



THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS

January/February 2022

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



Monday, January 17

Free Income Tax Service

Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging and AARP Foundation Tax-Aide will be offering free income tax service for tax year 2021. 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 again created a situation where we cannot be sure of all the details yet. You will be given 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. The tax preparation location will again be St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 135 Hamilton Street, Penn Yan, located just up the street from Morgan's grocery. Please enter the church through the rear entrance. Tax preparation season will run from **February 2, 2022 through April 15**. To schedule an appointment call Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging at 315-279-4321. You can make an appointment, or if you get voice mail, 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 18, 2022**. You can call Monday thru Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Use the same phone number to cancel or reschedule appointments. When scheduling, make sure you will have all your tax documents in time for the appointment date.

When coming for a tax appointment bring all the same 2021 documents that were used in preparation of your 2020 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 2021. Required documents are photo ID for each taxpayer and Social Security cards for each taxpayer and dependent on the return. Bring your 2020 return with you. If you cannot locate last year's return you can get a replacement transcript from www.irs.gov.

You will also need to bring a completed Intake/Interview form just like last year. These can be picked up from the Yates County Office Building on Liberty St. after January 18, or you can request an email form when you make your tax appointment (best option). The electronic form can be printed and hand completed or filled-in on your computer and then printed.

You may be required to come in twice; once to drop off your documents and again to sign the paperwork and pick up your packet. 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.

Two very important things to remember as you prepare for this year's tax season are the **Advanced Child Tax Credit** and the third **Economic Impact Payment** (otherwise known as stimulus payment). If you qualified for either of these benefits you will need to know exactly what you received. If you did not get everything you were entitled to your 2021 tax return is the opportunity to receive missing money.

The third Economic Impact payments started being distributed in March 2021 and the Child Tax Credit payments in July. When you come in for your tax appointment in 2022 it is very important that you have accurate records of what you received from either of these programs. Your bank should be able to help you find missing information. Please book your appointments early. We are short staffed and may not be able to serve everyone in the community who wants a tax return done. We are always looking for new volunteers!

SUMMARY

1. Call 315-279-4321 beginning January 18, 2022 for tax appointments
2. Tax location: St Paul's Lutheran Church, 135 Hamilton Street, Penn Yan
3. May require 2 trips to complete
4. Bring ID, 2020 tax return, all tax papers, and Intake form

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 3

- ◆ 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 1:30pm - 2:30 pm. Pre-registration is required to obtain call-in information by contacting 1-800-272-3900.

January 11

- ◆ "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 or email ourtownrocks@ourtownrocks.org. All residents of the Towns of Barrington, Starkey, and the Village of Dundee are welcome to attend. Contact "Our Town Rocks" regarding the January Community Gathering monthly meeting.

January 20th

- ◆ Educational opportunity to learn the basics of Medicare! Welcome to Medicare presentation by Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging from 2- 4pm, held in the Yates County Office Building – Room 1037 (signs will be posted). Please contact Ashley Beach at 315-279-4321 or tillmana@proactioninc.org for more information. Register by 1/18/22.

February 7

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February 8

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February 17th

- ◆ Educational opportunity to learn the basics of Medicare! Welcome to Medicare presentation by Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging from 2- 4pm, held in the Yates County Office Building – Room 1037 (signs will be posted). Please contact Ashley Beach at 315-279-4321 or tillmana@proactioninc.org for more information. Register by 2/15/22.

Announcement: The HUBBA Tea is tentatively scheduled for April 7, 2022.

ANNOUNCEMENT

FREE Legal Presentation for Yates County from Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.®

Our next legal presentation, "Life and Death Planning 101: What Everyone Should Know About Wills, Powers of Attorney, and Health Care Proxies" will be held on Friday, February 4th, at 2:00 PM in the Yates County Office Building Auditorium and online via Zoom.

The presentation will focus on the legal basics of Wills, Powers of Attorney, and Advance Medical Directives. The presentation will include a brief overview of the recently amended New York State Power of Attorney law. There will also be time for attendees to ask general legal questions about estate planning and how to obtain assistance from an attorney.

To register contact Pro Action Yates OFA at **315-279-4321**. If participating via Zoom, you will need to provide an email address. RSVP by 2/2/22.

Be Aware of Bereavement Scams

Obituary swindles, also known as bereavement scams, typically start with information gleaned from death notices in newspapers or posted online. Fraudsters harvest facts commonly included in obits - such as the deceased's birth date, where the person lived and worked, and family members' names - to start building a profile for identity theft. With just a few key details, cybercrooks can locate and purchase a dead person's home address, Social Security number and other personal data on the dark web. They use that information to access or create financial accounts, take out loans, obtain health care or file phony tax returns (and claim bogus refunds) under the deceased's name - a form of ID theft dubbed ghosting. Or they'll weave what they've learned about a recent death into impostor scams targeting a surviving spouse or other family member. Con artists posing as government officials, debt collectors or insurance agents try to pry loose more personal data about the deceased, or solicit payment for a supposedly unpaid bill, unclaimed benefit or lapsed policy.

The COVID pandemic has brought a new strain of this scam: Crooks are pretending to represent the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program that helps families pay funeral expenses for victims of the virus, claiming they need personal information to "register" you for the aid. Some bereavement cons are more involved, and they can get personal. Obit-scouring swindlers pretend to be long-lost friends or relatives of the deceased, contacting surviving spouses out of the blue to commiserate and reminisce. These shows of simulated compassion can evolve into romance scams or attempts to defraud beneficiaries out of inheritance money. Fraudsters are fond of obituary scams because the victims are either dead, so they're unable to monitor financial accounts and credit reports for unusual activity, or emotionally vulnerable and potentially more prone to manipulation. Some scammers even pose as psychics or spiritual advisers, draining money from grieving people by promising to use supernatural means to ease their loss. For more details, visit AARP at <https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2020/obituary.html>

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 – In person classes or on Zoom
Penn Yan – Tuesdays: January 4 to March 22 from 10:00-11:00 am at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.
Penn Yan – Thursdays: January 6 to March 24 from 10:00-11:00 am at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Beginner Tai Chi- Relieve Pain and Improve Health and Balance - In person class
Penn Yan – Mondays: January 3 to March 21 from 11:00 – 12:00 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church

NEW CLASS – Intermediate Tai Chi – This class is for people who have take the beginner Tai Chi class and feel they are ready for the next step.
Penn Yan – Wednesdays: January 5 to March 23 from 10:30 – 11:30 am

Heathy Living with Chronic Pain–Learn how to manage your chronic pain to make your life better.
Penn Yan- New class will be starting in the spring. This class runs for 6 weeks. Class is held on Wednesdays from 9:30 - Noon. Please call for more information.

Healthy Living with Chronic Disease – Learn how to manage your chronic disease to make your life better.
New class will be starting in the spring. This class runs for 6 weeks. Class is held on Wednesdays from 9:30 to Noon. 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 from 8:45 to 9:45 am in the Yates Office for the Aging Conference Room. This class runs for 6 weeks. New class will start in the spring. Please call for more information.

* To sign up for these classes, call Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging, Pam Swarthout, at 315-279-4321.
Most classes can be joined at any time! Transportation may be available.

13 New Year's Resolutions for Caregivers by Carol Bradley Bursack, AgeingCare

It's human to want a fresh start. Even though I know that December 31 of one year is rarely that different from January 1 of the next, I greet each New Year's Day as a symbolic new beginning. I can't explain it, but the first day of January always gives me a (brief) psychological boost.

Reevaluating Your Goals, Expectations and Attitudes

Like most family caregivers, I always strove for perfection while caring for my elders. Of course, these expectations always left me feeling like I fell short. There is no way that I know of to be a perfect caregiver. The needs of any care receiver can change in an instant. We can miss subtle signals. We are often so tired and stressed that we may absentmindedly forget to pick up a prescription, check an adult brief or do the laundry. All these things can bring on a huge case of unearned caregiver guilt.

It is so easy to get wrapped up in the difficult feelings and the pressure that come with this role. Every so often, caregivers need to remind themselves that they are doing their personal best. The new year is a perfect time to take inventory of your life and see what improvements you can make. My thought is that we can look at the coming year with fresh eyes, even though that freshness may only last a moment.

I made the following list of New Year's resolutions that I felt I could've used when I was an active family caregiver. However, some of the items on this list that address self-care and self-love are important for everyone, not just those who are providing care. Even if you only stick to one of these, remember that progress is good, no matter how small.

A Caregiver's New Year's Resolutions

1. I give myself permission to not keep the following resolutions or to keep them only partway.
2. When I feel I am imperfect, I will remember that guilt is not an option as long as I know I did the best I could, given the circumstances.
3. I will find time alone for myself, even though that seems impossible. That may mean asking for help from people and resources I've never considered before.
4. Regardless of how deserving the source, I will say no to requests for my time when I know I can't add any more to my plate.
5. I will remember that family members and friends who are not care receivers deserve some of my time. This may mean a little less of my attention will go to my care receiver, and that is okay.
6. I will follow through with my own medical appointments and screenings, including dental cleanings and eye exams.
7. I will find a way to monitor my own energy levels so I can recharge my batteries before I hit the point of exhaustion and burnout.
8. I will remember that seeking advice from professionals, organizations and fellow caregivers is a sign of strength, not weakness.
9. I will remember that my care receiver didn't choose the illness or disability that he or she is living with.
10. I will remember that I didn't choose this life for my care receiver either, so I won't be a martyr to their illness.
11. I will remember that taking care of my own needs isn't selfish. Taking care of myself benefits everyone I love.
12. I will get appropriate help for myself if depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues become apparent to me, my friends, or my family.
13. I will be open to alternative ways of caring for myself. This can include massage, aroma therapy, some form of meditation, exercise, attending a caregiver support group, participating in an online caregiver forum, seeking out respite care, or meeting with a therapist.

Setting Your Own Resolution for the New Year

This list is merely a starting point. What resolutions would you add for yourself? Which would you delete? If you print out this list and hang it in a prominent place, you can work toward these goals a little bit every day. Even looking at it once a month will help you view your situation with a fresh perspective.

Remember, happiness isn't about perfection, it's about having realistic expectations. We all have room to adjust our expectations to more closely match reality, and that change alone can help us have a happier and more productive year.

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

Transportation Program

MESSAGE LINE PHONE NUMBER – 315 279-4409 OR EMAIL: beckert@proactioninc.org



If you are new to our transportation program or would like information on our services, please call our office and ask to speak to Terri Becker.

Reminders:

Please do not schedule medical appointments after 2:30. Our driver's day ends at 3:30pm.

*When calling for a ride please have the FULL address of where you are going available at the time of your call.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR DRIVEWAYS ARE CLEAR OF SNOW AND ICE.

Transportation Route Schedule:

Monday- Dundee between 9am-11am.

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

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.

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

Rides within Penn Yan are Monday –Friday 8:30am-3:30pm.

Grocery shopping trips to Tops and Aldi are scheduled according to availability after medical appointments requests are completed.

***All riders must be able to enter and exit the vehicle on their own, our transportation program is not a Medical Transport service.** . 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.

PERS – PERSONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT



If you or a loved one are looking for a way to stay safe in your home, then a PERS unit might be a tool that can assist you in your safety. With the press of a button emergency help can be on its way. Please call our office to find out more about our PERS unit.

CURRENT PERS CLIENTS: If you have not received your payment vouchers in the mail please contact our office. Please also note that if you have activated your PERS button and are admitted to the hospital make sure that the PERS pendant stays with your personal belongings. There is a \$42.00 fee to replace the pendants.

Project Lifesaver System- 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 age 60 residents. This program is for ANYONE who lives in Yates County!

*** For information on Yates OFA Transportation Services, Emergency Response System, or Project Lifesaver, call Terri Becker at 315-279-4321.

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.

******REMINDER PRO ACTION YATES OFFICE FOR THE AGING HAS A NEW TELEPHONE
NUMER 315-279-4321******

If your telephone has the capability to save telephone numbers, please save our new number so you know it is a friendly Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging Staff trying to reach you when we call. This will ensure you get prompt return calls and eliminate the frustration of playing 'phone tag'. Thank you!



GET INVOLVED!

Strengthening yourself by Strengthening your Community

- ◆ **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 315-279-4321 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.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)**- LTCOP is a resident-centered, resident-directed advocacy program. LTCOP at Lifespan of Greater Rochester assists residents in nursing homes, adult care facilities and family-type homes in Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties. Ombudsmen advocate for residents to address quality of life, quality of care and resident's rights concerns. Together, we CAN make a difference in the lives of older adults residing in long term care facilities. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or want more information about the Ombudsman program, please call (585) 287-6414.
- ◆ **Yates County History Center** needs volunteers in the following areas: Assist with upkeep of our campus; Plan/Assist with projects, presentations, & fundraisers; Promote events; Help in the Spencer Research, Join any of the subcommittees of the Board of Trustees: buildings and grounds, collections and exhibits management, education & programming, finance & development, fundraising, membership & volunteers, nominating & leadership, strategic planning; Docent at any of our 3 museum building of our Historic Main St. walking tours; Bring a historical character to life; Fill in for staff when needed. Specific training will be required. Anyone interested or with questions should call the History Center at 315-536-7318 and ask to speak to Director, Tricia Noel.
- ◆ **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 315-279-4321.

2021-2022 Emergency HEAP benefit will open January 3rd

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 --\$2146.00 2 Person Household--\$2903.00 3 Person Household--\$3660.00
- 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, contact the YC Department of Social Services at (315)536-5184 for assistance.

Junk or Not? How to Sort Your Medicare Mail? – National Council on Aging

Be skeptical about ads touting “free” Medicare benefits – You may have seen ads on TV or received mailings and emails that tout free Medicare advice or benefits that appear too good to be true. Ads or mailings from Medicare health plans typically start on or just after October 1 each year. These marketing campaigns are designed to prompt you to call a phone number, enter an email address, or register for an event to learn more about an advertised plan and ultimately sign up for that plan. It’s important to be skeptical of these claims, and to know what questions to ask when looking at plan choices.

Learn to recognize important mail from Medicare – The Medicare program is administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Be sure to open any information that comes from the CMS, DHHS, and the Social Security Administration. Additionally, know that it is forbidden by law to use the words or symbols “Medicare,” “Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services,” “Department of Health and Human Services,” or “Health & Human Services” in a way that indicates approval or endorsement on any marketing or non-government correspondence.

How to identify marketing mail – Here are some tips to help identify materials that are promotional and do not require your attention:

The material usually asks you to call, email, send a post card or attend a seminar to learn more about a Medicare plan.

The material may use language filled with superlatives such as the best, the most, the least expensive or sometimes the word free which is prohibited and an inaccurate description for Medicare plans.

The material often includes large colorful graphics to grab your attention.

The postage area may be imprinted with “PRESORTED” or “PRSR STD” which is commonly used for mailing a large quantity of business or advertising mail.

Report suspicious mail – If you receive a piece of mail that raises your suspicion, here’s what to do:

Ask a relative or friend to review the information with you to determine if any action is required.

Go to Medicare.gov to review a complete list of the notifications and information that Medicare or your existing health and/or drug plan send out on behalf of CMS. The list explains the purpose of the mailing and the month it is sent.

Contact 1-800-MEDICARE or your plan for help in determining the legitimacy of mail that claims to be about your Medicare coverage.

Open mail from your current health or drug plan(s) – Even if you are looking to change plans for the coming year, it is still important to continue to read the information sent by the plan(s) in which you are currently enrolled. Know the name of your current Medicare plan(s) and be sure to open any mail sent by the plan(s).

Important reminder: Never provide your Medicare number, Social Security number or credit card information or any personally identifiable information in response to any solicitation.

Nominations for Senior Day 2022

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 an in-person event may be adjusted due COVID-19, as it was in 2021. 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 2022 event. It is time to take a moment and share information about the great volunteers you know. Please contact Zack Housworth at (315)279-4321 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 4, 2022**.

Yates County Office for the Aging
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THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

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.

2022 NY Connects Yates Office for the Aging Service Directory

The 2022 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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