

Your Newsletter  
*Growing Older*  
in *Rhinebeck*

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**January 1st 2009:** This Newsletter is published by the *Town of Rhinebeck Committee on Aging* to report on functions of interest to Seniors and to spread the word about activities during the upcoming months that are of interest or in support of Seniors in Rhinebeck. The Newsletter is viewable and maintained on the Town of Rhinebeck website [www.Rhinebeck-ny.gov](http://www.Rhinebeck-ny.gov). Printed copies are distributed in town where Rhinebeck Seniors might visit. We would appreciate feedback from you regarding your experience of these activities and if you know of other things going on in town that we should include in the Newsletter. From time to time, your editor discovers egregious errors: if you spot any, please let us know. You can send comments or items for the newsletter to the newsletter editor at 845-876-2683 or email [caroleleib@mindspring.com](mailto:caroleleib@mindspring.com).

## **Games, Games, Games!**

If you enjoy games, a new venue is available on Tuesday afternoons. Beginning Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1-3PM, at the Rhinebeck Town Hall, the gray days of winter can be brightened by joining other Seniors for a weekly afternoon of playing games: Mah Jong, Bridge, Mexican Train dominoes, or any other game you have in mind. Bring your games to share with others. For more information, call Joanne Gelb at 845-876-8799. This is a welcome addition to the games already available on Wednesdays at the Starr Library, where you can join in the Brain Games or test your skill at Scrabble with other Seniors. For the 'serious' bridge players, there is also a weekly duplicate bridge game on Tuesday mornings at 10AM in the Church of the Messiah community building.

Wouldn't it be nice if we had a Senior Center where we could 'drop in' or meet friends to socialize or play games all week long?

## **Local Author Book-Signing Party**

On Saturday, 1/10/09, 4-5:30PM, at the newly opened *Rhinecliff* hotel, Margaret De Wys will be available to sign copies of her new book, which will be on sale at a special event hosted by the Morton Memorial library and Rhinebeck's Oblong Books and Music store. The book - *BLACK SMOKE: A Woman's Journey of Healing, Wild Love, and Transformation in the Amazon* (Sterling Publishing) - is an inspirational true story of one woman's struggle with breast cancer and her courageous journey of healing, adventure, romance, and self discovery. Margaret De Wys shares her physical and emotional transformation as she discovers a different perception of wellness and wholeness in the depths of the Amazon. What emerges is a revealing chronicle of discovery, as well as a trenchant exploration of the limits of idealism.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Morton library. There will be a cash bar in the hotel's banquet room. For more information about the event, please call the library at 845-876-2903, or Oblong Books and Music at 845-876-0500. To contact the author, please go to [www.blacksmokethebook.com](http://www.blacksmokethebook.com).

### **Golden Age Singers Concert**

On Wednesday, 1/7/09, noon, at the *First Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Mill & Catharine Streets, Poughkeepsie, the Golden Age Singers will perform as part of the church's *Lunch N Listen free Concert Series*. At 12:45PM, light refreshments will be served. For more information, call 845-452-6050.

### **Health-Related Activities**

**Day Care** -- *Ferncliff*, on River Rd., has an active, participatory adult day care program, M-F, 8AM-4PM. The program, open to people with referrals from doctors, includes interesting recreational activities, meals and snacks during the day, physical/occupational therapy, medicinal and dietary supervision, transportation, podiatry, and lots more. For more information, call the Director, Regina Pasco, at 845-876-2011, x3248.

**Ginkgo Biloba Study**: The dietary supplement Ginkgo Biloba was found to be ineffective in reducing the development of dementia and Alzheimer's disease in older people, according to a study published in the "Journal of the American Medical Association". Researchers conducted the trial known as the Ginkgo Evaluation of Memory (GEM) study at 4 clinical sites for 8 years. It is the largest clinical trial ever to evaluate ginkgo's effect on the occurrence of dementia. This research was co-funded by five components of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Richard Hodes, of the NIA stated "It is disappointing that the dietary supplement tested in this study had no effect in preventing Alzheimer's disease."

**In-Home Services**: *Hudson Valley Home Care* provides an extensive range of in-home services to Seniors, including: total nursing care, skilled intermittent care, home infusion therapies, congestive heart failure management, wound care, and diabetic care. They also offer a Care Connections program for Seniors who need some assistance with the activities of daily living. Call 845-471-4243 for more information.

**Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)**: Wearing an *Emergency Medical Alert System* provides us with the ability to live active, independent lives without this concern. The PERS unit always keeps us connected to Fire, Police, and Medical emergency services. PERS consists of a voice-activated emergency alert unit.

<b>Local Suppliers</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>initial fee</b>	<b>monthly fee</b>
Kingston Hospital/Lifeline	845-334-2747	\$75.	\$41.
Lifefone	(800) 882-2280 x365	\$49.	\$21.
Response Ability	(800) 685-5252	none	\$23.
St. Francis/House Watch	845-483-5528	none	\$36.

**Weight-Lifting (Senior Exercise)** – Pump iron at the Rhinebeck American Legion, 10-11AM, Tues&Thurs. This activity is run by the DC Office for the Aging, and costs \$10/month to participate. Call 845-486-2555 for information and to register. Exercise classes are also available at Wells Manor in Rhinebeck, 10:30AM, Tues&Fri, also sponsored by the DC Office for the Aging.

The **Wellness Center at Northern Dutchess Hospital** in Rhinebeck, has an extensive program for fitness and wellbeing and is open M-Th, 6AM-8PM; F, 6AM-6PM; and S, 7AM-2PM. Their program includes various classes (stretch, pilates, Tai Chi) and specialized programs for osteoporosis and weight management. For more information, call 845-871-4300 or visit their website: [www.northerndutchesshospital.org](http://www.northerndutchesshospital.org).

**Winter Weather Warning :** The American Heart Association has launched an educational campaign aimed at people with existing heart disease or stroke, and those who may be at high risk. The stresses of the season may pose extra concern. According to the Heart Association, deaths from coronary artery disease tend to rise rapidly right after Thanksgiving, continuing through Christmas, and peaking around New Year's Day. "Several factors may influence this unfortunate trend, from an increase in respiratory infections during the winter, to increased workload on the heart from activities such as shoveling of heavy snow," said Dr. Ethan L. Gundek, cardiologist with the Hudson Valley Heart Center, "The American Heart Association recommends the following tips to help prevent sudden cardiac arrest:

- **Avoid sudden cold weather exertion.** Snowstorms present particular challenges for everyone, primarily because getting rid of the snow usually means sudden exertion in cold weather. Snow shoveling is not healthy if you are normally sedentary, in poor physical condition, or have risk factors that make snow shoveling inadvisable for your health. Even walking through heavy, wet snow or snowdrifts can strain a person's heart.
- **Recognize the symptoms of hypothermia.** Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below normal. It occurs when your body can't produce enough energy to keep the internal body temperature warm enough. It can kill you. Heart failure causes most deaths in hypothermia. Symptoms include lack of coordination, mental confusion, slowed reactions, shivering and sleepiness.
- **Stay Warm.** People with coronary heart disease often suffer chest pain or discomfort called angina pectoris when they're in cold weather. Besides cold temperatures, high winds, snow and rain also can steal body heat. Wind is especially dangerous, because it removes the layer of heated air from around your body. Similarly, dampness causes the body to lose heat faster than it would at the same temperature in drier conditions. To keep warm, wear layers of clothing. Also, wear a hat or headscarf. Ears are especially prone to frostbite. Keep your hands and feet warm, too, as they tend to lose heat rapidly.
- **Avoid alcohol before heading outdoors.** Alcohol gives an initial feeling of warmth, but this is caused by expanding blood vessels in the skin. Heat is then drawn away from the body's vital organs. Alcohol consumption and physical activity in harsh winter weather conditions can increase the likelihood of hypothermia.
- **Learn CPR.** Learn CPR. The American Heart Association conducts courses convenient to everyone. To access a course listing, log on to the AHA's web site at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org).

## Heating Help

**Need Help to Pay for Heating (and other) Costs?** There are many possibilities for financial assistance for Seniors:

Economic stimulus payment	Medicare savings Programs
Help for Medicare Prescription Drugs	EPIC
SSI	Food stamps
Telephone Lifeline	Earned income tax credits
STAR	Real property tax credit
Veteran's property tax exemptions	IT-214 NY State income tax refund program
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	Weatherization Referral and Pkg (WRAP)
EmPower	Assisted Home Performance w/Energy Star
Access to home	

For information about any of these programs, contact the DCOA at 485-486-2555 or [www.dutchessny.gov/countygov/departments/aging/agindex.htm](http://www.dutchessny.gov/countygov/departments/aging/agindex.htm).

**HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program):** is a federally funded program intended to assist low-income households in meeting their energy expenses. HEAP is administered locally by the DCSS under the supervision of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). A seasonal program, HEAP usually opens in November and closes in the spring (May). Generally, all HEAP benefits are paid directly to the vendor. The HEAP Regular Benefit is an annual supplement to assist households in paying a portion of their energy costs. Eligible households receive one benefit per year. The HEAP Emergency Benefits are available to assist eligible low-income households in meeting an energy crisis as defined by HEAP. The Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement component opens October 1 each year and continues through the following September for HEAP-eligible client-owned furnaces and oil tanks. Households must meet eligibility income limits and all requested verification must be provided to the agency prior to benefits being granted. DCSS contracts with the Office for the Aging (OFA) as an alternate HEAP certifier for outreach to the elderly. For information, visit the state's HEAP website at <http://www.otda.state.ny.us/main/heap/#regular>. Seniors may call 845-486-2553 for more information.

## Libraries

In the **Starr Library**, you can *surf the internet*, join the *scrabble game* or *brain games* (Wed), do *genealogical research* (Tues&Thurs), get *Medicare counseling* (Mon), go to the annual *book sale and art show*, or join the *Starr Library Book Club*. For information about events at the library, call 845-876-4030 or go to [www.starrlibrary.org](http://www.starrlibrary.org).

**Morton Library:** the new handicapped ramp is now available and the renovation of the Recreation Center and adjacent handicapped restroom are underway. The Morton Library has a *fiction writers' group* (alt.Sat) and the *Morton Advanced Novel Group* (2<sup>nd</sup> Wed). They are also a venue for *concerts, plays, poetry readings, & art shows* and have begun a monthly *cookie swap day*. For more information about library events, call 845-876-2903 or go to <http://morton.rhinecliff.lib.ny.us>. To get on the Morton Library email list, go to [mortonmemlibrary@hvc.rr.com](mailto:mortonmemlibrary@hvc.rr.com).

## **Music, Arts, Crafts, and Education**

**Bard College** provides events and concerts (fee and free) throughout the year. Call 845-758-7412, email [pr@bard.edu](mailto:pr@bard.edu), or go to <http://www.bard.edu/nws/calendar/> to find out what's happening.

**CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art**: The CCS Galleries and Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College are open Wed.-Sun., 1-5PM. Free. Full descriptions of the exhibitions can be found at [www.bard.edu/ccs](http://www.bard.edu/ccs).

**Embroidery**: The *Starr Stitchers Needlework Group* meets at the Starr Library the 2<sup>n</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 10AM. All are welcome.

**Knitting**: The *Shepherd's Knitters* meets 7-9PM, Wednesdays, at the Brogan Center, Church of the Good Shepherd. For information, call 845-876-1044 or 845-876-5940.

**TV Conversion**: Residents of licensed nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, assisted living facilities and households that use a post office box for mail delivery will be eligible to request coupons from the TV Converter Box Coupon Program. The rule change takes effect 30 days after publication in the Federal Register. Allowing nursing home residents and households who rely on a post office box for their mail to request coupons helps those most in need to make the switch to digital television. For more information, go to [http://www.commerce.gov/NewsRoom/TopNews/PROD01\\_007228](http://www.commerce.gov/NewsRoom/TopNews/PROD01_007228). For more information about the DTV Coupon Program, visit [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov) and for questions about the DTV transition, go to [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov) or call 1-888-225-5322.

## **Transportation for the Disabled**

The **ND Caregiver's Coalition** gives rides to medical appointments and shopping for those unable to drive themselves. To schedule a ride, call 845-486-2555.

**Paratransit service** is also available to those with physical or mental disabilities who cannot use regular bus service. Those who meet the requirements are eligible to schedule next day service for trips that start and end within 3/4-mile of an existing DC LOOP bus route. The trip days and times must coincide with existing fixed route schedules. So, for Seniors who are disabled and live several blocks from a bus route, this service could be quite beneficial, as the vehicle would travel to their homes. For more information about the Paratransit service, including an application and reservations, call 845-473-0171 (select '0', ask to speak with someone in Operations, and state that you are looking for "ADA Complementary Paratransit Service.")

## **Volunteering Opportunities**

**Drivers needed for meal delivery**: The DCOA is looking for new volunteers to supplement the Dutchess County Home Delivered Meals program. Volunteer drivers deliver over 300 nutritious meals each weekday just before the noontime hour. Drivers usually volunteer one day a week for one hour or less, to deliver from one of the Senior

Friendship Centers located throughout the county. Drivers use their own vehicle, but can be reimbursed for mileage. In addition to providing clients with a hot, nutritious, midday meal, the program also facilitates much needed socialization for homebound seniors. In some cases, the volunteer driver may be the only contact a senior has each day. If you are interested in volunteering as a driver, call the DCOA at 845-486-2555 or email [ofa@co.dutchess.ny.us](mailto:ofa@co.dutchess.ny.us).

**The Northern Dutchess Caregivers Coalition (NDCC)** is a not-for-profit, all volunteer organization that started in our northern Dutchess communities 15 years ago through the collaboration of staff from ND Hospital and congregational representatives from Rhinebeck, Red Hook, and Hyde Park. Volunteers provide transportation to medical appointments and shopping for those unable to drive themselves. Many of the recipients of service are older adults who live in the Town of Rhinebeck. Volunteers typically provide as few as one trip a week or even one trip in two weeks. NDCC wants to expand the number of residents they serve and the distances they drive. They'd also like to serve a wider range of transportation needs and offer more volunteer visiting, shopping assistance, and other services. They currently place a priority on medical appointments. Any expansion of services will require more volunteer drivers. If you are interested in volunteering as a driver, leave a message with the NDCC (845-876-5683) voice-mail.

**Ombudsman Program is Looking for Volunteers:** The Hudson Valley Ombudsman Program is seeking bright, motivated people who would like to make a difference to residents in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. If you have a few hours each week to volunteer, you can become an Ombudsman and play a crucial role in resolving conflicts and maintaining a high quality of life and care for residents of long-term care. The Hudson Valley Ombudsman program offers free training and ongoing support in exchange for your good will and life skill. A new training session is beginning in October. For more information and to apply, contact Anne Salamone at 845-452-5600, x104.