Special Programs For Ancram Seniors

From the Columbia County Office for the Aging:

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP): If your income qualifies, you can get help paying energy bills. To learn more, and to receive an application if you haven't participated before, call 518-828-9411 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays.

Fresh produce: If you're over 60 and income eligible, you can receive a $20 booklet of coupons to use at your local farmers' market between July and September. Booklets are limited so call early: 518-828-4258.

Help pay for medications: Regardless of age but in need of financial help, you may be eligible for up $250 a month for prescriptions. Call Lynda Scheer at The Healthcare Consortium, 518-828-2273.

Beware of scams: Never give your credit card, banking, Social Security or Medicare numbers, or other personal information, over the phone unless you made the call yourself.

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Meet Bob the Kestrel: Sonny Bettley, Sharon Audubon Center, describes Bob, the kestrel who fell from his nest, was raised by humans, and never learned how to be a kestrel in the wild. He's about five years old, and at the center, he may live to well over 20.

Ancram Conservation Display Opens To Standing Room Only Crowd at Town Hall

If you missed the opening party for "Ancram Field Notes: Past, Present, and Future," stop by Ancram Town Hall to see the exhibit on Wednesday, Thursday, or Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Created by local artist Lynne Perrella, the exhibit was inspired by the Ancram Natural Resources Conservation Plan, created by the town's Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) and Hudsonia Ltd. The exhibit focuses on each of Ancram's six distinct conservation areas. A map helps you find where you live and learn more about what makes your area special.

Presentations by CAC members Jamie Purinton and Colleen Lutz focused on how to protect and create habitats and how to identify and deal with damaging invasive species. Two easy suggestions: stop mowing the lawn and create a meadow instead – and do not transport firewood due to hidden invasive pests.

Some Ancram Conservation Advisory Council members describe why they volunteer:
(Comments/photos continue next page)

Council chair Jamie Purinton notes, "It's rewarding to work with friends and neighbors who want to accomplish something good together."

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Erin Robertson: "I grew up in an area like Ancramdale, and I loved being in fields and woodlands exploring, watching and learning. Then I experienced the loss of that beauty to development. It taught me that our natural environment and all the life it supports is precious and fragile."

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David Dembo: "We have an opportunity in Ancram to avoid some of the development and other anti-environment mistakes that so many towns around us have made."

"Getting Ready for Getting Older" Workshops Offer Information and Advice for Seniors

For four Friday mornings, beginning in April, the RoeJan Library hosted two-hour workshops to help people 50 and older plan and prepare for the future. Two library trustees, Ancram resident Gerry Fultz and Rev. John Thompson, St. John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls, planned the workshops with help from Karen Frishkoff, RN, CCM, who chaired the sessions.

The library serves Ancram, Copake, and Hillsdale, where in 2015 the median age was 50, compared to U.S. median of 37. The first session focused on staying well, and getting help from health professionals and local agencies, and was led by Maura Rose, RN, FNP, owner of RoseCare Patient Advocacy and Elder Services LLP; Jackie Elder, RN, LMT; Karen Frishkoff; and Patricia McQuade, Pastoral Care Counselor.

The remaining sessions covered staying in your home or moving, and how to make wherever you live safer; documents, downsizing, and decluttering; and financial and legal issues.

Based on positive feedback, Gerry Fultz plans to bring the workshops to Ancram Town Hall this year. In the meantime, some of the tips and tactics shared appear on the facing page.

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Choral Eddie: "Through CAC, I can contribute with others in developing a biodiversity map to provide an introduction, and tool, to the understanding that we are truly connected and interdependent to all the varieties of life that exist here."

Tips For Successful Aging

If you are 65 or older today, in reasonably good health, your life expectancy is typically 84, but living here in Ancram gives you extra points due to our clean air (no emissions) and low crime rate. While genetics will play a role in your actual life expectancy, here are some tips to increase your long, active, enjoyable life:

- Get your flu shot in late October/early November right before flu season begins, not in August when the vaccines come out. Also, get the shingles vaccine.
- Just do it – you can't change your heredity, but you can improve your nutrition, diet, and physical exercise.
- Age-proof your home now – make sure you have railings and well-lit stairs, and fix anything that could cause you to fall. The older we get, the more dangerous falls can be.
- Complete a health care proxy and talk over the contents with the person you want to speak for you if you can't speak for yourself. Be specific about what care you want and don't want in different medical situations, such as life support.
- Move before you need to move. If you plan to move to be closer to family as you age, move when you're healthy and can establish a new life, new friends, and new activities.
- Check out the resources at the Columbia County Office for the Aging in Hudson at columbiacountyny.com/depts/ofa.

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Jane Miegs: "I enjoy working with committed people who are trying to help Ancram retain its abundant natural resources of clean air, clean water, diverse biodiversity and ecosystems, and a stable climate."

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Kim Tripp: "I have been dedicated to the study and conservation of nature throughout my career. I can think of no greater privilege than to put that experience to good use right here at home in Ancram with the Conservation Advisory Council at a time when this work is so incredibly important."

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Jamie Purinton: "I serve out of a deep love and appreciation for this planet's amazing plant and animal life and a belief that environmental stewardship begins in our own backyard."

Free Pool and Kids Camp!

In April, Ancram Town Board voted to make the town pool free and Ancram Kids Camp free to kids and grandkids of people who own or rent here. NonAncram residents will pay $75/week per child for camp. Jane Moore, Neighbors Helping Neighbors board member, will provide daily free lunches to all campers through a program of the Regional Food Bank of New York. Lunches are "shelf stabilized" (they won't spoil). Art Bassin plans to offset the cost of camp through grants and donations.

Neighbors Offer Grants For College Students

Ancramdale Neighbors Helping Neighbors offers higher education grants to Ancram students who will enter an accredited college, community college, or vocational school this fall.

The grant is intended to help students pay for food, clothing, books, or transportation during the first year of continuing education, and will be based on financial need.

Last year, five students received $1,000 grants each. This year, preference will go to first-year students, but all continuing college students may apply.

To apply, a student needs to be a resident of the Town of Ancram and accepted into an academic or vocational program that begins in 2016. Interested students or parents should contact Adrienne Citrin at 518-329-5042 or Jack Lindsey at 518-329-7306 to apply by July 1, 2016.

Get News Faster: To receive town information by email and save the town money, send your name, mailing address, and email address to Councilwoman Madeleine Israel at misrael@townofancram.org.

Ancram Kids Camp enjoys a day on a farm, hosted by Saida and Woody Baxt, who provided bus transportation as well as a BBQ for campers and counselors.