

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of November 7th

Holiday Advisory:

The Office for the Aging and all OFA Friendship Centers are closed on the following holidays in November:

Tuesday, November 8th (Election Day)

Friday, November 11th (Veterans Day)

Thursday, November 24th (Thanksgiving)

OFA Friendship Centers are also closed on Friday, November 25th, but the OFA central office will be open on the 25th.

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program will receive meals in advance of each day that friendship centers are closed.

FALL-PROOFING YOUR HOME BEFORE WINTER (PART 1 of 2)

Whether you're an older adult or somebody who's caring for an older family member, most of us want to live out our lives in our own homes, for as long as it's safe to do so. The key is to make the "safe to do so" part last, and we can start toward that goal by adapting the home with an eye on safety.

If there's only one improvement you can manage for now, fall-proofing is it. Falls are potentially deadly, life-altering, and expensive. The financial burden of fall-related costs to taxpayers through Medicare and Medicaid was \$674 billion as of 2020, a cost that has only risen since then.

Falls are the single leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injury for American older adults. Not all falls are avoidable, but nor are they inevitable. Let's get working on prevention, starting with some zero- and low-cost options. Start with one room at a time and work systematically so that the job doesn't overwhelm.

Decluttering? Sort and be ruthless. As you go through your belongings in each room, have three piles – what you need to keep; what can be sold, donated, or put into storage; and what can be thrown away. If there's something that you haven't used in at least a year, and no chance it'll be used soon, away it goes. It's sad but true: family heirlooms are rarely needed by grown children and

grandchildren. We'll have more ideas on what to do with items of sentimental value in a future column.

Lose the throw rugs and carpets. They can be slipping/tripping hazards.

Remove them or replace them with mats that have a non-slip backing. Non-slip mats are essential for bathrooms as well.

If it's in the wrong room, put it back. Where's the screwdriver? You brought it in from the garage to fix a loose door hinge, and then the phone rang, and the dog was hungry, and the Giants game was on, and...we know. While you're in decluttering mode is the time to put things back in their correct location.

Need a bathroom grab bar? Many fall-prevention improvements are as simple as a trip to the hardware store. If it's time to replace a doorknob, look for one with a lever handle. They're easier on aging hands. LED light bulbs make great replacement bulbs because they're long-lasting and throw off very little heat compared to incandescent bulbs.

Get off that ladder. Find somebody more sure-footed to clean the leaves out of your gutters. Outdoors falls at height are some of the most dangerous falls, and this time of year is when they're most common. One misstep and you could have a broken bone or a head or spinal injury. You could be unconscious with nobody

aware that you have fallen because you're outside.

You're well on your way to having a safer and more attractive home before Thanksgiving. More to come in next week's column.

*Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114
Delafield St., Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, telephone 845-486-2555, email:
ofa@dutchessny.gov website: www.dutchessny.gov/aging*

REGULAR "HEAP" NOW OPEN

The 2022-2023 Regular HEAP season opened this past Tuesday, November 1st. New applications are now available and can be accepted.

Applicants over age 60 can contact OFA's HEAP division at 845-486-2553 or zserrano@dutchessny.gov. An online application option is available at mybenefits.ny.gov.

Under 60 and looking for HEAP info? Contact the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services at 845-486-3000.

If you were a HEAP beneficiary during the 2021-22 season, you should have received your “early outreach” application in the mail earlier in the fall and should have submitted the completed application by now. Contact OFA if you need help with that.

There’s some key paperwork you need to gather so that approval can be expedited:

- ID for household members.
- Proof of residency and vendor relationship (a copy of the applicant’s utility bill is preferred).
- Last 30 days of wages/proof of income prior to application date.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED THIS MONTH IN BEACON, POUGHKEEPSIE, AND...

OFA'S Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program and Senior Friendship Center in Beacon (1 Forrestal Heights) is looking for volunteers who can help in the kitchen at the Beacon Friendship Center. We’re looking for help on any or all weekdays from Tuesday through Friday, from approximately 9-11 am. You would be part of the process where OFA prepares and packages dozens of meals delivery

to homebound older adults in the greater Beacon area, along with clients of the Friendship Center. Additionally, we're looking for volunteer assistance with Friendship Center clients on Wednesdays between 10 am and 2 pm. We work with your schedule - if you're free just one of the days, two days, or all of them, our older adults will be more than grateful for the assistance and companionship. For more information, contact Jamie in the OFA Nutrition division, at 845-486-2597 or jdennis@dutchessny.gov.

We're also seeking volunteer drivers in our Home Delivered Meals program throughout Dutchess County, and particularly in the Beacon, Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley and Poughkeepsie areas. Mileage reimbursement is available for drivers who use their own vehicles for deliveries, and reimbursement was increased earlier this year, to reflect higher fuel prices. Contact OFA to find out more: 845-486-2555 or ofa@dutchessny.gov.

2023 COUNTY BUDGET TOWN HALL FORUMS

The 2023 Executive Budget was accompanied this past week by a budget address from County Executive Marcus Molinaro. You can [find out more about the '23 budget at this link](#). The complete budget proposal is a lengthy document,

[which you can read here](#) to get more detail. The section of the executive budget concerning OFA services and plans for 2023 and beyond is on pages 38-39.

Two in-person public forums have been scheduled at which the budget will be discussed:

Tuesday, November 15th, 6 pm

In-Person Town Hall

Pine Plains Town Hall

3284 State Route 199, Pine Plains

Tuesday, November 29th, 6 pm

In-Person Town Hall

East Fishkill Town Hall

330 State Route 376, Hopewell Junction

Other news:

Some things to know if you plan on [working while collecting Social Security](#).

Depression [is not a normal part of aging](#).

Understanding [four types of dementia](#).

So long, Broadway Joe. Bye bye, J.J. Walker. Boldly go...somewhere else, William Shatner. Come 2023, [Medicare Advantage advertising will have to be cleared by a federal panel](#) before it can air, appear online, or be sent to your mailbox.

Bette Midler's classic debut album [The Divine Miss M](#) was released 50 years ago this week. Her pianist and music director? A then-unknown Barry Manilow.

This week's birthdays:

11/6: Actress [Sally Field](#) (76)

11/7: Singer/songwriter [Johnny Rivers](#) (80)

11/8: Jockey [Angel Cordero, Jr.](#) (80)

11/9: Bodybuilder/actor [Lou Ferrigno](#) (71)

11/10: Author/illustrator [Neil Gaiman](#) (62)

11/11: Singer/songwriter/Hudson Valley resident [Marshall Crenshaw](#) (69)

11/12: Actor/playwright [Wallace Shawn](#) (79)

This week's Bad Joke comes from our tech support division:

You shouldn't use "beef stew" as a password. It's not stroganoff.