asked them to.**

If you can't find your Medicare card, call **800-633-4227** to get a new one mailed to you, or use your **medicare.gov** account to print one for yourself.

One more thing about your Medicare card: you don't need it in your wallet every day. Bring it with you to medical appointments; otherwise, keep it at home in a safe place.

## **2. "Your benefits are cancelled"**

No, they're not. The **scammer** is trying to scare you and trick you into giving up personal information. Stay calm and do not give them *any* information. You can call Medicare directly to check your coverage status.

## **3. "We need your Social Security number"**

No, they don't, because they're **scammers**.

#### 4. "You can get money for medical expenses"

If somebody you don't know contacts you out of the blue with a claim that you've overpaid for services and qualify for a rebate...**that's a scam.**

#### 5. "Free" equipment or medical tests

If it sounds too good to be true, **it's a scam.** Legitimate insurance agents are forbidden by federal law from even using the word "free" in their sales.

#### 6. What's this on my porch?

If an unexpected delivery of medical equipment arrived at your home, especially if it doesn't look like anything you've been prescribed, report it as an **attempted scam.** Do not sign for the delivery.

## 7. Read Every Medicare Summary Notice

Check the claims listed on every Medicare Summary Notice you receive, and check that it matches up with the medications and services you have received. If somebody billed Medicare under your ID for equipment you don't use, your doctor didn't prescribe, at a facility thousands of miles away? **That's a scam.** Report it.

### A Real-Life Example of A Medicare Scam

This year, a gentleman in Pawling asked us about a curious pattern of Medicare claims. Somebody had been filing claims using his Medicare ID for large quantities of catheters. He did not need these, nor did his doctor prescribe them, so he reported the claims to Medicare as a likely scam. Which it was.

Earlier this year, the federal Department of Justice (DOJ) reported the arrest of 324 suspects from as far away as Estonia in catheter-claims fraud totaling \$10.6 billion. DOJ added that Medicare had been able to stop payment on most of the fraudulent claims.

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## **OFA PROM REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**

The annual OFA “Masquerade Ball” Senior Prom takes place on Monday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, from noon to 4 pm, at Villa Borghese, 70 Widmer Rd. in Wappinger.

The prom begins with a sit-down lunch, then the full Bob Martinson Band will keep the dance floor packed for the rest of the afternoon. The prom is presented with vital support from The Pines at Poughkeepsie.

Prom reservations are now open and are \$20 per person. The registration deadline is Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, or until the event reaches capacity, whichever comes first. The prom sells out every year!

Need the sign-up form? It's at [www.dutchessny.gov/prom](http://www.dutchessny.gov/prom). For those of you

who organize group trips, there's a page where you can list everybody in your group. **Those who are planning to attend the prom as part of a group should send their payment in together.**

Not online? Paper forms will be available in the upcoming Fall 2025 issue of our THRIVE60+ newsletter, due out later this month. They're also available at OFA headquarters in Poughkeepsie (location in next paragraph).

Payment (cash, check or money order only) can be mailed, or hand-delivered during business hours, to Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601.

## **GOLDEN GATHERING RETURNS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

The scenario: you've got one day to gather as much information as you can about aging services in Dutchess County. That one day is coming up on **Saturday, September 27th, from 10 am to 1 pm.** It's the annual **Golden Gathering** for older adults, and it's happening at **Arlington High School at 1157 NY 55 in LaGrangeville.** No RSVP is required.

It's presented by County Executive Sue Serino and the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, along with New York State Senators Michelle Hinchey and



Rob Rolison, with support from the James J. McCann Charitable Trust.

The Golden Gathering is the single largest annual event of its kind in Dutchess County, and it's continuing to grow. More than 70 exhibitors from various organizations and service providers will offer information on topics ranging from health care and financial services to housing options, legal advice and more.

Representatives from OFA and other Dutchess County Government and New York State departments and divisions will also be on hand to inform residents about how they serve the community every day.

The Golden Gathering includes health screenings, entertainment, refreshments, door prizes and dozens of informational tables geared toward the interests and needs of area older adults, their families and caregivers.

Flu shots will be available at the Golden Gathering while supplies last. If you plan on getting a flu shot, bring your insurance card.

Contact OFA if you are available to volunteer at the Golden Gathering.

## **OFA HONORS VOLUNTEERS**

Forgive us if you've heard us say this before, but we really could not accomplish all we do at OFA without hundreds of volunteers. [We took some time this week to honor our volunteers](#) this past week in Hyde Park, from our health insurance counseling, clerical, OFA Picnic, exercise programs and more.

We also honor our volunteer Home Delivered Meals drivers and Friendship Center helpers at events year-round throughout the County.

For more information on becoming an OFA volunteer, see [www.dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer](http://www.dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer).

### **Other news:**

Are you an older adult who's been prescribed [GLP-1 drugs for diabetes and/or weight loss](#)?

About that study from earlier this year, supposedly indicating that we "age in bursts" around ages 44 and 60. [If that's your age, don't panic](#).

[Never too late to try learning a new musical instrument](#). Nobody's expecting you to be Billy Joel. It helps with successful aging, though.

There's a study for everything, it would seem, including [the risks of lingering over a mobile device while in the restroom](#).

### **This week's birthdays:**

9/5: Actor/producer [Michael Keaton](#) (75)

9/6: Author/illustrator [Sergio Aragonés](#) (88)

9/7: Jazz saxophonist/composer [Sonny Rollins](#) (95)

9/8: Civil rights activist [Ruby Bridges](#) (71)

9/9: Actor/producer [Hugh Grant](#) (65)

9/10: Singer-songwriter/guitarist [José Feliciano](#) (80)

9/11: Singer/songwriter/guitarist [Leo Kottke](#) (80)

## **And the Bad Joke!**

*What does corn say when it gets a compliment?*

Aw shucks!