

# SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS

A Publication of the Dutchess County Office for the Aging

WINTER 2009—2010

## Medicare and YOU!



If you are having trouble understanding how Medicare works, or if you are new to the Medicare system, the Office for the Aging is offering regular informational sessions around the county. Topics will include: hospital, medical, and preventative services covered by Medicare, supplemental insurance, Medicare Prescription Drug Plans, EPIC, Medicare Advantage Plans and much more.

**Tuesday, December 1**  
**Hyde Park Library**  
**2 Main Street**  
**5:30 PM—8:30 PM**

**Wednesday, January 20**  
**Poughkeepsie Galleria**  
**Community Room**  
**10 AM—12 noon**

Visit the Calendar of Events section of our website for the most up to date program schedule: [www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov)



A Message from  
County Executive  
William R. Steinhaus

*Dear Friends,*

*I am always honored each year to meet the winners of the Senior Citizen of the Year awards at the annual Celebration of Aging. These are citizens who go above and beyond for their community. We need your help to identify these outstanding residents. You'll find a nomination form on page 6 of this issue of the Spotlight on Seniors. Please take a few moments to let us know about someone you know who is deserving of this distinguished honor.*

*Also honored at the Celebration of Aging are residents who will be turning 100 or more and couples married 70 or more years anytime during 2010. Contact the Office for the Aging at 486-2555 and let them know about anyone you know who will reach one of these milestones in the new year. We would love to have them as our guest at this year's luncheon.*

*Sincerely,*



**William R. Steinhaus**  
**Dutchess County Executive**



### HIRE-A-TEEN

If you need help raking leaves, shoveling snow, housecleaning, or doing other small jobs around your home, Hire-A-Teen may be able to help. They match teens (ages 13-19) with people who need jobs done. Call them for more information on how the program works at 229-4680 x102.

### GET A WORKOUT THIS WINTER

Because so many seniors leave the area during the winter months, many of the Office for the Aging's Senior Exercise and Brain Games classes have openings for new members. To obtain more information about an exercise or brain games program in your town, call 486-2555.

### HOW DEPRESSING

People often link happiness and good health, and a new study may offer scientific evidence backing that relationship. The *Archives of Internal Medicine* reports that seniors who experience symptoms of depression that increase over time, remain persistently high, or occur as an isolated incident are all at higher risk for type-two diabetes than those seniors who do not experience depression. The good news is depression is treatable. Everyone feels down once in a while, but if you have lost interest in things you used to enjoy or are having trouble shaking feelings of sadness, talk to your doctor. Depression is nothing to be ashamed of and the sooner you get help the sooner you will feel better.

### TOO TAXED FOR TAXES?

The AARP Tax-Aide program is a free service available to low and middle income senior citizens who need assistance filing their taxes. Volunteers provide the service every year between February 1 and April 15th. To locate the site near you, call 1-888-AARP NOW or visit their website: [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide).

### DON'T HIBERNATE!

Seniors reap huge health rewards (both physical and mental) from the simple act of volunteering. The Office for the Aging has openings for volunteer drivers to deliver meals from one of our ten Senior Friendship Centers located throughout the county. Drivers usually volunteer once a week to deliver a midday weekday meal on a route that takes an hour or less. Volunteers use their own vehicle, but are reimbursed for mileage. Call 486-2555 for more information.

### SAFE OLDER DRIVERS

The number of elderly drivers is surging (drivers over 80 are growing at the fastest pace), but older drivers are involved in fewer accidents than they were a decade ago. The 19% drop in the number of seniors involved in injury-causing crashes appears to be due to safer cars, the use of seatbelts and the fact the senior drivers today are healthier than senior drivers were in the past.

### JEST FOR FUN

A sweet grandmother telephoned the hospital one day and timidly asked, "Is it possible to speak to someone who can tell me how a patient is doing?" The operator said "I'll be glad to help, Dear. What's the name and room number?" The grandmother in her weak tremulous voice said, "Holly Finkel, room 302." The Operator replied, "Let me check. Oh, good news. Her records say that Holly is doing very well. Her blood pressure is fine; her blood work just came back as normal and her physician, Dr. Cohen, has scheduled her to be discharged Tuesday." The Grandmother said, "Thank you. That's wonderful! I was so worried! God bless you for the good news." The operator replied, "You're more than welcome. Is Holly your daughter?" The Grandmother said, "No, I'm Holly Finkel in 302. No one ever tells me anything!"

# Laughter Heals

Did you know enjoying a good laugh triggers healthy physical changes in your body?

**Laughter relaxes the whole body.** A good hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes afterwards.

**Laughter boosts the immune system.** It decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

**Laughter triggers the release of endorphins.** These are the bodies natural feel-good chemicals. They promote an overall sense of well-being and can temporarily relieve pain.

**Laughter protects the heart.** It improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

Shared laughter is one of the powerful forms of communication between people. When we laugh together, we create a strong positive bond with others that is an important part of healthy aging.

Try to find the humor in your life everyday, even in the bad situations. Learn to laugh at yourself, spend more time with people who make you laugh, and feel free to let go with a big hearty belly laugh. Remember, Bob Hope and George Burns both lived to age 100!

## From the Director's Chair



**JOHN A. BEALE**

EMAIL:

JBEALE@CO.DUTCHESS.NY.US

*Dear Friends,*

*Many of you are already aware of my strong belief that staying active and engaged as we age is as important as eating right and exercising. That is why I continue to urge you to search out a volunteer opportunity that fits your interests. The rewards that come with volunteering are immeasurable for both your mental and physical health.*

*If you've been thinking about volunteering, but aren't sure where to start, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) may be able to connect you with the right organization. Call them at 452-5104 for more information.*

*If you're good with numbers, you may be interested in volunteering with the AARP Tax-Aide Program. They are looking for seniors who will be available for training programs in January and December as their tax season runs February through April. Trained counselors then provide free, confidential tax preparation to low and middle income taxpayers. If you're not comfortable doing taxes, they have many other opportunities "behind the scenes." Call them for more information at 1-800-687-2277.*

*Get up, get out and volunteer!*

Sincerely,

*John A. Beale*  
John A. Beale, Director  
Dutchess County Office for the Aging

# 2010 Caregivers Workshop Schedule



January 12, 5:00 - 6:30 PM

**Financial Planning & Long Term Care Insurance**

St. Francis Atrium, 241 North Rd., Poughkeepsie

February 4, 4:00 - 5:30 PM

**Identity Theft**

Dutchess County Emergency Response

392 Creek Road, Poughkeepsie

Call St. Francis Home Care Services at 483-5528 to register for one of these free programs or a copy of the full 2010 schedule.



## Check Your Home for Safety!

There was much interest in the Fall Prevention information in our last issue of the *Spotlight on Seniors*. The Office for the Aging now has a handy pamphlet entitled "Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults." The pamphlet details what steps senior citizens can take to fix any falling hazards that may exist in their home. Thousands of seniors die each year from falls and millions more are treated in the emergency room. Don't let it happen to you or someone you love! The pamphlet is available free of charge by calling us at 486-2555.



## Marge and John Jackson of East Fishkill crowned 2009 Duke & Duchess

Almost 400 seniors packed the Villa Borghese in Wappingers Falls for the annual Senior Prom. This year's theme was a "Crazy Hat Party."

Marge & John Jackson of East Fishkill, married for 54 years were chosen as the Duke & Duchess of the 14th annual prom. They missed their High School Prom as John was called into the service.

We encourage seniors to patronize the sponsors of the prom including our cosponsor The Pines in Poughkeepsie Health Center, CDPHP, ARAMARK Corporation, Unlimited Care, Bermac Home Aides, Inc, Senior Whole Health, Hedgewood Home for Adults, PAZ Health Care Management, Comprehensive Home Care, A & T Health Care, McClelland's Home for Adults, A Special Occasion Limousine, Hyde Park Florist, Poughkeepsie Price Chopper, Stop & Shop in Wappinger and Hyde Park, Channingville Deli, Paesano's Bakery, Hannaford's, La Deliziosa Pastry Shop, Olive Garden, Wingate Health Care, Dutchess Diner, Umberto's, Cafe Aurora, Wappinger's Buffet and Chen Yeng Restaurant.

# Dutchess County Senior Citizen of the Year

## 2010 Nomination Form

Use this form to nominate a senior or senior couple who you think deserve to be recognized as the year 2010 senior citizen(s) of the year!

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

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

**Nominee's Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Person Making Nomination** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please describe below why the person or couple you are nominating is deserving of the Dutchess County Senior Citizen of the Year Award. Be sure to include volunteer and community activities, as well as information about professional career and family. Use additional sheets if necessary. Clippings and other information is welcome. 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, 27 High Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. All nominations must be received no later than Friday, **March 26, 2010**.

# IT'S A GAMBLE

When does gambling for fun turn into a problem? Legal gambling has become a socially acceptable form of entertainment for many senior citizens, but for about 5% of them, it has had a devastating effect on their lives.

Research has shown that seniors who are bored, lonely or depressed are especially at risk for developing a compulsive gambling problem. They are also become very good at hiding the problem. Here are a few warning signs:

\*Started gambling with others but now will gamble on their own.

\*Gambles more often, for more money, for longer periods of time.

\*Talks only about wins, not losses.

\*Borrows from family & friends.

\*Sells personal or household items in order to gamble.

If you think someone you love has a gambling problem, there is help available. The New York Council on Problem Gambling has a toll-free hotline that can answer your questions:

**1-877-8 HOPE NY  
(1-877-846-7369)**

**or visit their website:**

**[www.nyproblemgambling.org](http://www.nyproblemgambling.org)**

## OFFICE FOR THE AGING SERVICES

(845) 486-2555 or toll free at (866) 486-2555

Senior Friendship Centers

Home Delivered Meals

Nutrition Education

Senior Citizen Picnics

Caregiver Support

DUTCHESS NY Connects

Nursing Home Ombudsman

Nursing Home Information

Benefit & Entitlement Counseling

Information, Referral & Advocacy

Health Insurance Counseling & Assistance

Reverse Mortgage Counseling

Tax Assistance

Legal Assistance

Housing Information

Home Energy Assistance

Senior ID Cards

Dial-A-Ride

Medical Transportation

Physical & Mental Fitness Programs

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Help

Visit our website today for more  
information about any of our  
programs or services!

[www.dutchessny.gov/CountyGov/  
Departments/Agging/AGIndex.htm](http://www.dutchessny.gov/CountyGov/Departments/Agging/AGIndex.htm)



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

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## **Staying Warm This Winter**

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging offers a Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) funded through the Dutchess County Department of Social Services to provide assistance with home energy needs for low income, older individuals and families. Services include financial assistance with fuel bills, emergency financial assistance for fuel/utility terminations and referrals for weatherization service. HEAP is an income eligibility program. Please call 486-2555 to see if you meet the requirements. There are some restrictions.

Another great program that the Office for the Aging offers is the Weatherization Referral and Packaging Program (WRAP) designed to help senior citizens with energy related problems or needs. If you are experiencing a cold, drafty house during the winter, or if your heating bills are skyrocketing out of sight, contact the Dutchess County Office for the Aging at 486-2555. A representative may be able to help you apply for benefits.

For more information  
about the

**Dutchess County  
Office for the Aging**

Visit us online or call

**(845) 486-2555**

or **(866) 486-2555**



Service, Support and Information  
[www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov)