



THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS

November/December 2023

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



Friday, November 10, Thursday & Friday, November 23 & 24, Monday & Tuesday, December 25 & 26

Don't forget! Medicare Open Enrollment period ends December 7th 2023

You can evaluate and change plans between October 15th and December 7th each year during the Annual Open Enrollment Period.

The changes made during this time will go into effect January 1, 2024.

The Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging Staff can help you decide what plans fit your needs best. There are still presentations being held at the following locations to go over Federal Medicare updates and Medicare Advantage plan changes:

Penn Yan Yates County Building Auditorium: Monday, November 6 from 2-3pm; Friday, November 17 from 10-11am; Tuesday, November 21 from 2-3pm

Dundee Library: Thursday November 2 from 2-3pm

Do you wish to not attend a presentation? We are offering 2024 Yates County Medicare Reference Guide packets. Each packet will include all 2024 plan information, federal updates, and a comparison worksheet with tips and advice. These packets can be mailed to you or you can stop in to pick one up.

Call **315-279-4321** to reserve your spot at a session or request a packet. Attendance at the group sessions is strongly encouraged as there will be limited availability for individual meetings. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227) directly for assistance that is available 24/7 during the Open Enrollment Period.

"I missed the Medicare Open Enrollment Period – What do I do?!"

Every year, the annual Medicare Open Enrollment period runs from October 15th-December 7th, and changes made during this time take effect January 1st. Understandably life sometimes get busy and the deadline gets missed. Here are some Special Enrollment Periods (SEP's) that you can use if you missed the Open Enrollment Period:

If you are a member of EPIC and have not used your once annual special enrollment period in 2023, you can use it to change your plan before December 31st and the change will take effect January 1st. This is an annual SEP that all members of EPIC can use, regardless of plan or deductible status.

If your current plan notified you that the plan is terminating and will not be offering Medicare coverage in 2024, you have until December 31st to enroll in a new plan for January 1st. Additionally, you have until the end of February to enroll in a new plan and coverage will take effect the first of the month following your enrollment.

The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period is an additional Open Enrollment period every year from January 1st to March 31st where Medicare beneficiaries can disenroll from their Medicare Advantage plan and enroll in a different Medicare Advantage plan or switch to Original Medicare and a stand-alone Part D plan. Coverage will take effect the first of the month following your enrollment.

If you find yourself in a position where you may need to use one of these enrollment periods, please reach out to Ashley Beach at 315-279-4321 or tillmana@proactioninc.org for assistance.

LOCAL EVENTS

November 8

- ◆ Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging will hold it's annual Thanksgiving meal on Wednesday, November 8 at 11:30am at the First Baptist Church in Penn Yan. Menu is turkey and gravy, bread stuffing, squash, cranberry relish, rolls and pumpkin pie with whipped topping. You must make a reservation by Monday, October 30, by calling 315-279-4321. Suggested donation of \$8 per meal for people over 60. Mandatory \$8.75 for people under 60. Take out meals will be available at 12:00. You must state dining in or taking out when making reservation.

November 14 and December 12

- ◆ "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.

November 17

- ◆ Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc. has partnered with Foodlink to provide a Drive Thru Pop Up Food Pantry on 11/17/23 from 10am – 11:30am at the Town of Starkey Highway Barn, 656 Dundee-Glenora Road, Dundee, NY 14837. **Pre- registration is required.** This is drive-thru only. Contact Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging at 315-279-4321 for more information.

November 27 (Penn Yan) & November 28 (Dundee)

- ◆ 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 Support Group meeting in-person the 4th Monday each month from 4:00-5:00 pm at the Penn Yan Library, 214 Main Street in Penn Yan and the 4th Tuesday each month from 4:00-5:00 pm at the Dundee Library, 32 Water Street in Dundee. Registration is requested by contacting 1-800-272-3900.

November 28 and December 19

- ◆ "Our Town Rocks" Community Gathering monthly meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at the Our Town Rocks Office, 12 Main Street in Dundee. 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.

November 30

- ◆ Last day to utilize your Farmers Market Coupons. Reminder– not all markets will be open through 11/30/23 so be sure to check for closing dates.

December 13

- ◆ Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging will hold it's annual Christmas meal on Wednesday, December 13 at 11:30am at the First Baptist Church in Penn Yan. Menu is ham with fruit sauce, twice baked potato with sour cream, green beans, rolls and cherry pie with whipped topping. You must make a reservation by Monday, December 4 by calling 315-279-4321. Suggested donation of \$8 per meal for people over 60. Mandatory \$8.75 for people under 60. Take out meals will be available at 12:00. You must state dining in or taking out when making reservation.

December 15

- ◆ Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc. has partnered with Foodlink to provide a Drive Thru Pop Up Food Pantry on 12/15/23 from 10am – 11:30am at the Town of Starkey Highway Barn, 656 Dundee-Glenora Road, Dundee, NY 14837. **Pre- registration is required.** This is drive-thru only. Contact Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging at 315-279-4321 for more information.

December 18 (Penn Yan) & December 19 (Dundee)

- ◆ 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 Support Group meeting in-person typically the 4th Monday each month from 4:00 -5:00 pm at the Penn Yan Library, 214 Main Street in Penn Yan and the 4th Tuesday each month from 4:00-5:00 pm at the Dundee Library, 32 Water Street in Dundee. Registration is requested by contacting 1-800-272-3900. Due to December holidays, December meetings will be held the 3rd Monday and Tuesday.

Tax-Aide Income Tax Service

Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging and the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program are pleased to offer free income tax service again for tax year 2023. Experienced tax preparers will e-file your Federal and New York State income tax returns in a single 1-hour appointment. If you have a refund coming it can be received in as little as 2 weeks via direct deposit to your bank account.

Now is the time to start preparing for your 2023 tax return!

When coming for a tax appointment, please bring all current documents that report income and deductions for 2023 [wages – W2 form; Social Security – Form 1099SSA; other retirement/IRA – Form 1099R; home mortgage – Form 1098]. Please make sure you will have such documents in hand before your tax appointment. If you own a home, bring your school and property tax bills paid in 2023. You may qualify for a credit. Required documents for all returns are: photo ID for each taxpayer, Social Security cards for each taxpayer and dependent on the return and a copy of your 2022 return. If you cannot locate last year's return, you can get a replacement transcript from www.irs.gov.

To schedule an appointment call Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging at 315-279-4321. If you get voicemail leave a message for a callback. When leaving a voice message, please clearly state your name and phone number. Appointments can be made beginning Tuesday, January 16. You can call Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Use the same phone number to cancel or reschedule appointments. Tax preparation season runs from February 1st through April 15th.

You will also need to bring a completed Intake/Interview form just like last year. These can be picked up from Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging in the Yates County Building on Liberty Street once you have scheduled your appointment 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. Having this done ahead of time will greatly speed up your appointment and help insure an accurate tax return. The tax preparation location again this year is at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 135 Hamilton Street in Penn Yan. Appointment days and times are not yet determined. Look for more information in the next newsletter. Please come prepared for your 2023 tax return. It will make the experience better for all of us!

Tax-Aide is always looking for new volunteers as tax preparers but also for several other positions. If you feel you can give some of your time to help our community, or know of someone else who may want to volunteer, please contact Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging.

Money Matters: How to Help A Person With Dementia

Problems managing money can be one of the first noticeable signs of dementia. To provide support while respecting the person's independence, a family member or trusted friend can help by:

- **Watching for signs of money problems** — Trouble paying for a purchase or a pile of unopened bills may indicate money issues. Start a conversation about services that may help the person manage their expenses.
- **Setting up automatic payments** — Arrange for utilities, mortgage, rent, or other expenses to be paid through automatic deductions from a bank account. This step will make sure that bills are paid correctly and on time.
- **Establish consent to manage finances** — To prevent serious problems, consider getting legal permission to access and manage the person's financial affairs.
As the disease progresses, a family member or trustee can take additional steps to:
 - **Establish consent to manage finances** — To prevent serious problems, consider being named as a legal proxy to access and manage the person's financial affairs.
 - **Plan for in-home and long-term care costs** — Consider options for a personal care assistant or home health care aide and their costs, including possible Medicare or Medicaid support. If the person needs more care, consider assisted living communities and nursing homes.

*Learn more ways you can help a loved one with dementia manage their finances at <https://www.nia.nih.gov/>
Source: National Institute on Aging

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Tips for Caregivers by National Institute on Aging

A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease can be difficult. Having accurate information and support can help you know what to expect and what to do next as the disease progresses. Explore steps you can take after an Alzheimer's diagnosis with this checklist.

- 1) Learn about Alzheimer's disease: Being informed will help you know what to expect as the disease progresses. Here are some resources: Alzheimer's and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center: www.alzheimers.gov 800-438-4380; Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org 800-272-3900; Alzheimer's Foundation of America: <https://alxfdn.org> 866-232-8484. Local hospitals and community centers may have educational programs about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- 2) Get regular medical care: Make regular appointments with your primary care doctor or specialist. Consider going to a memory disorders clinic.
- 3) Find local services and supports: Contact Eldercare Locator at <https://eldercare.acl.gov> 800-677-1116, Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org 800-272-3900 or Alzheimer's Foundation of America: <https://alxfdn.org> 866-232-8484 to find local services and support groups.
- 4) Do some legal, financial, and long-term care planning: Get information to help you plan. Prepare or update your will, living will, health care power of attorney, and financial power of attorney. Learn about care you may need in the future and how to pay for it at <https://longtermcare.acl.gov>
- 5) Get help as needed with day-to-day tasks: Use simple memory aids like a notepad or sticky notes to jot down reminders, a pillbox to keep medications organized, and a calendar to record appointments. Ask family members or friends or find local services to help with routine tasks, such as cooking, paying bills, transportation, or shopping. Consider using technology solutions for medication management, safety (e.g., emergency response, door alarms), and other care.
- 6) Be safe at home: Get home-safety tips. Ask your doctor to order a home-safety evaluation and recommend a home health care agency to conduct it. Medicare may cover the cost. Consider wearing a medical ID bracelet or necklace in case you get lost or need help.
- 7) Stay safe on the road: Talk with your doctor if you become confused, get lost, or need lots of help with directions, or if others worry about your driving. Get a driving evaluation. Ask your doctor for names of driving evaluators.
- 8) Consider participating in a clinical trial: Ask your doctor about trials or studies. Contact an Alzheimer's Disease Research Center for assessment and potential research opportunities.
- 9) Stay healthy: Be active! Getting exercise helps people with Alzheimer's feel better and helps keep their muscles, joints, and heart in good shape. Eat a well-balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Continue to enjoy visits with family and friends, hobbies, and outings.
- 10) If you live alone: Identify someone who can visit you regularly and be an emergency contact. If you are at risk of falling, order an emergency response system. A special pendant or bracelet lets you summon help if you fall and can't reach the phone. Consider working with an occupational therapist. This person can teach you ways to stay independent. Ask your doctor for more information. Stick with familiar places, people, and routines. Simplify your life.
- 11) If you are working: If you have problems performing your job, consider reducing your hours or switching to a less demanding position. Consider consulting your employer's HR department or employee assistance program about family leave, disability benefits, and other employee benefits. Find out if you qualify for Social Security disability benefits through "compassionate allowances." Call 800-772-1213.

For more details go to <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/next-steps-after-alzheimers-diagnosis>

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 315-279-4321 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. Call 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 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 director@keukacomfortcarehome.org.
- ◆ **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, contact Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-279-4321.
- ◆ **Front Desk 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! Contact Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-279-4321 for more information.
- ◆ **Pro Action Transportation Program Clerical** — to assist with phone calls, surveys, Word Documents and Excel Reports. Contact Becky Bennett-Tears at 315-279-4321 for more information.

**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: October 3 to December 12 from 10:00-11:00 am at St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Penn Yan – Thursdays: October 5 to December 14 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 only
Penn Yan – Mondays: October 2 to December 11 from 10:15 am-11:15 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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 Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging Conference Room. This class runs for 6 weeks. Next class will be held in the spring.

Bingocize-This new program combines bingo with exercise using exercise bands and exercise balls. Classes are held 2 times a week for 10 weeks and 1 hour per class. A new class will be held in the spring. Call Pam Swarhout if you have any questions.

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

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

Transportation Program

To schedule a transportation trip, please call 315-279-4409 or send an email to beckert@proactioninc.org. If you require a wheelchair van, please mention that at the time of your call. If you would like to request one of our volunteer riding companions, please request a companion when you call. To be courteous to our companions and increase the availability of riding with a companion, it is best to request your ride 2 weeks in advance.

As of this time, we are still operating on a modified schedule. Medical trips are priority, grocery shopping to Tops or Aldi are scheduled on Mondays around the medical appointments for that week if there is availability.

Important Reminders:

- OFA is not a medical transport. **ALL RIDERS MUST BE ABLE TO GET TO AND FROM THE VAN ON THEIR OWN.** ***Drivers are not able to lift, pull or tug.*** Our drivers can lend an arm and each vehicle has a step stool to help with getting in/out of the vehicle. This is for your safety and theirs.
- Drivers are not permitted to load/unload your grocery bags from the vehicle. If you are using our transportation program to grocery shop then you must be able to carry your own bags.
- You are always welcome to have a family member or friend ride along with you. Please make sure to mention this at the time of your request.
- Reminders calls are made the morning prior to your ride. If you do not receive a call by 2pm the day prior, please call our office after 2pm.
- If you need to cancel a ride, please call the main number at 315-279-4321, and speak to the receptionist so that the driver can be notified and does not drive to your home.

**Messages left after 3pm Thursday will not be received until the following Monday.

****A minimum of 2 days' notice is required for in town and a week's notice is required for out of town transportation requests.



Personal Emergency Response Services (PERS)

QUESTION: Have you ever thought about what you would do if you were alone in your home and needed medical help?

ANSWER: A Personal Emergency Response System.

The fee for the service is \$30 per month or \$45 for a unit with a Cell Modem for households that do not have a landline phone. This covers 24-hour monitoring, annual maintenance, and service calls.

Other services available are:

- FALLS DETECTION PENDANT can be added for an additional \$10 per month.
- CELL MODEMS can be linked to the unit for an additional \$15 per month and a 1 time \$10 hook up charge (for homes without a landline phone)
- SMOKE DETECTORS can be added to your service for an additional \$5 per month.
- SECOND PENDANT for someone in the same household can be added for an additional \$5 per month.



The Project Lifesaver System offers help in rescuing loved ones who may wander. If your loved one has Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, or Down Syndrome this is a great program that is offered to anyone in Yates County regardless of age.

If you would like more information or to sign up for either program, please call Terri Becker at 315-279-4321.

***Attention current PERS and Project Lifesaver Clients:** If you have activated your PERS pendant and are admitted to the hospital please make sure the PERS pendant or Project Lifesaver Pendant stay with your belongings. There is a \$47 fee to replace a lost PERS pendant. Project Lifesaver pendants are very costly to replace.

711-NYS Relay Service

New York Relay Service is a statewide service that connects standard (voice) telephone users with individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, speech disabled, or late-deafened who use text telephones (TTYs) or voice carry-over (VCO) phones. This service allows TTY or VCO users to communicate with standard telephone users through specially trained relay operators. Calls can be made to anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with no restrictions on the number, length, or type of calls. All calls are strictly confidential and no records of any conversations are maintained. Anyone wishing to use New York Relay simply dials the relay number to connect with a relay operator. The relay operator will dial the requested number and relay the conversation between the two callers. Dialing 711 is easy and fast. It automatically connects to a relay operator, without having to remember and dial a ten-digit access number. All states have 711. The relay service is free.

Follow these simple steps:

1. Dial 711 (NOTE: If the phone from which you are calling does not accept 711, just call 1-800-662-1220 for the same great results; Español 877-662-4886.)
2. A specially trained New York relay operator will answer and identify themselves by their operator number.
3. Give the operator the phone number of the person you are calling.
4. The operator will connect you with the person you are calling and assist you with communication.

It really is that easy!

SOUTHERN TIER PARKINSON'S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

Those with Parkinson's Disease and caregivers to attend. This is an opportunity to create a community, share stories, and learn.

Meeting: Third Thursday of every month 1:30 - 3:00 pm.

Attend in person: Silver Spoon Cafe (in the Schuyler County Human Services Complex), 323 Oswego Street, Montour Falls, NY 14865

RSVP/Questions: **Gloria Friedman**, gloria@gsfriedman.com, 607-731-4967 or **Robyn Ballard** robynblld@yahoo.com, 607-351-6959 or **Jill Silence**, jsilence24@gmail.com

HEAP Announcement

People should reference the following website <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/> for details and information about the HEAP Program.

- 23-24 Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement benefit opened October 2, 2023.
- 23-24 HEAP Clean and Tune benefit opened October 2, 2023.
- 23-24 Regular HEAP benefit will open November 1, 2023.
- 23-24 Emergency benefit will open January 2, 2024.
- 23-24 Cooling Assistance benefit will open April 15, 2024.

HEAP Applications are accepted at the local Yates County Department of Social Services, 417 Liberty Street, Suite 2122, in Penn Yan, 315-536-5184

Donations Welcome at the Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging

If you or someone you know is interested in making a donation to Pro Action Yates Office for the Aging to support our work to improve individual's lives, there is a Donate section on the Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc website located at: <https://proactioninc.org/support-us/>

You can make a donation in whatever amount you can share. You can donate by PayPal. If you prefer not to submit a donation electronically, you can send checks, payable to Yates Office for the Aging to: Yates Office for the Aging, 417 Liberty Street, Suite 1116, Penn Yan, NY 14527. Please indicate "donation" in the memo field of your check and you can specify a specific program if you choose.



Yates County Office for the Aging
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THE GRAPEVINE EXPRESS NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

Emergency/Weather Related Closings

Pro Action Yates OFA Transportation, Exercise/Wellness Classes, and Nutrition Services are closed whenever the Penn Yan Schools are closed for weather-related reasons. Although meals are not served that day, we send out emergency non-perishable meals in advance in case of weather closings so no one goes hungry. If a special event is cancelled, the event will be postponed for one week.

****To find out if we are closed due to weather, listen to WROC Channel 8 or WHAM Channel 13 or check the Yates NY Connects/Office for the Aging Facebook Page.**

Procedures for Hope Center Keuka Food Pantry Holiday Distributions

- Clients need to call in advance to set up an appointment. Contact Number is 315-924-3502.
- If this is the person's first visit, the appropriate paperwork needs to be filled out.
- In addition to the person's pantry shopping choices, additional traditional holiday food and fresh vegetables will be provided, as available.
- Holiday meats would either be turkey, ham, or chicken, depending upon availability.

*Regular Hope Center Hours: Monday 9am-2pm, Tuesday 11am-4pm, and Thursday 10am-2pm.

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](http://proactioninc.org/thriving-seniors/)

This newsletter is funded in part through the New York State Office for the Aging under Title III-B of the Federal Older American's Act