



## Prepare For Spring With “A Matter of Balance”

In Dutchess County, falls account for more than half of all emergency room visits. That number can be reduced, and you have the power to reduce your risk of falling.

The Office for the Aging is now taking applications for its spring 2020 “A Matter of Balance” classes. Available in Dutchess County since 2015, “A Matter of Balance” is an award winning, research-based program aimed at helping older adults reduce their risks for falling.

The program is comprised of eight weekly sessions and also promotes exercise to increase strength and balance. People most likely to benefit from “A Matter of Balance” include older adults who are concerned about falls; have fallen before; restrict activities because of concerns about falling; are interested in improving flexibility, balance and strength; and who are at least age 60, ambulatory and able to problem-solve.

The spring series of classes will be held throughout Dutchess County. Class applications are available at [www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging), by email at [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov), or by calling the Office for the Aging at **845-486-2555**. Each session is limited to 14 participants, and they fill up quickly.

In the meantime, here are some simple tips to reduce your risk of falling at home:

- Clear your floors of tripping hazards like boxes and electrical cords;
- If you need a step stool to reach a commonly used item, move that item to a lower shelf;
- Move coffee tables, ottomans and plant stands away from high-traffic areas;
- Clean up spills right away;
- Repair any loose carpeting or floorboards;
- Make sure your bathtub includes a non-skid mat, and perhaps grab bars and/or a seat;
- Use two-bulb fixtures to light living spaces, and
- Have flashlights available where you can find them during a power outage.

Todd N. Tancredi  
Director

## A Message from County Executive Marc Molinaro

*Friends,*



*The search is already underway for Dutchess County residents who will celebrate a 100th birthday in 2020. We'd like to honor their milestone at the 22nd annual “Celebration of Aging”, coming up in May.*

*We're also searching for couples living in Dutchess who will have been married for 70 or more years in 2020.*

*If you know anyone who will reach either milestone - or both - contact the Office for the Aging at (845) 486-2555 or [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov).*

*We're also accepting nominations for the 2020 Senior Citizen of the Year honors, which are also awarded at the “Celebration of Aging.”*

*Dutchess County is home to thousands of seniors who go far above and beyond the call in service to the community, and you can help show them how much their work is valued. Look for a nomination form on page 4 of this newsletter.*

*The only requirements for a Senior Citizen of the Year is that they be at least age 60, a resident of Dutchess County, and not a previous Senior Citizen of the Year honoree. Describing their efforts is up to you, and any others who also appreciate the nominee's service. Honorees are chosen in early April by a subcommittee of the OFA Advisory Board.*

*If you've nominated somebody before and they weren't chosen, feel free to nominate them again!*

*My best wishes,*

Marcus J. Molinaro  
County Executive

## In 2020, Good Help Is... Easier To Find

Sometimes, a minor home repair to a senior's home can make a major difference in reaching the goal of the senior's continued independence.

In 2020, OFA will collaborate with Rebuilding Together Dutchess County (RTDC, formerly known as "Christmas in April") to build on RTDC's existing handyman program, which provides timely small-scale repairs that can be done in half a workday or less.

Covered repairs include grab bar installation, repairs to walkways, installation of door peepholes, smoke/CO detectors, lever-style doorknobs, lighting improvements, installation of Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant high-rise toilets...and more.

You can find printable applications for all RTDC services and eligibility information by calling **(845) 454-7310**. Applications can also be found at [www.rtdutchess.org/apply](http://www.rtdutchess.org/apply).

## Some Spotlights For The Waiting Room?

If you work in a medical office in Dutchess County and are looking for waiting-room reading material for your senior clients that might interest them more than an assortment of 10-year-old golf magazines, may we suggest a supply of *Spotlight on Seniors*?

Each issue of the Spotlight contains helpful information about OFA services of which your clients might not be aware, aimed at reaching the shared goal of improving a senior's chances of continued independent living in the community.

Get in touch with us at **(845) 486-2555** or [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov), and we'll bring your office copies of the Spotlight, while they're available.

We can also deliver copies of the Spotlight to senior housing congregate areas, houses of worship, and any other establishment where seniors gather.

## Senior Exercise Program Turns 20!

In 2020, the Dutchess County Senior Exercise Program will celebrate 20 years since its founding. Our special thanks to the leaders of five of our dozens of classes, who have been with the program since the very beginning:

*Linda Barnes - Bowdoin Park*

*Marion Bennett - Millbrook Library*

*Annette Berger - Pleasant Valley Town Hall*

*Barbara Gilmore - East Fishkill Community Center*

*Laura Moriarty - St. Martin de Porres Church*

There are plenty of opportunities for you to join us as a Senior Exercise volunteer for the next 20 years - or less, if you can't commit that much time all at once. Contact the Office for the Aging to find out more about volunteering with our Senior Exercise, Tai Chi, and/or A Matter of Balance programs.

## SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS

Marcus J. Molinaro — County Executive  
Todd N. Tancredi — Director, Office for the Aging  
Brian Jones — Editor, Spotlight on Seniors

Dutchess County Office for the Aging  
114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601

(845) 486-2555 / toll free (866) 486-2555

Email: [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov)

Web: [www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging)

Available for free at libraries, senior centers and municipal buildings throughout Dutchess County.

Distributed in February, June, September and December, with a Medicare-focused edition in October.

To be added to or removed from our mailing list, call (845) 486-2544 or email [bjones@dutchessny.gov](mailto:bjones@dutchessny.gov).



## Spotlight on Staff: Deborah Thomison

One goal of the Office for the Aging is to help Dutchess County seniors remain living independently in the community for as long as is safely possible. Within that goal is reducing the likelihood that a senior admitted to a hospital is re-admitted soon thereafter.

Reducing re-admission rates requires close coordination between the Office for the Aging and area health care teams, so we're expanding our outreach efforts at a wide range of local health care facilities. Leading that effort is Deborah Thomison, RN, BSN, Public Health Nurse for the Office for the Aging.

Deborah's role is to ensure local physicians, hospitals, rehabilitation centers and urgent care facilities are aware of services provided by the Office for the Aging for their senior patients and caregivers. She's been a Registered Nurse for over 30 years, and a Certified Nurse Case Manager for over 20 years in both public and private sector case management.

Ultimately, we believe this outreach will lead to savings in time and money for seniors and taxpayers alike, thanks to fewer re-admissions. Just as important is the prospect for greater peace of mind for everybody concerned. A trip to the hospital is often unplanned, and seniors can often find the experience unsettling. Our new outreach effort is aimed at ensuring seniors and caregivers have answers ready when they prepare to leave the hospital and ask themselves, "Now what?"

## NY Connects: When You Don't Know Where To Start

Looking for the help you need for yourself or somebody you care for can be stressful and confusing in the best of times, especially when you might not know where to begin the search, or even what questions you need to ask.

NY Connects at the Office for the Aging can help.

### What's NY Connects?

It's your trusted place to get connected to local resources for long term services and supports. NY Connects serves older individuals, and also serves individuals with disabilities of all ages. NY Connects can help families, caregivers and professionals.

### What kind of help can NY Connects provide?

When it comes to providing unbiased information on your options, NY Connects at the Office for the Aging can help you...

- Find options for benefits eligibility
  - Find care and support
    - Stay independent
  - Understand care options
    - Find transportation
  - Learn about caregiving supports
- Find supported employment programs
  - Get answers about Medicare
- Apply for Medicaid and other benefits



**NY Connects**  
Your Link to Long Term  
Services and Supports

of DUTCHESS COUNTY

**845-475-3511**

# DUTCHESS COUNTY SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

## 2020 Nomination Form

Please use this form to nominate a senior citizen or senior citizen couple who you think deserve to be recognized as the 2020 Senior Citizen(s) of the Year!

Name of Nominee(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Nominee(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

*Please describe below why the person or couple you are nominating deserve the Dutchess County Senior Citizen of the Year Award. Be sure to include any volunteer and community activities, as well as information about their professional career and family. Use additional sheets as necessary. Clippings and other information are welcome but cannot be returned. Winners will be honored at the annual Celebration of Aging luncheon in May.*

Mail completed form to:

Advisory Board, Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601

Nominations must be received no later than Friday, March 27, 2020.

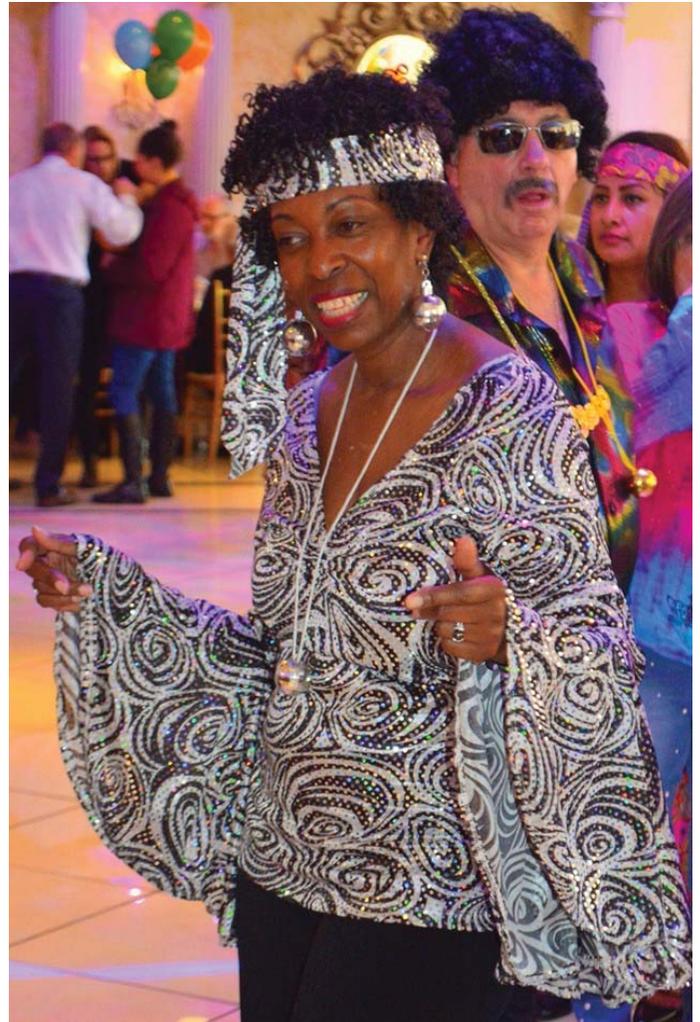


## 2019 OFA Senior Prom - The '70s



**Congratulations to Joan and Fred Salerno, the 2019 Senior Prom Duchess and Duke!**

**Join us in October 2020 for the 25th annual OFA Senior Prom  
Theme: Silver Anniversary  
(Wear silver!)**



*Presented in conjunction with The Pines at Poughkeepsie and sponsors*

*Wingate Healthcare, Medicare Specialists, Home Energy Consultants and EverCare At Home*

## Senior Transportation News For 2020

When we surveyed thousands of Dutchess County seniors in 2018, they told us that transportation was one of their most pressing issues. It's what seniors in communities across the country have been telling their leaders. A recent National Household Travel Survey indicates that 21 percent of seniors do not drive, whether or not they still have a license.

If that percentage holds in Dutchess, that's as many as 11,000 non-driving seniors who need some other way to get around a county that's still largely rural. Many of them rely on family or volunteers doing the best they can, but we'd like to do more in the future.

The 2020 Dutchess County budget includes funding for the Office for the Aging and Dutchess County Public Transit to look at current county transportation options. We'll look closely at the county Dial-A-Ride program, and how we can improve transportation choices for seniors throughout the county. Our goal is to develop and implement a pilot program by the end of 2020.

### In the meantime, how can we improve things?

Thanks to volunteer drivers, Dutchess County's non-driving senior population is better able to live successfully, safely and independently, but our senior population is growing much more quickly than our general population. This means volunteer drivers are more essential than ever before.

You can volunteer to drive for one of Dutchess County's diverse senior transportation services. Mileage reimbursement and supplemental insurance are typically provided, and they'll work within your schedule. If you can only drive one day a week, it may be the one day when help is needed most. Contact the Office for the Aging to find out more.

### I'm the one who needs the ride

Contact the Office for the Aging to learn more about senior transportation.

For clients of OFA Senior Friendship

Centers, OFA vans and buses provide transportation to and from the centers. There are eight OFA Senior Friendship Centers. Chances are there's one near you.

In southeastern Dutchess, the Pawling Resource Center (**845-855-3459**, [www.pawlingresourcecenter.org](http://www.pawlingresourcecenter.org)) serves the transportation needs of seniors in the Town of Pawling.

Friends of Seniors (**845-485-1277**) provides non-emergency medical transportation for the frail elderly. They are sometimes able to travel to appointments outside Dutchess County. At least two weeks' notice is required to reserve a ride.

For the towns of Amenia, Dover, North East, Stanford and Washington, the North East Community Center (**518-592-1399 extension 5**, or [transportation@neccmillerton.org](mailto:transportation@neccmillerton.org)) provides "Care Car" transportation. NECC also coordinates the Northeast Dutchess Transit Program which can additionally assist residents of the towns of Pine Plains, Stanford and Washington.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) (**845-452-5104**) picks up City of Beacon seniors who do not drive, for trips to the Beacon Senior Friendship Center at Forrestal Heights. Beacon seniors may also be eligible for trips to the Walmart or Shoprite in Fishkill. RSVP is a program of Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County.

All of the above are partly or wholly funded by the Office for the Aging.

**MORE THAN A SIGN!  
RESPECT THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED.**



**BE HANDICAPPED PARKING CONSIDERATE.**

Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board Handicapped Parking Education

## Seasonal Scam Prevention

“You better watch out...”

Those words aren't just about Santa Claus coming to town. They're also a warning that scammers don't take holidays off, and they're always looking for opportunities to separate you from your money and personal information.

Here are four of the most common scam attempts you may encounter this winter:

### “Your furnace needs fixing right away”

The scammer will pose as a repairman and knock on your door, hoping to play on your fear of losing heat during the winter. Don't fall for it. Get a second opinion from a trusted heating provider. It's an easy question to ask any time you're having your heating equipment serviced.

### “We're from the electric company and...”

No, they're not. The two utilities serving Dutchess County, Central Hudson and NYSEG, do not settle outstanding bills over the phone or through in-person visits. If you really are in arrears, you'll get letters from your utility company, and weeks or months of notice before any shutoff. Utility companies are willing to work with you to get your account squared away.

### “We need your Medicare number”

Only your doctors need that. The only reason a random caller wants your Medicare ID is to make fraudulent claims. Medicare benefit payments totaled \$731 billion in 2018. That's an attractive target for skillful thieves who know their way around Medicare's payment systems. To prevent theft from Medicare, as well as from a private insurer, read your benefit statements as carefully as you would read a credit card statement.

### “For \$200 cash I'll plow your driveway all winter”

More likely they'll take off with your money. Before making snow removal arrangements with anybody, check them out with people you trust.

More scam prevention resources at  
[www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging)

## Snow Clearing Safety Checklist (Clip and Save!)

If you're a veteran of many Dutchess County winters, digging out may be second nature for you...but it's always good to have a checklist to refer to, just in case.

The National Safety Council notes that shoveling is responsible for thousands of injuries and as many as 100 deaths every winter, so take these recommendations to heart before heading out with your shovel:

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; have a younger neighbor take care of the heavy stuff
- Push the snow rather than lifting it
- If you must lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion
- Keep emergency contact information with you
- *If you experience shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, a cold sweat or lightheadedness, STOP SHOVELING and call 911.* Your local emergency medical service providers can begin treatment up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to a hospital by car

### Snow Blower Safety

A snow blower can reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of heart strain. The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons has additional recommendations:

- If the blower jams, turn it off
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space
- Add fuel outdoors, before starting, and never add fuel when it is running
- Never leave it unattended when it is running

**Dutchess County Office for the Aging  
114 Delafield Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601**

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
NEWBURGH, NY  
PERMIT NO. 17

**CURRENT RESIDENT OR**

**TO:**

## **“HEAP” HELP FOR THE WINTER**

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging offers a Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), funded through the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services, to provide assistance with home energy needs for low-income, older individuals and families. Services include financial assistance with fuel bills, and emergency financial assistance for fuel/utility terminations. HEAP is an income eligibility program. Most people who qualify have already been sent the application information.

HEAP benefit levels are based on household size, with maximum monthly gross incomes ranging from \$2,494 for a one-person household and \$3,262 for a two-person household, to \$7,086 for an 11-person household.

If you meet these requirements and would like to apply, please call 845-486-2555. Some restrictions apply; also, you will need a face-to-face or phone interview, at which time your documents can be reviewed.

For more information  
about the  
Dutchess County  
Office for the Aging,  
visit us online at  
**[www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging)**

email

**[ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov)**

call

**(845) 486-2555  
or (866) 486-2555**

or mail

**Dutchess County  
Office for the Aging  
114 Delafield St.  
Poughkeepsie NY 12601**

We're open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Monday through Friday.