



# THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS

January/February 2021

Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging  
Hours of Operation: 8:30am-4:30pm Monday-Friday



Friday, January 1 & Monday, January 18  
Monday, February 15

## Free Income Tax Service

Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging and the AARP Tax-Aide Program are planning to offer free income tax service again for the tax year 2020. Experienced tax preparers will e-file your Federal and New York State income tax returns. If you have a refund coming it can be received in as little as 2-weeks via direct deposit to your bank account.

The complications and uncertainty from COVID-19 have created a situation where we cannot be sure of many of the details yet. You will be given all specifics when calling for an appointment and a complete list of what to bring. The following information highlights some of the key points you need to know if using the Tax-Aide program in 2021.

The tax preparation location will be St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 135 Hamilton Avenue, Penn Yan (not the Yates Office for the Aging as in past years). Located just up the street from Morgan's grocery. Plan to enter the church through the rear entrance. Tax preparation season will run from February 2 through April 15. To schedule an appointment call Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging at 315-536-5515. You can make an appointment, or if you get a voice mailbox, leave a message for a callback. When leaving a voice message please clearly leave your name and phone number. Appointments can be made beginning January 15, 2021. You can call Monday thru Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Use the same phone number to cancel or re-schedule appointments.

Bring your 2019 return with you. If you cannot locate last year's return you can get a replacement transcript from [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). If you did not file in 2019, and need two years returns done, make two appointments and bring your 2018 return.

When coming for a tax appointment bring all the same 2020 documents that were used in preparation of your 2019 return as well as any new sources of income or deductions. If you own a home bring your school and property tax bills paid in 2020. Required documents are photo ID for each taxpayer and Social Security cards for each taxpayer and dependent on the return.

We anticipate many changes to the program to keep clients and counselors safe such as calling from the parking lot to announce your arrival and waiting in your car for instructions. You may be required to come in twice; once to have your documents scanned so counselors can prepare returns from their homes and again to sign the paperwork and pick up a copy of your return. Facemasks will be required for all interaction with tax counselors. We need your help to streamline the process. Please open all tax document envelopes prior to your appointment and have all paperwork organized. If there are items to add up (i.e. medical expenses, car mileage, rental income, etc.) please do it yourself ahead of time and bring totals.

We appreciate your patience as we work through all these issues and are looking forward to another successful tax season!

## SUMMARY

1. Call 315.536.5515 beginning Jan 15, 2021 for tax appointments
2. New tax location: St Paul's Lutheran Church, 135 Hamilton Street in Penn Yan
3. May require 2 trips to complete. May not finish same day.
4. Bring ID, 2019 tax return, all tax papers
5. Must be flexible – COVID-19 issues

# LOCAL EVENTS

**DISCLAIMER: Due to COVID-19 any of these events may be cancelled or postponed. Pro Action Yates OFA will work closely with NYSOFA and Yates County Public Health to ensure that all appropriate safety guidelines are followed.**

**January 12 & February 9** “Our Town Rocks” Champions Meeting will be held at the Our Town Rocks Office, 12 Main Street in Dundee at 10:00 am. For more information call Caryl Sutterby at 607-426-4015, go to [www.ourtownrocks.org](http://www.ourtownrocks.org) or email [ourtownrocks@ourtownrocks.org](mailto:ourtownrocks@ourtownrocks.org). All residents of the Towns of Barrington, Starkey, and the Village of Dundee are welcome to attend.

- ◆ No January or February “Our Town Rocks” Community Gathering monthly meetings have been scheduled.

**January 26**

- ◆ Virtual opportunity to learn the basics of Medicare! Welcome to Medicare presentation by Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging from 2-4 pm, held virtually using Zoom. Please contact Ashley Beach at 315-536-5515 or [tillmana@proactioninc.org](mailto:tillmana@proactioninc.org) for more information. Registration due by Tuesday, January 19.

**January 28**

- ◆ All Yates County family caregivers are welcome to register to visit and share with others who take care of, or are concerned about loved ones with dementia or Alzheimer’s at the Alzheimer’s Association’s Virtual Support Group meeting at 8:00—9:00 am. Pre-registration is required to obtain call-in information by contacting 1-800-272-3900.

**February 23**

- ◆ Virtual opportunity to learn the basics of Medicare! Welcome to Medicare presentation by Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging from 2-4 pm, held virtually using Zoom. Please contact Ashley Beach at 315-536-5515 or [tillmana@proactioninc.org](mailto:tillmana@proactioninc.org) for more information. Registration due by Tuesday, February 16.

**February 25**

- ◆ All Yates County family caregivers are welcome to register to visit and share with others who take care of, or are concerned about loved ones with dementia or Alzheimer’s at the Alzheimer’s Association’s Virtual Support Group meeting at 8:00—9:00 am. Pre-registration is required to obtain call-in information by contacting 1-800-272-3900.

**Announcement:** Unfortunately, the HUBBA Tea for 2021 will not be held due to COVID-19 concerns. The hope is to have the event in 2022.

**Hold Harmless Provision from the Social Security Administration**

Social Security works together with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to make sure you won’t have a reduction in your Social Security benefits as a result of Medicare Part B premium increases. A special rule called the “hold harmless provision” protects your Social Security benefit payment from decreasing due to an increase in the Medicare Part B premium. The Part B base premium for 2021 is \$148.50, which is \$3.90 higher than the 2020 base premium.

Most people with Medicare will pay the new premium amount because the increase in their benefit amount will cover the increase. However, a small number of people will see little or no increase in their Part B premium - and their Social Security benefit checks will remain the same - because the amount of their cost-of-living adjustment isn’t large enough to cover the increase.

To qualify for the hold harmless provision, you must:

- Receive Social Security benefits or be entitled to Social Security benefits for November and December of the current year.
- Have your Medicare Part B premiums for December and January deducted from your monthly benefits.

There are exceptions:

- The hold harmless provision does NOT apply to you if:
- You enroll in Part B for the first time in 2021.
- You pay an income-related monthly adjustment amount premium.
- You are dually eligible for Medicaid and have your premium paid by a state Medicaid agency.

## Telehealth

Telehealth is a service that uses video calling and other technologies to help you see your doctor or other health care provider from home instead of at a medical facility. It can often be easier, faster, and less expensive than waiting for and traveling to an in-person appointment. And during the COVID-19 pandemic, it may be a safer option for routine visits. Telehealth may be particularly helpful if you have limited mobility or live in a rural area. You can set yourself up for a successful visit by taking a few minutes before your appointment to prepare. Consider the following tips:

- **Test the camera in advance.** Practice with a family member or a friend to make sure you understand how to use your camera before your online doctor visit.
- **Test the sound and video on your device.** Most devices have built-in microphones and speakers, but you may have to turn them on or allow the telehealth software or website to access them.
- **Use the best internet connection possible.** If you are using Wi-Fi, being physically close to the internet router and minimizing the number of devices connected to it can help improve your connection.
- **Position yourself.** Place your device on a sturdy surface. Try positioning your device so your head and shoulders are in the camera frame.

Source: National Institute on Aging

**DISCLAIMER: Due to COVID-19 any of these classes may be cancelled or postponed. Pro Action Yates OFA will work closely with NYSOFA and Yates County Public Health to ensure that all appropriate safety guidelines are followed.**

**Do you want to feel great when you wake up in the morning?  
What if you fall, do you want to learn how to get up?  
Would you like to feel stronger and have more stamina?  
Do you want to have fun and be active at the same time?**

**Bone Builders – Osteoporosis Prevention and Bone Strengthening – This class will be held via Zoom. Call if you would like to join.**

Penn Yan – Tuesdays: January 5 to March 23 from 10:00-11:00 am.

Penn Yan – Thursdays: January 7 to March 25 from 10:00-11:00 am.

**Advanced Tai Chi – Relieve Pain and Improve Health and Balance – This class will be held via Zoom. You must have taken the Beginner Tai Chi in order to do this class.**

Penn Yan -Tuesdays: **Advanced class** – January 5 to March 23 from 8:30– 9:30am.

**Heathy Living with Chronic Pain–Learn how to manage your chronic pain to make your life better**

Penn Yan- New class will be help in the spring. Please call for more information.

**Healthy Living with Chronic Disease – Learn how to manage your chronic disease to make your life better**

Penn Yan – New class will be held in the spring. Please call for more information or to register.

**Walk with Ease— Helps people with arthritis improve balance, reduce pain, and improve overall health.**

Penn Yan- Classes will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. New class will be held in the spring from 8:45 to 9:45 am at Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging Conference room. Please call for more information.

- ◆ To sign up for these classes, call Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging, Pam Swarhout, at **315-536-5515**. Most classes can be joined at any time! Transportation may be available.

**Tips For Keeping Warm While You're Inside**

- Set your heat to at least 68–70°F. To save on heating bills, close off rooms you are not using. Close the vents and shut the doors in these rooms, and keep the basement door closed. Place a rolled towel in front of all doors to keep out drafts.
- Make sure your house isn't losing heat through windows. Keep your blinds and curtains closed. If you have gaps around the windows, try using weather stripping or caulk to keep the cold air out.
- Dress warmly on cold days even if you are staying in the house. Throw a blanket over your legs. Wear socks and slippers.
- When you go to sleep, wear long underwear under your pajamas, and use extra covers. Wear a cap or hat.
- Make sure you eat enough food to keep up your weight. If you don't eat well, you might have less fat under your skin. Body fat helps you to stay warm.
- Drink alcohol moderately, if at all. Alcoholic drinks can make you lose body heat.
- Ask family or friends to check on you during cold weather. If a power outage leaves you without heat, try to stay with a relative or friend.

You may be tempted to warm your room with a space heater. But, some space heaters are fire hazards, and others can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

Source: National Institute on Aging

**Caregiving Around the Clock**

November is National Family Caregivers Month. Caregiving can be a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week job, states the Caregiver Action Network, which spearheads National Family Caregivers Month. “Providing care around the clock can crowd out other important areas of life.”

**What challenges do family caregivers face, and how do they manage them day and night?**

**Morning:** The average family caregiver is a working mother of school-aged children. Mornings become a tricky balancing act of getting the kids ready for school, making sure your loved one has what they need for the day, and then getting yourself out the door for work.

**Throughout the Day:** Up to 70 percent of the time, the family caregiver manages the medications. The more serious the condition, the more likely it is that the family caregiver manages the medications for the patient. This means ensuring their loved one is taking medication correctly and maintaining an up-to-date medication list.

**During the Workday:** Six out of 10 family caregivers work full or part time in addition to juggling their caregiving responsibilities at home. Most say they have to cut back on working hours, take a leave of absence, or quit their job entirely.

**Evening:** Evenings are for family time and mealtime. Nutrition is as important for caregivers as it is for their loved ones. Proper nutrition helps maintain strength, energy, stamina and a positive attitude.

**Late at Night:** This might be the only time that family caregivers get a few minutes for themselves to rest and recharge. The chance to take a breather and re-energize is vital so they can be as good a caregiver tomorrow as they were today.

**Middle of the Night:** If loved ones may need to go to the emergency room in the middle of the night on occasion, family caregivers should be prepared ahead of time with what they need to know and what they need to have with them.

At SRC we take our job of Caring for the Caregiver very seriously. We know how hard and thankless the job can be. We offer a monthly support group and monthly class, which both focus on self-care and managing the stress that comes with being a caregiver. Most of all, we want our caregivers to know that we are here for you and appreciate all you do for those you are caring for.

Source: Posted by SRC on November 8, 2017

## **Pro Action Yates OFA Transportation, Emergency Response, and Project Lifesaver Programs**

### **Attention those with PERS (Personal Emergency Response System) Units:**

2021 Payment Coupon Books have been mailed. If you have not received your Payment Coupon Book please contact Terri Becker @ 315 536-5515. Remember if you wish to pay a few months or a year in advance just send in the January coupon with the months noted you wish to pay.

Our **Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)** is a push button alert system for seniors and caregivers. It helps you maintain your independence and also gives you and your family peace of mind. If you have a medical emergency, you push the button on your pendant or wristband and your call will be sent to our monitoring station. They will be able to dispatch Emergency help if needed. This is ideal for anyone who lives alone! This system works with a landline phone service.

The **Project Lifesaver System** is designed to rescue individuals with cognitive conditions like Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, and Down Syndrome who tend to wander. It is never too early to enroll your loved one in this program, even if they are not showing signs of wandering yet. It's better to be safe than sorry. Project Lifesaver is not only for our over 60 residents, this program is for ANYONE who lives in Yates County!

**Attention PERS and Project Lifesaver Clients:** If you have activated your PERS button and are admitted to the hospital please make sure that the PERS Pendant stays with your belongings. There is a \$42.00 fee to replace the pendants. \*If your loved one has a Project Lifesaver bracelet and is admitted to a hospital or care facility, please make sure that the staff gives you the bracelet so it can be returned to OFA. You can ask them to call us and we will be glad to pick it up at that location, 315 536-5515. The PL bracelets are very costly to replace.

**Have you noticed?** Over the past two years, the OFA Transportation Program began replacing our older vehicles and just recently was able to purchase a new 2020 Kia Sorento with All Wheel Drive.. Thank you for your contributions!

### **Transportation Program**

Transportation Route Schedule:

Monday- Medical Appointments in Dundee or to Dundee between 9am-11am.

Tuesday- Canandaigua between 9:45am-12 noon.

\*Bi-weekly trips to Walmart in Watkins Glen are available on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1:30pm-3:00pm.

\*Dundee to Penn Yan for Grocery shopping Tops/Hope Center 3rd Tuesday of the month from 1pm-3pm.

Wednesday - Rochester between 10am-12:30pm, Rushville between 11:30am and 1:30pm.

Thursday - Geneva between 9:30am-11:30am, Clifton Springs between 10am-11:30am.

Friday- Montour Falls/Watkins Glen between 9:30am- 12 noon.

\*Dundee to Penn Yan for Tops/Aldi Shopping 1st Friday of the month from 11am-12:30pm.

\*Bath, Hammondsport, Elmira and Corning— please call for availability.

\*Rides within Penn Yan are Monday –Friday 8:30am-3:30pm. Shopping trips are available Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in Penn Yan from 12:30-3:00pm.

If you need to cancel a scheduled trip the day of your appointment, please call 315 536-5515 and let the receptionist know you are canceling your ride for that day.

**Please note we require two business days' notice for local trips within Penn Yan. We require a minimum of a week's notice for out of town trips. We cannot accommodate next day or same day trips.**

Reminder calls are made the day before your scheduled ride. If you do not receive a call by 2pm the day before, call our office and speak to Terri Becker.

For scheduling transportation, call 315-536-5517 or send an email to [beckert@proactioninc.org](mailto:beckert@proactioninc.org). If you require a wheelchair bus or prefer riding in the van please mention that at time of call, we will be happy to accommodate you with a comfortable ride.

**Did you know that you can ride in our vehicle with your own Transportation Companion?** Many times, riders ask if it is ok if their friend, neighbor or family member can ride along. The answer is YES. Pro Action Yates OFA also has volunteer companions who may be available to help you find your way to your medical appointments and will wait for you while you are in the appointment. They will ride with you on our vehicles to keep you company. Let Terri know you are interested in having a Transportation Companion.

**Please remember that Office for the Aging is not a Medical Transport.** Our drivers cannot lift, pull, push or tug riders to help them get in or out of our vehicles. You must be able to get to and from the vehicle on your own or with your companion. Drivers can assist with lending an arm and each vehicle has a step stool to help with getting in/out of the vehicle.

\*\*\*\* For information on Yates OFA Transportation Services, Emergency Response System, or Project Lifesaver, **call Terri Becker at 315-536-5515.**

The Penn Yan Area Council of Churches provides transportation to Sunday Worship Services in Penn Yan. To arrange for a ride or to volunteer to drive, call Jennifer Jensen at 315-536-8281.

## GET INVOLVED!

### Strengthening yourself by Strengthening your Community

- ◆ **Pro Action Home Delivered Meals Drivers-** We cannot serve our customers without the help of volunteers who deliver the meals. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our program, providing so much more than a meal. Volunteers provide the warm, human contact our seniors need and may be the only contact that senior has that day. Whether you have only a few hours one day per week, can volunteer every day, or can only work a few hours a month, your assistance is needed. Background and driver's license checks are required. Mileage is paid. Call Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-536-5515 for more information.
- ◆ **Food Basket Delivery Drivers-** Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging is looking for individuals interested in volunteering a few hours a month to deliver a monthly food basket to older adults who are homebound and have limited supports to get to the local food pantry. Call Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-536-5515 for more information.
- ◆ **HIICAP (Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program) Volunteer-**Are you someone who has some free time to spare and the drive to help others? Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging is looking for individuals interested in volunteering to assist Medicare Beneficiaries comparing health plans and screening for financial assistance programs. Training and learning materials will be provided. If you are interested, please contact Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-536-5515.
- ◆ **Front Office help-** Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging is seeking volunteers to answer and transfer phone calls, help customers who come into our office, and general clerical duties. Volunteers decide how often they assist. We will train you! Call Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-536-5515 for more information.
- ◆ **Phone Friends-** Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging is seeking volunteers to make brief, friendly phone calls to homebound seniors to provide emotional support and to enhance social contact. Please contact Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-536-5515 for more information.
- ◆ **Milly's Pantry** - we are looking for some friendly folks to volunteer at the Pinwheel Market. For more information, please stop in (19 Main Street, Penn Yan), call 315-595-2500, or email [volunteer@millyspantry.org](mailto:volunteer@millyspantry.org).
- ◆ **Keuka Comfort Care Home**—Throughout the year we look for people to help with our fundraisers; we need cookie bakers in December, pie makers in September, and various other tasks. We also have openings for volunteer caregivers for our residents. For more information call 315 536-1690 or email [events@keukacomfortcarehome.org](mailto:events@keukacomfortcarehome.org).

### 2020-2021 Emergency HEAP benefit will open January 4, 2021

Emergency HEAP is a benefit designed to meet a households immediate energy needs. If you are eligible, the Emergency Heap benefit is there to resolve energy crisis situations including heating fuel shortages and utility shutoff emergencies. Emergency HEAP benefits and eligibility are based on: 1) income; 2) available resources, and; 3) the type of emergency.

#### **You may be eligible for an emergency HEAP benefit if:**

- Your electricity is necessary for your heating system or thermostat to work and is either shut-off or scheduled to be shut off or
- Your electric or natural gas heat is off or scheduled to be shut-off or
- You are out of fuel, or you have less than one quarter tank of fuel oil, kerosene or propane or have less than a ten (10) day supply of wood, wood pellets, corn, or other deliverable heat source.

#### **and**

- Your income is at or below the current income guidelines or you receive Family Assistance, Safety Net Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) or Code A Supplemental Security Income.  
Gross Monthly Maximum Income guidelines:  
1 Person Household --\$2610.00    2 Person Household--\$3413.00    3 Person Household--\$4216.00
- The heating and/or electric bill is in your name **and**
  - Your household's available resources are:
    - less than \$2,000 if no member of your household is age 60 or older; or
    - less than \$3,000 if any member of your household is age 60 or older.

If you have an emergency, you contact the Yates County Department of Social Services at (315) 536-5184 for assistance.

## Food Labels

Did you know the ingredients on food labels are listed in descending order by weight? That is, the ingredient that weighs the most is listed first, and the ingredient that weighs the least is listed last. Learning how to read food labels can help you make smart, healthy food choices.

For example, knowing the difference between the date labels — which include “sell by,” “use by,” and “best if used by” tags — helps you understand whether a past-date food is unsafe, or just not as flavorful as it had been.

- “Sell by” tells how long the manufacturer suggests that a store should sell foods like meat, poultry, eggs, or milk products—buy it before this date.
- “Use by” tells how long the food will be at peak quality—if you buy or use it after that date, some foods might be stale or less tasty.
- “Best if used by” (or “best if used before”) tells how long the food has the best flavor or quality—it does not suggest a date by which the food should be purchased.

Product dates are not safety dates and are not required by federal regulations (except on infant formula). They are added voluntarily by manufacturers.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires a Nutrition Facts label on most packaged foods and beverages. At the top of the Nutrition Facts label, you will find the total number of servings in the container and the food or drink’s serving size. The serving size on the label is based on the amount of food that people typically eat at one time and is not a recommendation of how much to eat. The label will also list the calories and nutrients in a serving. Percent Daily Value (DV) is a reference amount of a nutrient to consume or not to exceed each day. The percent Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of the food contributes to a total daily diet. Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet, so if you are eating fewer calories and eat a serving of this food, your %DV will be higher than what you see on the label. Some nutrients on the Nutrition Facts label do not have a %DV, so use the number of grams to compare and choose products.

Most Americans exceed the recommended limits for saturated fats, sodium, and added sugars. Compare and choose foods to get less than 100% DV of these nutrients each day.

Many Americans also do not get the recommended amounts of dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, and potassium. Eating enough foods that contain these nutrients can reduce the risk of developing some diseases and conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and high blood pressure. Compare and choose foods to aim for 100% DV of these nutrients. If a food has 5% DV or less of a nutrient per serving, it is considered low in that nutrient. If it has 20% DV or more of a nutrient per serving, it is considered high in that nutrient. Low or high can be either good or bad—it depends on whether you need more of a nutrient (like dietary fiber) or less (like saturated fat).

Source: National Institute on Aging

## Nominations for Senior Day 2021

Each May as part of national Older Americans Month, NYSOFA celebrates older adults at an Older New Yorkers’ Day event in Albany. The occurrence of the in-person event may be adjusted due COVID-19, as it was in 2020. Many older New Yorkers, chosen by their local Offices for the Aging, are recognized for their outstanding contributions at this annual event. Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging is accepting nominations for the Senior Day 2021 event. It is time to take a moment and share information about the great volunteers you know. Please contact Zack Housworth at (315)536-5515 to nominate someone. Let Zack know how the nominee has made a difference in our community through civic engagement. Nominations are due no later than **Friday, February 5, 2021**.

Yates County Office for the Aging  
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## THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

**NEWSLETTER ACCESSIBILITY:** LARGE PRINT issues of “The Grapevine Express” are available upon request. You may also receive this newsletter electronically via email. Let us know your preference. We offer help for those who don’t speak/read English or cannot read. We have special equipment if you are hard of hearing. All of these services are FREE. Just ask!

### **Language Assistance Services Available**

Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging provides language assistance services through the AT&T Language Line program. If you or someone you know speaks or prefers a language other than English, please let us know by using the enclosed Language Access Poster. We will arrange for services to be provided in your preferred language at **no cost** to you.

### **2021 NY Connects Yates Office for the Aging Service Directory**

The 2021 Service Directory is enclosed. Please keep this as a helpful reference tool all year long.

### **Stay Informed**

- Follow Yates NY Connects/Office for the Aging on Facebook.
- Go to our website for previous issues of The Grapevine Express at <http://proactioninc.org/thriving-seniors/>



**Yates NY Connects/Office for the Aging**

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