

THE BUZZ

ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

DECEMBER 2024



It is the mission of the Ulster County Office for the Aging to assist and empower older adults and their families to live as independently as possible, with dignity and purpose.

Ulster County will strive to reach more older adults and expand upon its current services by bringing them to remote and underserved areas of the County.

This includes new educational health promotion, service enrollment and Senior advocacy program opportunities so they can stay in, and contribute to, their community.

Are you 60 years old or older and...

...Need a ride for a medical appointment?

...Would benefit from a nutritious home-delivered meal?

...Need help with legal matters or Medicare questions?

Programs and Services:

- Home-Delivered Meals and Community Café's
 - Legal Services
 - HIICAP Medicare Counselling
 - Home Care Services
 - Transportation for non-emergency Medical appointments via Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) or Neighbor to Neighbor
 - Medical Alert
 - Housing Information
 - Caregiver Support Group and Warm Calls
 - Tai Chi, Mall-Walk, and other Exercise Programs
 - Nutrition Counseling by Registered Dietitian
 - Information and Assistance/NY Connects
- Trained staff are available 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., in person or by phone, to answer questions about available community resources, benefits and entitlements. Call 845-340-3456 for more information.



1003 DEVELOPMENT COURT, KINGSTON, NY 12401 | 845-340-3456 | ULSTERCOUNTYNY.GOV/AGING

Kingston Lighthouse, Courtesy of Keith Perry, Courtesy of Ulster County Tourism

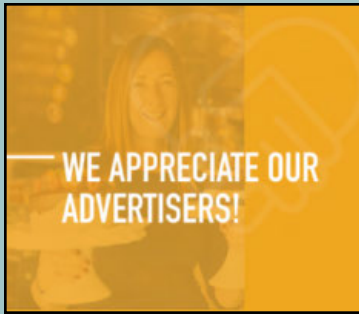


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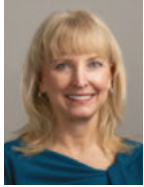
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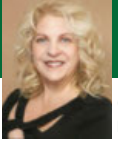
UCOFA DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Dear Ulster County Older Adults!
 December is upon us, which comes with the winter solstice, and the promise of days getting longer again! We have a few things going on during December months, namely our Holiday Sing-A-Long with Holiday Craft and Tea on December 20; and our December movie, The Shop Around the Corner, for some Holiday cheer!
 We do carry on all year with our regular activities, including the Community Cafés, the exercise classes at the Hub and elsewhere, Chess Class, Craft Corners, SSIP Kingston meetings in the Hub, some special events, weekly tech classes, plus the Caregiver Respite program, all of which will continue throughout the winter.
 HEAP began November 1, so please call the office if you think you might be eligible (it is income dependent – see bottom of pg. 11) which may help you pay for fuel bills, and perhaps even some maintenance for an inefficient heating system. We have some community partners who can also help with weatherization issues as well. Just call our office and ask for NYConnects, and they can assist you.
 This month’s energy tip: Use advanced power strips to reduce energy consumption by automatically turning power off when your home energy products are not being used. Advanced power strips are a great way to save time, effort, and money in the form of lower utility bills. Turn your television off when no one is watching or set up a sleep timer. A TV left on for eight hours a day, or while you sleep, can cost you \$41 to \$102 per year.
 Again, a reminder to those who want to learn more about their smart devices: our Senior Technology Support classes are held every Thursday at 9:30-11:30 in our Senior Hub – our instructors are well-learned folks with devices and tech, and you can learn a lot, or just one things that’s been a problem for you.
 Happy Holidays and a Safe NY to all!
 Susan Koppenhaver, Director,
 Ulster County Office for the Aging

Ulster County Office for the Aging Senior Technology Support Classes
 Senior Technology Support Classes will be held at the Ulster County Senior Hub in Kingston on Thursday mornings from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM. Next classes:
December 5: Creating a Photo Calendar for 2025, and Q&A (Lisa McCormack).
December 12: Basics of Computer Layout, Operation, Using External Drives, and Q&A (Herb Sawtell).
December 19: Apple iPad Review & New Features in OS 18.1, and Q&A (John Dowley).
 Classes are limited to 15 people. Please call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456 to register. If you have registered for a class but find you are unable to attend, please call as soon as possible so we can contact a person on the waitlist.

WINTER WEATHER POLICY FOR UCOFA ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

All OFA & Senior Hub activities and events will be **Cancelled (except Community Cafés)** if the Kingston City School District cancels school.
 All OFA & Senior Hub Morning activities and events will be **Cancelled (except Community Cafés)** if the Kingston City School District has a two (2) hour delay.
 Cancellations of the Community Cafés will be determined by Gateway Hudson Valley – please check radio or call UCOFA at 845-340-3456.
If the County declares a STATE OF EMERGENCY – OFA Offices and Senior Hub will be closed.
 Any questions please call Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.



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COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT
Involvement, support, and connection are the heart of our community. Join us for our monthly meeting on October 15th.

SECTION HEADING
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CLASSES

MALL WALK WITH THE UCOFA

HUDSON VALLEY MALL
1300 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY.
Every Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. sharp!

**We meet by the Food Court at 9:45 A.M.
All are welcome!**

If Kingston City School District is on delay or closed, the mall walk is cancelled.

**All classes below are held at the
Ulster County Senior Hub,
5 Development Court, Kingston, NY
Call the Ulster County Office for the Aging to
register at 845-340-3456.**

UCOFA Weekly Game Day
Wednesdays, 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

UCOFA Free Chess Classes
Mondays at 11:00 A.M.

If a County Holiday falls on a Monday, Chess Class will meet on Friday at 11:00 A.M. of that week.

UCOFA Craft Corner

Join Ulster County Office for the Aging for Creative Fun!
Each month a new craft. 3rd Friday of the month.
10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

UCOFA Gentle Chair Yoga
Mondays, 9:30 to 10:30 A.M.
Shoes must be worn.

**UCOFA Fitness and Fun for All
Bands, Balls, Light Weights, and Light Cardio**
Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 A.M.
Shoes must be worn.

MEDICARE

MEDICARE ANNUAL OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

The Annual Open Enrollment Period to change your Medicare health or prescription drug coverage for 2025 will begin on October 15. The Open Enrollment Period will be from October 15 to December 7, 2024.

During this six week open enrollment period, you can:

- Change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Change from Medicare Advantage to Original Medicare
- Switch Medicare Advantage Plans
- Join, switch, or drop a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan

If you would like to make a change to your Medicare coverage and need assistance or information, please contact the Ulster County Office for the Aging for a free HIICAP appointment at 845-340-3456 or toll-free at 1-877-914-3456.

It is important for Seniors to note that if you are happy with how you are currently receiving Medicare coverage, there is no need to do anything. Your current coverage will be the same in 2025 if you make no changes.

Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney

The Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney can provide counseling and referrals for:

- Estate & Long Term Care Planning
- Government Benefits, including Medicaid
- Consumer Issues
- Housing
- Elder Abuse

The Ulster County Office for the Aging Attorney can also prepare the following documents:

- Simple Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Health Care Proxies
- Living Wills

To make an appointment call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.

The attorney does not go to court on any matter. If immediate assistance is needed, a prospective client may want to contact Legal Services of the Hudson Valley at 845-331-9373.



**Holiday Harmony Sing-a-long
and Holiday Craft**

December 20, 2024
1:00 to 3:00 P.M.



Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court, Kingston, NY.

Refreshments will be served along with
Holiday craft, music, and cheer.

Free to Ulster County Seniors ages 60 and over.

Space is limited. R.S.V.P. by December 13, 2024 by calling the
Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.

If Kingston City School District is closed, this event will be cancelled and
will not be rescheduled.

Chair Zumba

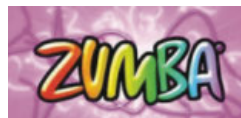
In partnership with MVP and NYConnects.

Dance fitness workout with seated movement to help balance
and coordination.

Wednesdays, November 7, 2024 to June 2025, from 2:00 to 3:00 P.M.

Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court, Kingston, NY.

Space is limited. Call the Ulster County Office for the Aging to register at
845-340-3456.



The Shop Around the Corner (1940) on
December 10, 2024, at the Rosendale Theatre,
408 Main Street, Rosendale, NY. Movie starts at
1:00 P.M. Free to Ulster County Seniors age 60
and over. Call the Office for the Aging to
R.S.V.P. by December 5, 2024 at 845-340-3456.



Winter Driving Tips for Seniors

Winter is an especially important time to be vigilant when driving because road conditions and weather may not be optimal. "Winterize" your car before the bad weather hits! This means having the antifreeze, tires, and windshield wipers checked and changed if necessary. Remember your cell phone when you drive in bad weather, and always let someone know where you are going and when you should be expected back.

Avoid driving on icy roads, and be especially careful driving on overpasses or bridges. Consider alternate routes, even if it means driving a longer distance, if the more direct route is less safe. Often bigger roads are cleared of snow better than smaller roads.

Stock your car with basic emergency supplies such as:

- First aid kit
- Blankets
- Extra warm clothes
- Booster cables
- Windshield scraper
- Shovel
- Rock salt or a bag of sand or cat litter (in case your wheels get stuck)
- Water and dried food or canned food (with can opener!)
- Flashlight
- Map (if traveling in new areas)



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December 2024 Community Café & Home Delivered Meals Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Chicken Marsala Buttered Noodles Brussel Sprouts WW Bread Pineapple Tidbits	3 Breaded Fish Filet White Rice Corn & Black Beans Rye Bread Mixed Fruit cup	4 Roast Turkey w/Gravy Mashed Cinnamon Sweet Potatoes Green Bean Almondine WW Dinner Roll Juice Vanilla Pudding	5 Chicken Tarragon Brown Rice Broccoli WW Dinner Roll Applesauce	6 Lazy Man's Stuffed Peppers WW Biscuit Creamy Broccoli Soup Mixed Fruit Cup
9 Chili Baked Potato Cauliflower Multigrain Tortillas Salsa Peach cup	10 Pineapple Chicken Stir Fry White Rice WW Bread Pineapple Tidbits	11 Stuffed Shells Marinara Spinach WW Breadstick Pear Cup	12 Salisbury Steak w/LS Gravy Mashed Potatoes Green Bean Mushroom and Carrot Blend Rye Bread Peach Cup	13 Veggie Cheese Bake Hash Brown Patty Broccoli Butternut Apple Soup WW Biscuit Mixed Fruit Cup
16 Lasagna Rollete w/LS Marinara and Mozzarella Winter Vegetable Blend WW Breadstick Mandarin Orange	17 Meatloaf w/LS Gravy Mashed Potatoes Green Beans and Mushrooms WW Bread Mixed Fruit Cup	18 Lemon Rosemary Chicken Confetti Rice Dill Carrots Rye Bread Juice Baklava	19 Omelet Meal w/Spinach French Toast Sticks WW Biscuit Tropical Fruit Cup	20 Pot Roast w/LS Gravy Baked Potato Peas and Pearl Onions WW Dinner Roll Carrot Salad Pear Cup
23 Fish Filet Herbed Couscous Zucchini and Tomatoes WW Bread Peach cup	Christmas 24 Eve Swedish Meatballs Buttered Egg Noodles Meadow Blend Vegetables WW Bread Mixed Fruit cup	*CLOSED 25 Christmas Christmas Day Garlic Butter Pork Mac and Cheese Brussel Sprouts WW Dinner Roll Juice Peppermint Bark Brownie	26 Spaghetti w/LS Meat Sause Italian Vegetable Blend Juice WW Donut	27 Mexican Casserole Brown Rice Multigrain Tortilla Chips Salsa Tropical Fruit cup
30 Ravioli w/LS Cream Sauce Italian Peas WW Bread Juice Cannoli Cream and WW Cannoli Chips	31 Sweet and Sour Diced Chicken Brown rice Oriental Blend Vegetables Rye Bread Mandarin Orange cup	Meals Prepared by Gateway Hudson Valley Milk is provided WW = Whole Wheat Menu Subject to Change	Community Café Information and Reservations call: 845-331-2180 For information or Home Delivered Meal Cancellation call: 845-331-2496	* Sites closed and No HDM deliveries



COMMUNITY CAFÉS

Do you know that Ulster County and the Office for the Aging sponsor multiple meal sites around the County so that Seniors, age 60 and over, can have a free meal?

Come and enjoy good food and socialization! See below for locations and days of the week.

UCOFA Community Café locations:

Ellenville: Trudy Farber Building, 50 Center Street, Ellenville, NY, Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:30.

Kingston: Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court, Kingston, NY, Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00.

New Paltz: New Paltz Community Center, 3 Veterans Drive, New Paltz, NY, Thursdays, 12:00.

Rosendale: Rosendale Recreation Center, 1055 Route 32, Rosendale, NY, Fridays, 11:30.

Saugerties: Frank D. Greco Senior Center, 207 Market Street, Saugerties, NY, Tuesdays, 11:30.

Woodstock: Mescal Hornbeck Community Center, 56 Rock City Road, Woodstock, NY, Thursdays, 12:30.

Want to try it out? Call Gateway Hudson Valley at 845-331-2180 for more information.

Reservations for registered participants must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Please remember, this is for Ulster County Seniors age 60 and over.

The recommended voluntary contribution for a Community Café meal is \$3.00 per meal but not mandated. All contributions are voluntary and confidential. No one will be denied a meal if they do not contribute. Meals made possible by funds provided by Ulster County Government, NYSOFA, UCOFA and Private funds. Your contributions help keep Senior programs available. Thank you.



HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Home delivered meals can help Seniors stay independent in their own homes. Are you or someone you know, unable to take care of meal preparation?

The Ulster County Office for Aging Home Delivered Meal Program provides a weeks-worth of nutritious frozen meals delivered once a week to Seniors at NO cost.

The meals served are planned by a registered dietitian and each meal provides one-third of a Senior's daily nutritional needs.

Qualified Seniors must be:

- 60 years or age or older
- Ulster County resident with no other supports
- Unable to prepare meals
- Homebound due to incapacity or illness

Voluntary contributions are appreciated. Contributions are confidential and no one will be denied a meal if they do not contribute. The recommended voluntary contribution is \$3.00 per meal. If monthly income is higher than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$2,248 for a 1 person household and \$3,040 for a 2 person household), Seniors are offered the opportunity to contribute the full cost of the meal which is \$ 11.04. Checks payable to Ulster County.

For more information, please call Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456. For home delivered meal cancellation call 845-331-2496.

The Office for the Aging gratefully accepts voluntary contributions. Your contributions help keep Senior programs available. Thank you. This program is made possible by funding from Federal, State, County and/or local contributions.



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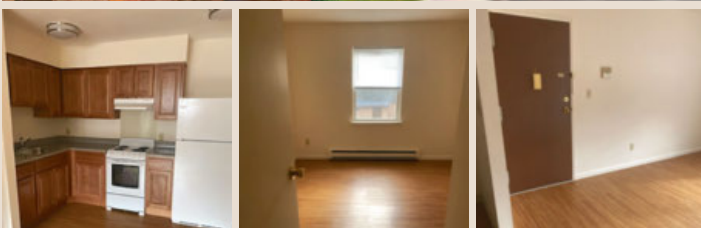
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06-5324

Fun and Engaging Indoor Winter Activities for Seniors

The winter months can be a challenging time for many elderly individuals. Shorter days and colder weather often mean more time spent indoors, leading to boredom, isolation, and depression. Learning something new is a great wintertime adventure and there are plenty of ways to stay engaged and active indoors. Take a look at these fun indoor activities so you can stay engaged during the winter months.

- **Painting or Drawing:** You can use inspiration from anywhere to paint or draw whatever you want. And remember when it comes to art, there are no mistakes.
- **Knitting and Crocheting:** Grab your knitting needles, crochet hooks, yarn. You can make blankets, clothes, accents for side tables – all while making new friends and sharing stories with those around you.
- **Scrapbooking:** If you have a lot of family photos, you may want to consider scrapbooking. This unique way for displaying your treasured memories allows you to add your own spin with stickers, stamps, or writing your thoughts with a colorful pen. Not only is this activity therapeutic, but you also get to reminisce about the cherished moments that have happened over the years.
- **Yoga and Tai Chi:** Yoga or chair yoga offers a way to meditate, work on mobility and flexibility, and clear your mind. Whether you're more comfortable on a yoga mat or with the support of a chair, yoga is a great way to feel fit and healthy. Just 10 minutes of stretching twice weekly can help increase seniors' ability to remain independent.
- **Games and Puzzles:** Playing games or doing puzzles with friends or family members allows you to get off your feet, relax, and focus on the game. These are great brain exercises because you're engaging your memory and using strategy skills, which can benefit your mental health.
- **Cooking and Baking:** There's nothing quite like whipping up something good in the kitchen. You may have a handful of delicious family recipes that you'd love to share with others. Do a recipe exchange with your friends and consider making a group cookbook. If you have grandchildren, make sure to pass down your favorite recipes for them to remember and enjoy.
- **Read Books:** On a cold winter day, there's nothing like a good book, a warm blanket, and curling up on the couch with a book. It is a great way to enjoy the quiet and let your imagination take off.
- **Listen to Music:** You may enjoy listening to your favorite songs as you cook, work out, or when you want to sit and relax.
- **Watch Movies:** Make some popcorn, get a drink, and sit on a comfy chair to settle in for a good story.
- **Indoor Gardening:** Gardening indoors will give you the satisfaction of gardening without having to go outdoors. You can grow an herb garden for your kitchen or houseplants from seeds. You'll bring a bit of life into your home.
- **Start Writing:** If you've always wanted to write a story or begin a journal, winter is the perfect time to begin. Maybe you've always wanted to create your own family cookbook with your family's favorite recipes or detail your family history in a journal.
- **Virtual Classes:** Whether virtual art classes, museum lectures, book club discussions, or university courses, these platforms provide valuable opportunities for continued learning without leaving the warmth of your home. Try these free online classes at: <https://www.getsetup.io/partner/nystate>.

HEAP 2024-2025 Guidelines

The 2024–2025 income guidelines for the New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) are as follows:

- Household size 1: \$3,322 maximum gross monthly income.
- Household size 2: \$4,345 maximum gross monthly income.
- Household size 3: \$5,367 maximum gross monthly income.
- Household size 4: \$6,390 maximum gross monthly income.



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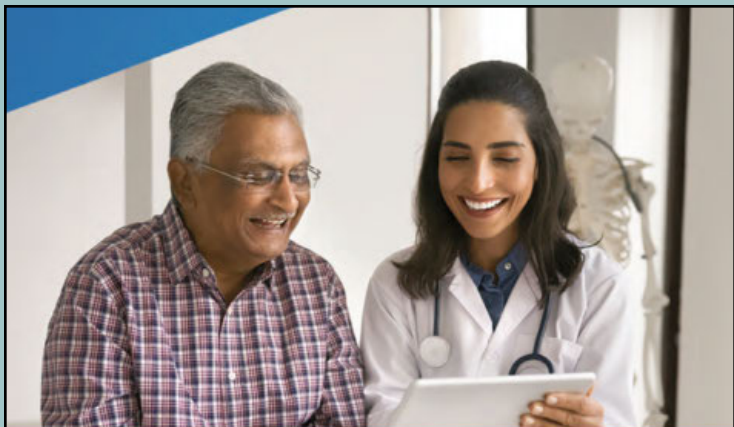
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Holiday Scams to Avoid

Spoof websites. Social media advertisers spend a lot of money around Black Friday through Christmas. While legitimate companies run the majority of these ads, there are a lot of fakes going around, too. If you see a deal that looks too good to be true, it probably is. After you click on a link for a social media ad, make sure you verify the website that you've been lead to is legit (has correct spelling and is the official website of the brand you're looking for). Non-legit websites could send you knock-off products or even no product at all.

Imposter social media accounts: Creating a social media account that mimics an already established brand is easy. Imposters will set up these accounts to try to steal your information, lead you to fake phishing websites or even try to harm your reputation. It may be hard to spot an imposter social media account because the scammer can use real logos and real images to make it look so real. Be on the lookout for accounts with few images, not many comments on posts and a short history. If the social media service you're on has a verification feature, make sure it's verified.

Empty gift cards: If someone, anyone, asks you to buy a gift card and send them the numbers on the back so they can provide you a service, it's a scam! Some of the most common unsolicited messages you'll get come from people claiming to be from the government, from Apple or Google tech support and from phony agencies claiming you won a prize.

Marketplace scams: Facebook Marketplace is the wild west of doing business. It's hard to tell if you're dealing with someone trustworthy or with a scammer. Scams can happen if you're a buyer or a seller.

Facebook has a list of what to look out for when doing business on Marketplace. For your physical safety, make sure to always meet a buyer or seller in a public space.

Fake charities: It's the season of giving. If you're feeling charitable, make sure that you're donating to reputable organizations. Fake charity scams tend to pop up more toward the end of the year. According to the Federal Trade Commission, they often pressure you to donate right away, asking for cash, gift cards, cryptocurrency or wire transfers. Scammers often refuse to send you information about the charity. They won't answer questions or explain how the money will be used.

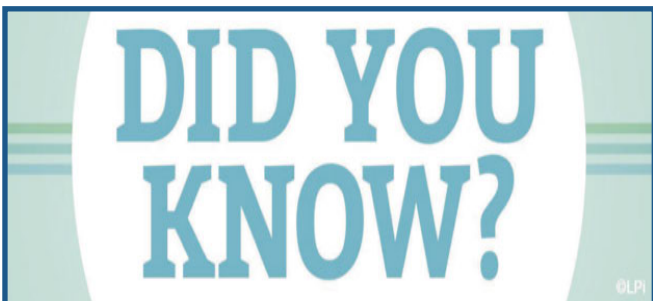
Package and delivery scams: Refresh. Refresh. Refresh. You need your packages in time for Christmas or the big holiday party. Many scammers will prey on these emotions by sending fake texts with fake links that lead to phishing websites that ask for your personal information. Make sure to never click on unsolicited links from packages you don't remember purchasing.

Visit the [Federal Trade Commission](https://www.ftc.gov) website for more information.



Garden tips for December

- A thick layer of straw over root crops like parsnips, carrots, leeks, and beets will protect them long enough to harvest them a little at a time well into the winter.
- Save and inventory leftover seeds from your favorite plants for next spring; store them in airtight containers and keep them in a dry place.
- Clear turf or weeds from the area right around the trunks of fruit trees and woody ornamentals before snow flies to reduce winter damage by rodents



The Bill of Rights came into effect on December 15, 1791.

Healthy Eating Tips for the Holidays

It is Holiday Time once again! It is time to share good times and good foods with friends and family. The big challenge is to have fun at special occasions without jeopardizing some of the healthy practices you have worked on throughout the year.

Here are some Helpful Hints to help you to survive the Holiday Season:

Stay Hydrated! Often, we misunderstand a feeling of Thirst as Hunger. Drink Plenty of fluids/ water throughout the day, every day to stay well hydrated. It can also help to diminish that desire to overeat.

Do not arrive hungry to the party! Skipping meals before a holiday party in an effort to save calories for the big party will only make you overeat. Eat a light meal or snack before arriving to the party. A snack or meal that is high in fiber and contains lean protein is ideal because it can help control your appetite and help you avoid overeating.

Choose the right plate. You are more likely to eat food that ends up on your plate. Thus, choosing a smaller plate will not only prevent you from filling your plate with more items than you really need, but it will also make the amount of food on your plate seem larger.

Be merry. Spread holiday cheer by spending time enjoying the company of others at the party. The more you talk, the less time you will spend eating.

Balance your meals. Aim to fill half your plate with vegetables, a quarter with lean protein, and a quarter with starch.



Bring something to the party. Offer to bring an appetizer, side, or dessert to the party. Not only will the host or hostess appreciate the help, but you'll also have control over what goes into the dish.

Fill up on vegetables and fruits. Not only do these foods have plenty of vitamins and minerals, but they also contain fiber, which helps keep you full longer and may leave less room for other high-calorie foods.

Enjoy this festive time of year!

From the desk of UCOFA Registered Dietitian: Patricia Ricks, MPA, RD, CDN. Nutrition consults are free to Ulster County Seniors 60 and over. To make a referral, call 845-340-3456.

Caregiver Support Group

Ulster County Office for the Aging (UCOFA) and the Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. (MHA) are offering a support group designed for caregivers seeking support and interaction with other caregivers. The group will also allow caregivers to learn skills, share information, and learn about available resources. Facilitated by MHA of Ulster County, Inc.

Meetings are held at:

MHA of Ulster County Inc.
300 Aaron Court, Kingston, NY
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month:
6:00 to 7:15 P.M.
In-person or via Zoom.

RCAL Conference Room
727 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY
2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month:
10:15 to 11:30 A.M.
In-person or via Zoom.

For registration or details, please call the Ulster County Office for the Aging at 845-340-3456.

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The New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program services are made possible through funding from the New York State Office for the Aging and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

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OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Susan Koppenhaver
Director

Judy Riley
Deputy Director
845-340-3456

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Counseling
845-340-3579

Neighbor-to-Neighbor
845-443-8837

DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

HEAP
845-334-5436

SNAP
845-334-5200

Medicaid
845-334-5175

Central Intake
845-334-5125

Do you know someone who might like to receive The Buzz via email? Have them call the Office for the Aging with their e-mail address.

The Ulster County Office for the Aging is always looking for ways to improve our services and resources to all Seniors across the County. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have feedback, ideas or need additional information regarding our services.



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

of Ulster County

(800) 342-9871 (845) 334-5307



NY Connects staff can help link you to long term services and supports, such as home care, transportation and meals.

Our goal is to help you live as independently as you wish to while meeting your medical, social and functional needs that arise from aging or disability.

We can help individuals, families, caregivers, and professionals.

Appointments available at the Ulster County Office for the Aging.

Call 845-340-3456 to make an appointment.

The Alzheimer's Association helpline is available 24/7 by calling (800) 272-3900.