Cortland County Legislature and Area Agency on Aging Recognize Efforts to Combat Social Isolation for Older Adults

In grateful acknowledgment of dedication to older adults and leadership to facilitate activities to combat social isolation in Cortland County during the COVID-19 pandemic shut-down.

Left to right: Ann Homer, LD 7; Linda Mead, Cortland Center Secretary; Gary Mead, Cortland Center President; Sharon Lanphear, Cortland Club President; Liz Haskins, Director, Area Agency on Aging

Sharon Lanphear, Cortland Senior Club President; Dick Nauseef, Commander, American Legion Post 489; Liz Haskins, Director

Tom Brown, Owner, St. Charles Hotel; Gary Mead, Cortland Center President

The Cortland County Area Agency on Aging is a member of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and is supported by the New York State Office for the Aging, the Cortland County Legislature, and contributions from individuals and organizations.
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”
- Margaret Mead (no relation to the Meads)

The quote above captures the depth of impact Gary and Linda Mead and Sharon Lanphear have made in the lives of older adults in Cortland County. When Covid19 forced the county to pause senior center services, Gary, Linda and Sharon worked diligently to find temporary locations to hold social activities.

Many thanks to Tom Brown, owner of the St. Charles Hotel, and Dick Nauseef, Commander, American Legion Post 489, for welcoming individuals on a weekly basis. On behalf of the agency, we are so grateful for the dedication and commitment the Meads, Sharon, Tom and Dick have for older adults.

Cortland Center Status Update:
At the time of this writing (November 17, 2021), Chuck Miller, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, is working through the permit process, and a stakeholders workgroup is in the early stages of meeting to clearly define what the vision is and the roadmap to get there. Continue to watch for updates on our website and social media sites.

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**Emergency HEAP and Regular Arrears Supplement**
**By: Deb Chavoustie, Aging Services Specialist**

**EMERGENCY HEAP**

The Home Energy Assistance Program, known as HEAP, is a federally funded program that assists eligible households with a one-time payment applied to your heating bill. If you have already received your first HEAP benefit for the 2021-2022 season, you can request an additional emergency benefit starting January 3, 2022.

To qualify for an emergency benefit, a client has to verify with the Department of Social Services’ HEAP program they are at a quarter of a tank or less of fuel or at a 10 day supply of heat. The client also has to prove they have resources (liquid cash assets) of $3,000 or less (for ages 60 and older). Saved stimulus money does not apply.

Cortland County Area Agency on Aging can help you receive this benefit if you are:
- Age 60 or over
- Homeowner or renter *(tenant of record proof required)*
- Meet monthly 2021-2022 income guidelines

**REGULAR ARREARS SUPPLEMENT (RAS)**

RAS benefits are a Regular HEAP supplement available to assist HEAP eligible households who have electricity and/or gas account in past due status, as documented by their utility vendor. Only one RAS benefit per current electricity and/or gas account is permitted, and total RAS benefits must not exceed $10,000 per applicant household.

All HEAP applications are being reviewed for RAS supplements based on vendors provided.

If you have any questions about Emergency HEAP or RAS benefits, please call the Area Agency on Aging at 607-753-5060.
The Cortland County Legislature and the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) approved a funding opportunity for municipalities, community organizations, not-for-profits and/or faith-based organizations to provide meeting places, activities, services and outreach for the County's aging adult population. This Cortland County grant program is known by the acronym LASS (Local Aging Adult Satellite for Services).

On behalf of the Cortland County Legislature, County Administrator Rob Corpora and the Area Agency on Aging, I am excited to announce the six recipients of the Local Aging Adult Satellite for Services (LASS) grant awards. Applications were submitted and approved for the Virgil United Methodist Church, Town of Truxton, Cortland Chenango Rural Services, Town of Preble, Scott Senior Club, Inc. and Sepp Group Inc.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the closing of senior centers centrally controlled and staffed by the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging (AAA). An analysis of the centers led to a decision to make a more direct investment in, and better serve, the aging adults in Cortland County. The LASS grant program offers seniors an opportunity to become active leaders and participants in creating, directing, and managing those activities best suited to the needs of the local communities in which they reside. Authority and control move exclusively from the County to an equal partnership between the County AAA and the local community. The AAA assumes more of a technical assistance, supportive role at the same time providing an option for local senior citizens to become more self-directed. Goals of this innovative model are to provide aging adults the knowledge, skills and, where appropriate, resources to help them achieve and maintain a safe, secure, nourishing, and emotionally fulfilling environment, however they may define that term, which enables the older adult to exercise more control over how, where and with whom they choose to live their life.

LASS centers are open to all individuals age 60 and older and their caregivers. On behalf of the host sites, we encourage you to visit and learn what each center has to offer!

**LASS Center Locations:**

**Harford:** Creamery Hills
355 Creamery Road, Richford
Open Thursdays
Contact Michael Kelly at 607-844-8229

**Preble Seniors:** Preble Fire Station
1911 Preble Road, Preble
Open Wednesdays
Contact Dave Morse at 315-663-1654

**The Scott Senior Club, Inc.:**
Scott United Methodist Church
Route 41, Scott
Open Fridays
Contact Kay Harvey at 607-842-6871 or 607-749-9391

**The Truxton Living Well Center:**
Truxton United Methodist Church
Route 13, Truxton
Open Tuesdays
Contact Jill Kraft at 607-244-1445

**Virgil:** Virgil United Methodist Church
1194 Church Street, Virgil
Open Tuesdays and Thursdays
Contact Pastor Steph Brown at 607-857-3556

**Willet Cincinnatus Senior Center:**
Willet Town Hall, Route 41, Willet
Open Tuesdays and Fridays
Contact Joanne Brown-Garringer at 607-863-3828

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**Rural Centers for Older Adults Open!**

*By: Liz Haskins, Director*

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Contact Joanne Brown-Garringer at 607-863-3828
A question most of us face at the doctor’s office is: how much salt are you adding to your meals? Salt is an important nutrient for the human body as it helps to regulate water and electrolyte balance. It is required to maintain normal blood pressure and is essential for nerve and muscle conduction. When consumed in higher amounts, sodium in salt causes water retention and raises blood pressure.

According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the daily requirement of sodium is 2300mg/day. Salt has many culinary functions, works as a great meat tenderizer and enhances flavor. The bad news is that only 1 teaspoon of salt is equivalent to 2300mg of sodium, which meets the daily value for adults >60 years of age.

The best way to reduce salt intake is to:
• Watch your daily intake of highly processed food
• Read nutrition facts labels and look for “low sodium” or “reduced sodium” or “no salt”
• Eat lots of fruits and vegetables, unsalted nuts, legumes and whole grains like rice, oats and barley
• Use caution with condiments like ketchup, pickles, olives, and salad dressings
• Allow your taste buds to adjust and adapt to adding minimal salt
• Try new flavors such as herbs, spices, garlic, lemon juice, and black pepper

Instead of adding salt for flavor, mix the ingredients together and sprinkle the mix.

**Mixed Herb Blend**

**Ingredients**

- ¼ cup Dried Parsley
- 2 tablespoons Dried Tarragon
- 1 tablespoon Oregano
- 1 tablespoon Dill Weed
- 1 tablespoon Celery flakes

**Italian Herb Blend**

**Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons Dried Basil
- 1 tablespoon Garlic Powder
- 1 tablespoon Dried Oregano
- 2 tablespoons Thyme
- 2 tablespoons Crushed Dried Rosemary
- 2 tablespoons Crushed Red Pepper
The Coronavirus has impacted almost every aspect of life and is continuing to do so with numbers still on the rise due to the Delta variant. The Cortland Center programs have remained paused creating a continuing need to provide a hot meal to those we serve. Cortland County Area Agency on Aging has implemented a grab-and-go meal pickup program at the Cortland United Presbyterian Church. Grab and Go meals are offered at a suggested contribution of $3.00.

How this program works:

- Reservations are required and can be made by calling 607-753-5061
- The meals are kept hot in food service delivery equipment and conveniently transported to the parking lot of the Cortland United Presbyterian Church via one of the agency’s Meals on Wheels vans.
- One of the Meals on Wheels drivers will be on location for an hour awaiting pick up of the reserved meals.
- Participants will give their suggested contribution to staff when picking up their meal to be enjoyed at home.
- Grab-and-go meals are available to older adults age 60 and older and their caregivers. Reserved meals may be picked up from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. Grab-and-go meals are the same delicious and nutritious meals as were provided prior to the shut down.

Auguste Escoffier once said, “good food is the foundation of genuine happiness”, and we at the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging wholeheartedly believe this statement to be true. We stand with and support our older residents and are always working diligently to provide the best support and accessibility to meals as possible. The grab-and-go meal program is just another way the agency is creatively meeting our clients’ needs, while also keeping our clients and community safe by adhering to all COVID-19 related protocols.

Got Rent?

The Cortland Housing Authority has a rental assistance program that may be able to help you!

The Section 8 Housing Program helps qualified people meet their monthly rent bills by paying a portion of their rent directly to their landlord.

Interested persons may pick up applications at the Housing Authority offices located at 42 Church St. or 51 Port Watson St. Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm; or call 753.9364 or 753.1771 and request to have an application sent by mail. Email requests for applications should be sent to info@cortlandha.com.
Do you hesitate to try new activities? Do you feel like you can’t engage in any activity unless you are sure it is something you will like to do? I used to worry if I dropped an affiliation, other members of the group would take it as a personal affront to them or the organization.

Our community offers a number of social activities to its members. The one I have embraced with enthusiasm is the Fitness Center. I walk down a couple of halls and two flights of stairs, and I have access to fitness machines. I joined chair yoga class and found I enjoyed that movement as well.

Not all my forays into new activities have been successful. I only lasted three weeks in line dancing. While I enjoyed the music and the movement, I was not successful in getting my feet planted in the right place at the right time. Too often I was facing a direction different from the rest of the dancers. I blamed the Parkinson’s for that, rather than my just being a klutz, and danced right out of the class.

I tried the Poets/Prose Workshop. I thought that since I enjoy writing this would give me a more “cultured” activity. We had weekly writing assignments on a given topic. Apparently, I enjoy writing only when I choose the topic. The other participants gave my works a good review, but each time I really stretched the topic to get where I wanted to go. I realized the writing was causing more stress than enjoyment, so another “step away” activity.

My favorite success is boxing. The program is Rock Steady Boxing, which is a program designed for patients of Parkinson’s Disease. It is a very demanding workout; but not only is it helping to keep me moving, it involves a focus that I really need. The best part is that whatever bag I am punching, it does not punch back!

So, my takeaway is that we are too far along on our life’s journey not to try new things. Try them, you might like them; and if not, walk away.
Civil Defense in Cortland County
By Cathy Barber,
Town of Scott Historian, Retired

During the 1950’s in Cortland County, the Cold War was a frightening reality. Some people prepared for a possible nuclear holocaust by building steel and concrete fallout shelters in their backyards. Many stockpiled food and necessities. In schools, Bert the Turtle showed kids how to “duck and cover”.

In 1953, an inventory was taken as part of Cortland County’s Civil Defense program, painstakingly outlining supplies needed in case of a Soviet attack. Clothing would be available at several stores, including Fabrizio’s Men’s Shop at 99 Main Street in the city of Cortland. There, 200 heavy coats and jackets were available and 1,000 pieces of underwear. For food, the Cortland Baking Company stated their bread output could increase from 30,000 pounds a day to 50,000 in case of emergency. Bill Brothers pasteurizing plant on West Road could expand their daily average to an output of 12,000 quarts. McGraw’s Victory Market had a tally of 14 dozen packages of frozen vegetables and 36 pounds of butter. Around the county, kerosene was stockpiled at a volume of 46,500 gallons with a potential of 79,500. The Cortland County Hospital had 20 extra cots, and the Pine Grove Inn had 15 listed as available for use.

In 1956, the town of Marathon was listed as a potential safe shelter by Dr. John Wattenberg, county civil defense director. For evacuation purposes, there were nearly 372 homes with basements. With 20 square feet of basement floor per person, a total of over 8,600 people could be sheltered. The six stores in town had enough basement space to house an additional 275 people. The study went on to study feeding capacities at area buildings. The study was based on a one-dish type meal served within a 24-hour period. The findings showed feeding potential was adequate.

Thankfully for us and the world, a nuclear holocaust never transpired here. However, the quote on Dr. Wattenberg’s speaker’s kit is still very valid today: “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” -Edmund Burke

Scam Alert!

Reported by: Mary A. Coye-Robillard, Vice President/Branch Manager, Tompkins Trust Company and Older Americans Act Advisory Board Member

Numerous folks have reported Windows 11 update scams. Such scams may in fact lead to infected computers, or worse, result in a ransomware lockdown of the victim machine. For more information, visit: https://www.techradar.com/how-to/how-to-spot-fake-windows-11-downloads.

New York has taken action to protect its residents from unwanted Robocalls and mobile spam. In particular, senior citizens had been the unfortunate targets of such scams. For more information, visit: https://943litefm.com/new-york-should-now-get-less-annoying-predatory-robocalls/.

On a side note, the scammers are truly getting more bold. They ultimately push the fraud (grandparent, Amazon security, lottery winnings, etc.) insisting the victim get cash. The scary thing is they are sending "runners" to the victim’s home to collect the cash. This is a brazen and bold move and very concerning. With these folks coming to people’s homes, it places the elderly in a more vulnerable situation.
Caring for a family member can be extremely rewarding. You get to spend time with your loved one and ensure they receive the best care possible. Unfortunately, being a caregiver comes at a cost. Caregivers often have to reduce their work hours or leave their jobs to provide care. Caregivers spend long hours assisting with daily tasks and providing companionship, but are not compensated for their time. Family caregivers need to know their options. Below are some possibilities for caregiver compensation.

**Medicaid.** If eligible, they may be able to receive aid from the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program. This program provides people the option to manage a budget and use their money to pay for services directly relating to their personal care needs, which includes hiring and paying for caregivers.

**Home and Community-Based Services Program.** Many older adults are eligible to opt into a home and community-based services program (HCBS). This program delivers ongoing support and care to assist caregivers while providing them a tax-free daily stipend to ease the financial burden of caregiving.

**Veterans Aid.** Some veterans can enroll in a Veteran Directed Care Program. This program empowers veterans to manage their own care, which may include hiring and paying for in-home caregivers. Another option for veterans who require in-home care is Aid and Attendance. This benefit can cover assisted living, nursing home, and in-home care costs including paying family caregivers.

**Long-Term Care Insurance.** Some policies include provisions for paying a family member who provides care. If your loved one has a policy, you need to find out if caregiver payment is among the benefits. If you need clarification, contact the agent or the insurance company, and ask about the caregiver payment benefit.

**Paid Leave for Caregivers.** As more families are required to serve as caregivers, companies are realizing the need to assist employees with paid leave. If you find yourself serving as a caregiver to a family member while employed, your company may offer paid family leave.

Despite the increasing complexity or comorbidity of conditions that adult care recipients are dealing with, 69% of caregivers have no paid help in caring for their recipient. 31% report their recipient received paid help from aides, housekeepers, or others in the past year. For more information on Caregiver Support, contact the Caregivers Resource Center at the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging 607-753-5060. 

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“I miss being a volunteer at the hospital,” said Roger, 74, of Cortland. “I miss interacting with the patients, reducing their fear and pain by being there. I also learn a lot from them as well.”

Roger Horak likes to be in the community and help those around him. He is a member of the Cortland Community Service Club since 1971, the group that runs the Corn-Ducky Derby for the past 25 years. Roger is also part of the lay pastoral care in two churches in which he is a member and a spiritual care volunteer for eight years at the hospital working under the Hospital Chaplain. Due to COVID, he has not been able to volunteer at the hospital in over a year.

Roger, a former Assistant Cub Scout Master at Parker School and Assistant Boy Scout Master for Homer, says he is now “semi-retired” as you never really retire from those.

The new normal means getting vaccinated, wearing a mask while in public, and washing hands thoroughly. Both churches where he is a member are doing a hybrid mix of people attending in person and via Zoom. They also have “Coffee Hour” where you can sit and talk via Zoom.

During the lockdown, and even now, Roger found ways to stay connected, even if he cannot see people in person. To stay connected, he learned how to Zoom. Roger is part of the Caregivers Support Group for at least a decade and has joined more Zoom groups since COVID, such as the two different churches he attends via Zoom, the Hospicare Grief Support Group, and the Zoom Social Hour each Wednesday when he can. Roger said, “I am able to connect with my family on FaceTime, and although I miss being around people, I get to see and talk to them.”

Roger took the Men Making Meals class and A Matter of Balance classes at the Cortland Senior Center before COVID and looks forward to taking classes at the new Cortland hub at the Crescent Commons.

Roger said he has also kept busy FaceTiming with his three grandchildren ages 5, 4, and 1-1/2 years old. Roger is also working at uncluttering his home and re-homing his lifelong collection of items.

Sign up to receive the newsletter delivered electronically by email. Simply email us at ccaa@cortland-co.org. Be sure to provide your name, email, and current mailing address.
Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)

Important Social Security Updates for 2022

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 5.9% in 2022. That’s the highest increase in nearly 40 years!

The 5.9% cost of living adjustment (COLA) will begin in January 2022 with benefits payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries. Increased payment to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin December 31, 2021. (Note: Some people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits.)

Other important changes to note include:

- The maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase from $142,800 to $147,000.
- The earnings limit for workers who are younger than “full” retirement age will increase from $18,960 to $19,560. (Social Security deducts $1 benefit for each $2 earned over $19,560.)
- The earnings limit for people reaching their “full” retirement age in 2022 will increase from $50,520 to $51,960. (Social Security deducts $1 from benefits for each $3 earned over $51,960 until the month the worker turns “full” retirement age.)
- There is no limit on earnings for workers who are “full” retirement age or older for the entire year.

Final 2022 benefit amounts will be communicated to the beneficiary in December through the mailed COLA notice or online at mySocialSecurity.com. Online notices will not be available to representative payees, individuals with foreign mailing addresses, or those who pay higher Medicare premiums to their income levels.

Source: SocialSecurity.com / Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2022

Medicare Changes after December 7th?

If you miss Medicare Open Enrollment, you still have an opportunity to make changes in your Medicare Plan. From January 1 to March 30 you may switch from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another or drop your Medicare Advantage Plan and return to Original Medicare. If you drop your Medicare Advantage Plan, you can enroll in a stand-alone Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan during this time period.

Source: Medicare.gov

Here To Help

At the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging, we specialize in providing the education, information, services and benefits important for enhancing the health and well-being of adults 60 and older. We are always available by phone Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 4:00. If calling after hours, please leave a message. We will get back to you the next business day. Our number is 607-753-5060. We can also be reached by email: ccaaa@cortland-co.org.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Expect with Medicare Part A and Part B Cost-Sharing for 2022!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will be making a number of cost-sharing changes to the Medicare Part A and B programs in 2022. Key changes are listed below:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Medicare Part A allows for 60 life-time reserve days in the hospital/acute care setting. The daily co-insurance rate will increase from $742 to $778. This is a $36 increase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Medicare Part A skilled nursing/nursing home daily co-insurance rate from days 21-100 will increase from $185.50 per day in 2021 to $194.50 in 2022. This is an increase of $9.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Medicare Part B helps pay for services from doctors, other health care providers, outpatient care, home health care, durable medical equipment and some preventive services. The monthly premium will increase from $148.50 in 2021 to $170.10 in 2022. This is an increase of $21.60 month.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The Medicare Part B annual deductible will increase from $203 in 2021 to $233 in 2022. This is a $20 increase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source: 2022 Medicare Part A and B Premiums and Deductibles, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Fact Sheet, November 12, 2021</td>
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Rebel With a Cause (or Why I Haven’t Texted You)

By: Alice Lawson, Cortland, NY

I must admit, lest I forget, I’m “allergic” to the internet! And I can state without temerity, I have NO “manual dexterity”!
You’ll never catch me “tweeting” or “skyping,” (I almost flunked my high school typing!) People ask where I “come from.” (The only phone I have is DUMB!)

My friends say, “It’s a crying shame, but she only has herself to blame! Technology just doesn’t suit her. This woman needs a computer tutor!”

I know the rules for chess and bingo, But I don’t get this high-tech lingo. Like, what do they mean when they say “app”? Is that some kind of canine “yap”? Somethings I contemplate out loud, whatever do They mean by “cloud”?? Are we talking “nimbus” or stratus”? (I’d love to know our “celestial status!”) But as those tech terms multiply, I don’t even want to try!
How Do I Find Help with Transportation?

By: Michelle Baker, Aging Services Specialist

Most of us need help from time to time, and it is a sense of relief when you know where to go to get that help. When you do not know where to find help, it can be frustrating. When you know where to go for assistance, it can be empowering and less scary.

If transportation is a problem for you, there are some options available. Seven Valleys Health Coalition offers a special program for individuals who have some form of public assistance, have a documented hardship, and need transportation assistance only for a short time. For those who need transportation for non-medical appointments, groceries, or to pick up medications, this is great option.

Seven Valleys Health Coalition also offers a transportation program for those seeking employment, but have transportation challenges. Eligible consumers can get transportation to/from their job or job training for approximately six weeks. This time frame will give the consumer additional time to arrange for more stable, permanent transportation.

Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO) also has transportation options. CAPCO also works with Seven Valleys Health Coalition with transportation. CAPCO provides transportation to medical appointments for those who are covered under a Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) program such as Nascentia, Fidelis, and iCircle. When calling the Medicaid Answering Service (MAS) at 315-701-7400 or 855-733-9397 two to three days in advance of your appointment, just ask for CAPCO transportation service. If you require wheelchair accessibility, MAS will arrange transportation with Speedy Medical Transport.

The most well-known transportation option is Cortland Transit, which falls under the Mobility manager. The Mobility manager addresses the transportation needs of Cortland County residents, especially those of the disabled, senior, and limited income. Go to the Cortland Transit website at http://www.cortlandtransit.8m.net or http://way2gocortland.org/local-transit or call 607-758-3383 and familiarize yourself with the routes. Senior 60 years and older can also purchase a bus pass at a discounted price of $22.50! Single bus tokens can also be obtained from the Area Agency on Aging. Please call the agency at 607-753-5060 to learn times of distribution.

NY Connects ....Did You Know?

Medicare offers an array of Preventive Services for its members?

Examples of Cancer Screenings Include:

- Cervical
- Colorectal
- Lung
- Prostate
- Breast

For more information, please visit www.Medicare.gov or call NY Connects today at 607-756-3485 or 607-756-5060 for more specific information.
La mayoría de nosotros necesitamos ayuda de vez en cuando, y es una sensación de alivio cuando sabes a dónde ir para obtener esa ayuda. Cuando no sabes dónde encontrar ayuda, puede ser frustrante. Cuando sabes a dónde ir para obtener ayuda, puede ser empoderador y menos aterrador.

Si el transporte es un problema para usted, hay algunas opciones disponibles. Seven Valleys Health Coalition ofrece un programa especial para personas que tienen algún tipo de asistencia pública, tienen dificultades documentadas y necesitan asistencia de transporte solo por un corto tiempo. Para aquellos que necesitan transporte para citas no médicas, comestibles o para recoger medicamentos, esta es una gran opción.

Seven Valleys Health Coalition también ofrece un programa de transporte para aquellos que buscan empleo, pero tienen desafíos de transporte. Los consumidores elegibles pueden obtener transporte hacia / desde su trabajo o capacitación laboral durante aproximadamente seis semanas. Este marco de tiempo le dará al consumidor tiempo adicional para organizar un transporte más estable y permanente.

El Programa de Acción Comunitaria del Condado de Cortland (CAPCO) también tiene opciones de transporte. CAPCO también trabaja con Seven Valleys Health Coalition con el transporte. CAPCO proporciona transporte a citas médicas para aquellos que están cubiertos por un programa de Atención Administrada a Largo Plazo (MLTC) como Nascentia, Fidelis e iCircle. Cuando llame al Servicio de Respuesta de Medicaid (MAS) al 315-701-7400 o al 855-733-9397 dos o tres días antes de su cita, simplemente solicite el servicio de transporte de CAPCO. Si necesita accesibilidad para sillas de ruedas, MAS organizará el transporte con Speedy Medical Transport.

La opción de transporte más conocida es Cortland Transit, que depende del administrador de Movilidad. El gerente de movilidad aborda las necesidades de transporte de los residentes del Condado de Cortland, especialmente las de los discapacitados, las personas mayores y los ingresos limitados. Vaya al sitio web de Cortland Transit en http://www.cortlandtransit.net o http://way2gocortland.org/local-transit o llame al 607-758-3383 y familiarícese con las rutas. ¡Las personas mayores de 60 años o más también pueden comprar un pase de autobús a un precio con descuento de $ 22.50! Los tokens de un solo autobús también se pueden obtener de la Agencia de Área sobre el Envejecimiento. Llame a la agencia al 607-753-5060 para conocer los tiempos de distribución.

Este artículo fue traducido al español con servicio de traductor de Microsoft.

¿Cómo encuentro ayuda con el transporte?
Por Michelle Baker, Especilista en Servicios para el Envejecimiento

NY conecta... ¿Sabías que?
¿Medicare ofrece una variedad de servicios preventivos para sus miembros?

Ejemplos de exámenes de detección de cáncer incluyen:
• Próstata
• cervical
• Mama
• Pulmón
• colorectal

**Cortland Senior Center Social Activities**

**Offered Tuesdays and Thursdays**

**Who:** Cortland County Resident’s 60+, maximum of 25 participants per day

**Where:** United Presbyterian Church of Cortland
25 Church Street, Cortland, NY 13045

**When:** Every Tuesday & Thursday (Excluding Holidays)
until renovations at our new home at the Crescent Commons Building are complete

**Time:** 9:00am-12:00pm

Please join staff from Cortland County Area Agency on Aging Tuesday or Thursday for socialization activities. Come visit with friends over conversation and COVID-19 safe interactive activities, including Bingo and so much more!

**Reservations are required!**
Please call 607-753-5060 a week in advance to reserve a seat.

“Friends make the good times better and the hard times easier” -Unknown
Do COVID-19 vaccines contain microchips?
No. COVID-19 vaccines do not contain microchips. Vaccines are developed to fight against disease and are not administered to track your movement. Vaccines work by stimulating your immune system to produce antibodies, exactly like it would if you were exposed to the disease. After getting vaccinated, you develop immunity to that disease, without having to get the disease first.

Can COVID-19 vaccines cause variants?
No. COVID-19 vaccines do not create or cause variants of the virus that causes COVID-19. New variants of a virus happen because the virus that causes COVID-19 constantly changes through a natural ongoing process of mutation (change). Even before the COVID-19 vaccines, there were several variants of the virus. Looking ahead, variants are expected to continue to emerge as the virus continues to change. COVID-19 vaccines can help prevent new variants from emerging. As it spreads, the virus has more opportunities to change. High vaccination coverage in a population reduces the spread of the virus and helps prevent new variants from emerging. CDC recommends that everyone 5 years and older get vaccinated as soon as possible.

New York State allows discounts on the upcoming property tax season.

**School Tax Relief Programs (STAR)** is a state program designed to provide a partial exemption from school property taxes for owner occupied, primary residences. The STAR benefit applies only to school district taxes. It doesn’t apply to county, town, or city taxes.

New homeowners need to apply for STAR online. Please visit the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance website at [https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star/](https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star/).

**Basic STAR**
- available for owner-occupied, primary residences;
- the income limit for the Basic STAR credit is $500,000;
  - the income limit for the Basic STAR exemption is $250,000

**Enhanced STAR**
provides an increased benefit for the primary residences of homeowners age 65 and older with qualifying incomes of $90,550 or less for 2021 or $92,000 for 2022

**Exemption Filing Deadline: March 1** (for both new and renewals)
The Cortland County Area Agency on Aging encourages homeowners to contact your local assessor, listed below, for application assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Cortland, Homer and Virgil</th>
<th>Brian Fitts</th>
<th>31 North Main Street Homer, NY 13077</th>
<th>607 749-3153</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cortlandville</td>
<td>David Briggs</td>
<td>3577 Terrace Road Cortland, NY 13045</td>
<td>607 756-7306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnatus</td>
<td>Caitlyn Brown</td>
<td>31 North Main Street Homer, NY 13077</td>
<td>607-749-0546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freetown, Lapeer, Marathon, Taylor, Willet</td>
<td>Frances Butler</td>
<td>40 West Main Street PO Box 366 Marathon, NY 13803</td>
<td>607 849-6966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuyler, Preble, Scott, Truxton</td>
<td>William Bearup</td>
<td>6361 Prospect Terrace PO Box 37 Truxton, NY 13158</td>
<td>607 842-6289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harford, Solon</td>
<td>Larry Fitts</td>
<td>31 North Main Street Homer, NY 13077</td>
<td>607 749-3473</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Information provided by NYS Department of Taxation and Finance
Mindfulness: What It Is and How It Helps
By: Matthew Kemak, Aging Services Coordinator

The COVID19 pandemic has brought many challenges to the forefront of our lives, with everyone at some point experiencing heightened stress and anxiety. Prior to COVID, and even sometimes now, no one knew what the term Mindfulness was, yet alone what it can do for you.

Mindfulness, as explained by the Mayo Clinic, is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment.¹

In a recent article by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), mindfulness is explained simply as “paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally”.²

You might ask: why should I be doing this? The Mayo Clinic lists multiple benefits of mindfulness, especially for those with stress, anxiety, pain, depression, insomnia, and high blood pressure. Through mindfulness meditation, you can improve your attention, decrease burnout, improve your sleep, and help with diabetes control.¹

Besides meditation, the Mayo Clinic also lists exercises you can try.¹

- **Pay attention:** Slow down and notice things in front of you.
  
  Focus on all of your senses.

- **Live in the moment:** Enjoy what is in front of you.

- **Accept yourself:** Treat yourself like you would a good friend.

- **Focus on your breathing:** Take time for deep breaths, close your eyes, and feel the air moving in and out.

New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) also has offered an assist by partnering with GetSetUp, an online platform where you can view and participate live with many different events and programs. GetSetUp currently lists six options when mindfulness is searched, ranging from Tai Chi classes to journaling.

Greg Olsen, Director of NYSOFA, said, “This partnership will expand our ability to reduce isolation, depression, and anxiety by significantly expanding virtual programming into the homes of isolated older adults to keep them connected. We are thrilled to partner with The Association on Aging in New York and GetSetUp.”³

GetSetUp is free while funding continues, and can be accessed at [https://www.getsetup.io/partner/nystate](https://www.getsetup.io/partner/nystate). You can then create an account and search for any classes that might interest you!

Sources:


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Thank You to the LASS Grant Selection Committee!

Kristen Avery,
Seven Valleys Health Coalition
Pastor Nate Metzler, Berean Bible Church
Cindy Craig, RN
Jan Dempsey, Older Americans Act Advisory Board
Ann Homer, Legislator
Kevin Fitch, Legislator
Liz Haskins, Director
Public transportation is an easy, inexpensive, and environmentally friendly way to travel. No matter if you are home or on vacation, it can save you money. Plus it’s environmentally friendly, as it reduced the amount of carbon emissions in the atmosphere. If you have never ridden public transportation, then the thought of doing so might be a little daunting. However, public transportation is super simple and should not be feared.

Try following the 5 simple tips below to have a successful trip on Cortland Transit.

1. Make a Plan
   - If you’re not sure you can do the public transportation thing, start small with one goal of taking public transportation at least one day a week until you figure it out.
   - Need help, don’t hesitate to contact Cortland County’s Mobility Manager, Melissa Potter at 607-756-3416 to help you get on the correct route to get you where you need to go. You can also go to www.way2gocortland.org to view the route map.

2. Be Prepared for the Weather
   - Living in Cortland, NY, the weather changes so much. Dress for the weather, so you are not uncomfortable while waiting for the bus to arrive or transferring to other buses.

3. Flag Down
   - Based on the route you need, when you see the bus going in the desired direction, put your hand in the air to “flag down” the bus. The driver will pull over to let you on the bus.
   - Tell the driver where you want to go and they will make sure to stop at your desired location on the route. There is also a pull cord in the bus that can be pulled to indicate to the driver you would like to get off the bus.

4. Have the Exact Fare
   - Have the exact fare on hand when you board the bus, which is $1.50 for routes 1-4, $2.00 for routes 5, 6, 8-15 and $5.00 for route 7. Monthly passes for routes 1-6 are $45.00 and routes 1-7 are $85.00.
   - Do you qualify for a reduced fare? If you are 60 years or older, you can ride half fare on the fixed routes. Just be sure to have your reduced fare card or photo ID available to show the driver.
   - If you are a person with disabilities, call Cortland Transit a head of time to get a half-fare card to be eligible to pay the reduced fare price. All buses are wheelchair accessible.

5. Check Your Seat
   - When the bus stops, check where you were sitting to make sure you left nothing behind and thank the driver as you get off. Be sure to watch your step.

Public transportation is often a safe and easy way to get around town. If you are a senior and simply do not like driving your own car, or do not own a car, then public transportation can help you regain your independence. Be sure to follow these tips; and if you need any assistance with navigating bus maps, bus routes or assessing your best transportation option, feel free to contact Melissa Potter at 607-756-3416 or mpotter@cortland-co.org or visit www.way2gocortland.org for more information.
To help defray the cost of printing and mailing, the Area Agency on Aging accepts paid advertisements for Senior News. Acceptance of ads does not constitute endorsement of any service, product or business.

We’re on the Web:

https://www.facebook.com/CCAreaAgencyonAging

CORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Cortland Housing Authority has 380 high quality apartments available in its senior/disabled and family developments throughout Cortland County. A single person could earn up to $40,500; and a family of five up to $62,500 and still qualify to live in one of our apartments.

We have senior/disabled efficiency and one bedroom apartments located in the City of Cortland. We also have one bedroom senior/disabled units in Homer, McGraw, Marathon, Truxton and Cincinnatus. Our large family apartments (3, 4 and 5 bedrooms) are located in the City of Cortland. We also have two and three bedroom family apartments scattered throughout the county in Homer, Truxton, McGraw, Cincinnatus and the City of Cortland. There are short waiting lists for apartments in most of our developments.

Call 607.753.1771 today for an application or email request at info@cortlandha.com
**Changing Your Address? Please Let Us Know**

Whether it is temporary or permanent, the Area Agency on Aging appreciates knowing your new address. This will help keep our mailing list up to date and avoid the expense of mail returned to us by the post office (we are charged approximately $1.25 for each newsletter returned).

If your change of address is temporary, or if you do not have second-class mail forwarded, please let us know. We’ll send your newsletter to your temporary address until you notify us of your return.

To notify us of your change of address:

* Call the Area Agency on Aging: (607)753-5060 or
* Use the convenient form below.

We appreciate your help.

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**Change of Address**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective from (Date)</td>
<td>If Temporary, to (Date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail to: Area Agency on Aging 60 Central Avenue Cortland, NY 13045</td>
<td>Please remove my name from the mailing list.</td>
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