



SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS

A Publication of the Dutchess County Office for the Aging

Winter 2016-2017

Let The Snow Do The Falling - Not You

Millions of Americans go to hospitals every year with injuries related to falls, according to the National Institutes of Health, with 2015 costs to Medicare for fall-related injury treatment and rehab coming to \$31 billion. Falls are the most common cause of a person needing nursing home placement.

Still, we should not assume falls and injuries are an unavoidable part of the aging process. Much of the pain and cost is preventable, and you can do a lot to fall-proof your home right away at very little cost.

Let's start with outdoor fall prevention. Make sure you're wearing rubber-soled boots or shoes for the best possible traction. If there's a hand rail available where you walk, use it. If a sidewalk looks slippery, the grass next to it may provide better footing. When walking into a public building, pay close attention to the floors because water from snowmelt can make walking surfaces slick. Around your home, keep your porch, deck, walkways and driveway free of snow, ice and clutter.

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Todd N. Tancredi
Director



**A Message from
County Executive
Marcus J. Molinaro**

Dear Friends,

Isolation is one of the greatest challenges seniors face, especially during winter. Fortunately, the Office for the Aging can help you connect with friends and make new friends, thanks to our eight Senior Friendship Centers.

Centers are located in the City of Poughkeepsie, Beacon, East Fishkill, Millerton, Rhinebeck, South Amenia and the Tri-Town Center in the Town of Poughkeepsie, which also serves Pleasant Valley and LaGrange.

The Senior Friendship Centers offer transportation for those who may have given up driving and also offer once-a-week grocery shopping. They are open from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and offer a nutritious noon-time meal for a suggested contribution of \$3.00. Reservations are required for lunch. Call the Office at 845-486-2555 for the number of the center nearest you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marcus".

*Marcus J. Molinaro
Dutchess County Executive*

Marcus J. Molinaro
County Executive



SENIOR CITIZENS OF THE YEAR

Many of us know that one senior citizen in our community who always seems to go that extra step to help their friends and neighbors. We at the Office for the Aging would like to help you get your hard-working senior friend the recognition they deserve. We encourage you to nominate a senior citizen you know who deserves recognition as a Senior Citizen of the Year for 2017. You'll find a nomination form on page 4. Those selected - one man, one woman, and one couple - will be honored at the Celebration of Aging in May.

MORE NEWS, FEWER TRIPS TO THE MAILBOX

The quarterly Spotlight on Seniors you hold in your hands is just one of many free publications available from the Office for the Aging. If you've got a computer, you can get a look at every Office for the Aging publication we make available at the county website, www.dutchessny.gov.

We have a column called "Golden Living" that appears every Sunday in the Poughkeepsie Journal and other weekly area newspapers, but if you've got a computer with Internet access you can get that column and lots more, including

the electronic version of this "Spotlight on Seniors" and our weekly "Aging News" email, which includes the "Golden Living" column, listings of upcoming events of interest to seniors, the latest developments in aging research, and plenty of other useful and entertaining information. To get on our list, email Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones at bjones@dutchessny.gov.

For those without Internet access who aren't already on our mailing list, call Brian at 845-486-2555 and you'll get all future copies of the Spotlight on Seniors.

THE AGE OF SHOVELRY, AND OTHER WINTER PUNS

Q: What happens when your vacuum cleaner becomes clogged with falling ice?

A: Hail freezes Hoover.

Q: Do reindeer go to school?

A: No; they're elf-taught.

Q: What does the T. rex wear when it's snowing?

A: A Jurassic parka.

Q: What took place when British monarch Richard III threw a 1970s theme party in a temporary outdoor structure in February?

A: The winter of our disco tent.

*"A Matter of Balance"
returns in late winter
2017*

*Call 845-486-2555 for
more information*

Let The Snow Do The Falling...

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Fall-proofing the inside of your home is also key. Start with your floors, by removing all loose wires and throw rugs. Any remaining area rugs should have either skid-proof backing or be tacked to the floor.

Make sure the items you use most are easy to reach without bending, stooping or climbing. A long-handled "grabber" device may come in handy. If you must have a step-ladder, make sure it's a sturdy one with wide steps and a hand rail.

For bathrooms, non-skid rubber mats in the shower or tub are recommended, along with grab bars there and beside the toilet. If you have balance concerns during bathing, you may want to use a plastic chair with a back and non-skid legs in the shower or tub, and use a handheld showerhead to bathe.

Stairs should be well-lit with light switches at the top and bottom, and have handrails on both sides.

Be careful when celebrating over the holidays, especially where alcohol is concerned. Alcohol can cause disorientation and loss of balance, and it can interact unpredictably with medications.

In the kitchen, use non-skid mats on the floor near the stove and sink, where floors tend to get wet. Clean up any spills as soon as they happen (which goes for anywhere else in the house as well). If you've been cooking for a big holiday party, put your guests to work. Let *them* carry that big pot of sauce to the table!

From the Director's Chair

Todd Tancredi
ttancredi@dutchessny.gov



Dear Friends,

Many of you have been asking about our popular File of Life packets. These red, magnetized pouches hold a card you fill out (in pencil, in case you need to make changes) with your medical information and emergency contact numbers. The packet is magnetized so that it can hang on your refrigerator, and the packet includes a small red File of Life sticker that you put on your front door.

In an emergency where you cannot communicate, a first responder will see the red sticker on your door and know to go right to the fridge to find your File of Life. Knowing your medical history, they can start helping you right away - and those are seconds that could make all the difference to you.

You can pick up a File of Life at our office on the 3rd floor at 27 High Street in Poughkeepsie, and at many of our Successful Aging presentations around the county. Some local governments and fire departments carry the File of Life as well.

We are unable to send the File of Life through the mail.

Todd Tancredi, Director
Office for the Aging

DUTCHESS COUNTY SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

2017 Nomination Form

Please use this form to nominate a senior citizen or senior citizen couple who you think deserve to be recognized as the 2017 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 are deserving of 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.

2016 SENIOR PROM



Helene Gross & Larry Wagner Jr. Crowned 2016 Duke & Duchess

Hundreds of seniors packed the Villa Borghese on October 17th for the 21st annual Dutchess County Senior Prom. This year's theme was "Denim and Diamonds." The sold out event was co-sponsored for the 19th year by The Pines at Poughkeepsie.

Helene Gross and Larry Wagner Jr. (pictured top left) were named the 2016 Duke & Duchess and will arrive at next year's prom in a chauffeured limousine courtesy of A Special Occasion Limousine of Poughkeepsie. Also on hand for the crowning by County Executive Marc Molinaro were Senator Sue Serino and Assemblywoman Didi Barrett.

A big THANK YOU to our platinum sponsors: Wingate Healthcare, Toll Brothers, TEG Federal Credit Union, Hudson Cadillac Buick GMC, EverCare, Helping Other People Everywhere, Hamaspik Choice, Zounds Hearing, and Prime Health Choice.

Plans are already being made for next year's prom, which will feature the theme "School Days." Attendees can dress in college or high school gear, and the Bob Martinson Band will play the biggest hits of the Class of '57, '67, '77, '47, all the years in between...and more!

The Big 1-0-0

More people than ever before are living happily, and in many cases independently, to the age of 100 and well beyond, as many Dutchess County residents and their families can tell you.

Every spring we honor county residents who have reached, or will reach, the age of 100 or more in 2017, at our "Celebration of Aging" coming up May 22, 2017 at Villa Borghese in Wappingers Falls.

We'll also be honoring couples who will have been married for 70 years or more in 2017. In 2016, we were fortunate enough to honor couples married as long as 76 years, and one Dutchess County resident, Rhinebeck's Vera Van Wagner, who at 112 is, as of the date the "Spotlight on Seniors" went to print, the oldest person in New York state, the sixth-oldest person in the United States, and the 35th-oldest person in the world. We hope to join her for her 113th birthday next May!

If you know any Dutchess County resident or couple in your family or circle of friends who will be turning 100 and/or married 70 years or more in 2017, let Outreach Coordinator Brian Jones know their story at bjones@dutchessny.gov.



Making Taxes Less Taxing

The AARP Tax-Aide program is getting ready to help thousands of Dutchess County seniors, low-income families and individuals with free tax preparation in 2017. Volunteer tax-prep helpers are needed to step up now, so they'll be trained in time for the peak of tax season from February through April.

AARP Tax-Aide assisted over 4,800 residents in Dutchess County with free tax preparation last year. In Dutchess County, individuals who used the Tax-Aide program saved an estimated \$971,000 in tax-preparation fees. Without a preparer's help, most seniors would not take full advantage of the credits and deductions they've earned, just when their finances may be becoming more complex because of retirement and other aging-related issues. For many seniors, getting the maximum tax refund they deserve under the law could mean they won't have to choose between paying for groceries and keeping the lights on.

If you're good with numbers, somebody with tech abilities who wants to help your neighbors, or skilled in the nuances of state and federal tax code, lend a hand to AARP Tax Aide and the Hudson Valley CA\$H (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Coalition, which is dedicated to helping families and individuals in the Hudson Valley save money and improve their financial stability. There are many roles to fill, with volunteering opportunities that fit your abilities and interests. The ideal volunteer for tax preparation is computer literate, well organized, enjoys interacting with others and has some knowledge of personal tax preparation.

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Making Taxes Less Taxing

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All volunteers receive training from the AARP Tax-Aide program that is administered through AARP Foundation, in conjunction with the Internal Revenue Service.

Volunteers will:

- Use skills to make a difference to those in need;
- Receive IRS Certification;
- Learn new skills and take advantage of free training;
- Join others in our community making a difference;
- Enjoy flexible days, times and locations throughout Dutchess County and the Hudson Valley.

If you're not so sure about your skills with taxes, there are still satisfying opportunities for you with AARP Tax Aide. They also need client facilitators, technology help, communications assistance, and site coordinators. They're also seeking volunteer help from bilingual speakers, and from interpreters who can work with preparers and filers at the same time.

Tax preparation training begins in the late fall and winter of 2016-17.

For more information on Tax Aide, contact Linda Eddy at 845-475-7500 or leddy@dutchesscap.org.

Remember also that you do not have to be a senior or AARP member to volunteer or to access the service.

Successful Aging - Coming To Your Hometown?

The Office for the Aging has free presentations available year-round for the benefit of senior groups, civic and social organizations, houses of worship and other adult groups. Over the years, we have found many Dutchess County residents are unaware of all the Office for the Aging has to offer, so we have taken to the roads of Dutchess to bring our message countywide.

Our most popular presentation is on "Successful Aging," the steps seniors can take to live happily and independently for as long as possible. We also have presentations available on Office for the Aging services and popular topics like Medicare. We can also help you find speakers on specific topics of interest to seniors including, but not limited to, scam prevention and hoarding.

All your group needs to provide is a venue that's open to the public, and a place to plug in our presentation equipment.

For more information on "Successful Aging" and other Office for the Aging presentation, contact our Outreach Coordinator, Brian Jones, at 845-486-2555 or bjones@dutchessny.gov.





Dutchess County Office for the Aging
27 High Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

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HELP WITH HEATING COSTS

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 \$2,300 for a one-person household and \$3,007 for a two-person household, to \$6,671 for an 11-person household.

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

For more information

about the

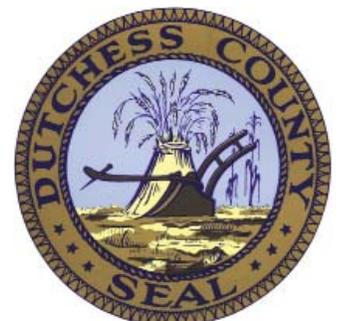
Dutchess County

Office for the Aging

Visit us online or call

(845) 486-2555

or (866) 486-2555



www.dutchessny.gov