



Madison County  
Office for the Aging, Inc

**Madison County Office for the Aging, Inc.**  
138 Dominic Bruno Boulevard, Canastota, NY 13032  
Telephone: (315) 697-5700 Fax: (315) 697-5777  
Web: [www.ofamadco.org](http://www.ofamadco.org)

e-mail: [information@ofamadco.org](mailto:information@ofamadco.org)

**December 2020 Newsletter**



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

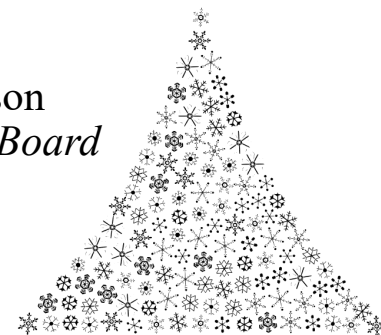
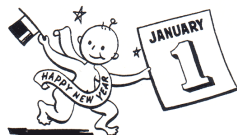
of MADISON COUNTY

(800) 342-9871 (315) 697-3092



Dear Friends,

We wish everyone a warm and wonderful Holiday season  
~from the Staff at the Office for the Aging, SNACK and the Board  
of Directors.



## Tele-Friend Means Being Alone Doesn't Have to Mean Being Lonely

During the bleak, dreary days of winter, especially during the current pandemic, it's nice to get a call from someone with common interests.

With public health officials recommending social distancing and self-isolation to limit the spread of the virus, there is less social interaction and more loneliness.

The Office for the Aging has a program that helps combat that loneliness – Tele-Friend. The Tele-Friend program provides regular phone contact for lonely seniors. Volunteers make calls to seniors on a regular basis – just to chat or to see how they are doing, or to compare notes on how social isolation is affecting us all.

Mary has been getting calls from a Tele-Friend volunteer since March. She enjoys their talks. They can discuss how the coronavirus has caused them both to miss out on time spent with family. Also, since both enjoy crafts, they encourage each other to try different projects they might not otherwise attempt.

Jim has also been getting calls since March. Up to now they had been connecting only once a month, but they plan on increasing that to once every two weeks. Since Jim has lost his home health aide, he feels he would like more contact with his Tele-Friend.

It's not the same as being able to get together face-to-face, but knowing there is someone out there you can connect with makes being alone just a little less lonely.

If you feel you, or someone you know, could benefit from being a Tele-Friend participant, contact Patty at the Office for the Aging, 315-697-5700.



*The Madison County Office for  
the Aging, Inc.  
(including SNACK and RSVP)  
will be closed  
Friday, December 25 for  
Christmas  
and Friday, January 1 for  
New Year's Day.*

## Call HIICAP For Medicare Help

HIICAP is here to answer your questions about Medicare.

If you are not sure which Medicare Advantage plan you switched to or you didn't check your Part D plan to see if it will cover the prescriptions you take in 2021, call Connie at 315-697-5743.

## Did You Get Your Social Security Benefit Verification Letter?

In December each year, the Social Security Administration mails out verification letters to those receiving benefits.

It is a document that comes all folded up, but turns out to be a lengthy document. The Benefit Verification Letter provides information of how much a recipient is going to receive from Social Security for the coming year, as well as Medicare premium deductions from those benefits

**Keep this document!** It is how to show proof of income from Social Security. Keep it with other important documents in a folder that can be easily found for future reference.

Your Social Security benefits will increase by 0.3% percent in 2017 because of a rise in the cost of living. You can use this letter as proof of your benefit amount if you need to apply for food, rent, or energy assistance. You can also use it to apply for bank loans or for other business. Keep this letter with your important financial records.

### How Much Will I Get And When?

• Your monthly amount (before deductions) is	<b>\$1,746.00</b>
• The amount we deduct for Medicare medical insurance is (If you did not have Medicare as of November 17, 2016, or if someone else pays your premium, we show \$0.00.)	<b>\$110.00</b>
• The amount we deduct for your Medicare prescription drug plan is (We will notify you if the amount changes in 2017. If you <b>did</b> not elect withholding as of November 1, 2016, we show \$0.00.)	<b>\$0.00</b>
• The amount we deduct for voluntary Federal tax withholding is (If you did not elect voluntary tax withholding as of November 17, 2016, we show \$0.00.)	<b>\$0.00</b>
• After we take any other deductions, you will receive on or about Jan. 3, 2017.	<b>\$1,636.00</b>

If you disagree with any of these amounts, you must write to us within 60 days from the date you receive this letter. We would be happy to review the amounts.

If you receive a paper check and want to switch to an electronic payment, please visit the Department of the Treasury's Go Direct website at [www.godirect.org](http://www.godirect.org) online.



## Seek Volunteers for Grocery Program

Do you shop online? Have you ordered groceries through Instacart? Do you want to help other seniors who might be technologically challenged?



Madison County Office for the Aging, Inc./RSVP is looking for volunteers for a new program that will help provide older adults better access to groceries. The program will need volunteers to help process orders for those without Internet technology or knowledge. Other volunteers are needed to pick up groceries from stores and deliver them to individuals. All volunteers will be trained.

If you are interested in volunteering for this new program, contact Annette Clark, RSVP Director, at 315-697-5700 ext. 212.



**AmeriCorps  
Seniors**



## AARP Workshops Help Older People Take Advantage of New Car Safety Tech

AARP's Smart DriverTEK workshops help people over 50 learn about the safety technology they are likely to find in their new cars

Current and emerging technologies are being installed in an ever-increasing number of vehicle models. The problem? Many older drivers don't take advantage of these new safety features. Smart DriverTEK works to correct this and extend the number of years older drivers can safely stay on the road. Drivers can watch quick learning videos at <https://learn.aarp.org/driver-safety-quick-learning> or sign up for an online workshop.

"With the changes in vehicle technology over the last five years, it's critical for drivers to stay updated and informed," said Kyle Rakow, vice president and national director of AARP Driver Safety.

"Too many older consumers buy a new car fully loaded with these safety technologies ... that they don't fully understand how to operate," says Ken Ow, 64, an AARP Smart Driver instructor and CarFit event coordinator.

"Mature drivers feel overwhelmed."

Nine key safety features are important to understand:

1. Smart headlights
2. Reverse monitoring system
3. Blind spot warning systems
4. Lane-departure warning
6. Drowsy-driver alerts
7. Assistive-parking
8. Adaptive cruise control
9. Emergency-response systems



GETTY IMAGES

## OFA Recognizes Staff Service Landmarks

The Office for the Aging celebrated staff in November for their years of service and wants to share our recognition of their efforts.

Behind the scenes, Fiscal Manager, **Sandy Peck** was honored for 20 years of service providing her expertise at managing the many budgets that drive the programs and services assisting us to stay a viable agency in the community.

The Nutrition Program celebrated its director, **Lisa DeHimer** who has led the program for 15 years, providing the older adults in Madison County a nutritionally balanced meal and education to support their independence.

**Bob White** was honored for driving the hills of Madison county for 15 years reaching many of our rural clients with meals.

And **Paul Catello** has delivered meals around the county for 10 years now, currently serving home delivered meal recipients along the Route 5 corridor.

Thank you for all your years of service!



### Struggling With Heating Costs? Maybe HEAP Can Help

The HEAP program provides eligible people with financial help to pay heating bills. The OFA can assist with the application process.

#### 2020-2021 Income Limits:

<u>Max Monthly Income</u>	<u>Household Size</u>
\$2,610	1
3,413	2
4,216	3

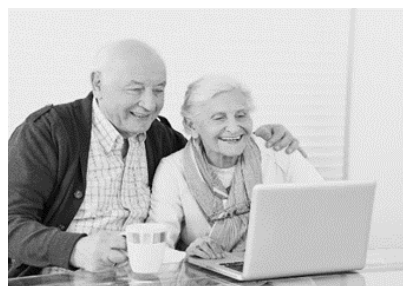
## Using Technology to Stay Connected for the Holidays

*By Colleen Russ, Aging Services Aide*

Seniors in a digital world can be easily overwhelmed by all the new technology surrounding them, but learning to use them can make life easier and keep everyone connected, especially during the holidays.

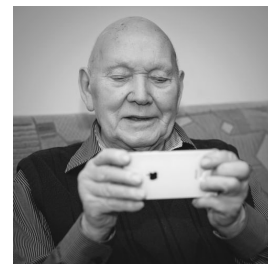
Smartphones, social media, tablets, banking machines, and laptops – there is no avoiding them, but it's not impossible to learn how to use them to keep connected.

Across the age spectrum from seniors 65 to over 80, the younger segment is more likely to have internet; 82 percent of seniors 65 to 69 have internet, while only 44 percent of those over 80 have internet in their home. For seniors who do use the internet, 71 percent are going online daily.



During this pandemic internet use is important. Those with smartphones can use a video application ("app") like Facetime, Skype, or Google Hangouts to see (mask-less!) loved ones as well as hear them. Seniors can also use a computer with a camera to Zoom, Skype or Facebook video chat. Those who need help setting up these devices and apps can ask a neighbor or a loved one to help. (Just make sure to social distance.) YouTube can walk those that have some tech savvy step by step through how to set these devices up.

Seniors may not be able to visit with family and friends in person this holiday season, but they can still see those smiling faces and hear those voices, maybe even cook a favorite dish together over video chat!



## Weatherization Programs Help Keep Homes Comfortable

Weatherization programs are available all year long but few think about staying warm (or cool) until the season is upon us. If you would like to reduce your energy bills and make your home more comfortable, there are programs that may help.

Stoneleigh Housing Inc. in Canastota is accepting names for the Weatherization Program which can help lower energy costs to eligible homeowners/renters. Applications must meet federal established income guidelines. Your questions can be answered by calling Stoneleigh Housing at 315-697-3737.

The Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP), offered through NYSEERDA and in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County, can help. From now until the end of the year, NYSEERDA is offering increased incentives that may qualify income eligible households for up to \$10,000 in home weatherization. Call or email the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) office for more information or to see what program you qualify for.

There is also the Assisted Home Performance with Energy Star program. The eligibility guidelines have been updated until the end of the year allowing for matching funds and, if needed, a low interest loan. Madison County CCE contact is Judy Parker; email [jwp39@cornell.edu](mailto:jwp39@cornell.edu) or call 315-684-3001 x114.

## ***PIES FOR SALE***

*to benefit OFA programs & services for older adults.*

**10" frozen pies - \$8.00 each**

Apple, Cherry, Lemon, Peach, Red Raspberry, Pumpkin, Banana Cream, Boston Cream, Chocolate Cream, and Coconut Cream.

We also offer

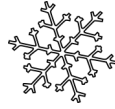
No Sugar added Cherry and Apple pies.

Call 315-697-5700



## **Weather Emergencies & SNACK Deliveries**

Occasionally, the Senior Nutrition Program (SNACK) is unable to provide meals due to the inclement weather. When this happens, there will be announcements made on the following television stations:



**WSTM (NBC) channel 3  
WTVH (CBS) channel 5**



The OFA Nutrition Program has a 5-meal Shelf Stable Food Box that they are delivering to seniors throughout the county. Please hold onto this box in case of an emergency. Any contribution for this delivery is greatly appreciated.

You can call the Office for the Aging at 315-697-5700 for more information.

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138 Dominic Bruno Blvd.  
Canastota, NY 13032

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## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**

Clip and mail your contribution to Madison County Office for the Aging, Inc  
138 Dominic Bruno Blvd, Canastota, NY 13032



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

I wish my contribution to be used for:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use Where Most Needed | <input type="checkbox"/> SNACK Program               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In Home Services      | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Assistance            | <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver Resources    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respite Program       | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Insurance Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> RSVP Volunteer Program |

Funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging under Title III of the Older Americans Act,  
New York State Office for the Aging, Madison County Board of Supervisors, and local contributions