



Sharing the Spirit

January - March 2024

A Publication of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and the Herkimer County Office for the Aging



Graduates of the WISE Program held at the Ilion Parish Center

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Medicare and cost savings programs for 2024.

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Herkimer County OFA Christmas Giving Program 2023.

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Essentials for Winter Car Safety

Director's Chair

Happy New Year!

I cannot believe 2024 is here already! We're starting this year off with a new look. Let us know what you think about our newsletter and what you would like to see in future issues.

This past year has been a very busy one for all of us. Thank you for taking such good care of our family and friends here in Herkimer County! The services you provide are essential to the health and wellbeing of our community and we couldn't do it without you! I look forward to working with you all in 2024.

Wishing you a Happy New Year filled with countless Blessings and New Adventures,

Rae Raffle-Maxson

Director of RSVP, Health and Assistance Programs

"A Blessed New Year"

May the road you walk be a smooth one,

May your troubles be few-if any.

May the days and years that lie ahead,

Be healthy, happy and many.

May you have friends in abundance.

May the sun shine bright around you.

May the world be a wonderful place to live,

And may God's love always surround you.



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Kateri's Thrift Store	315-823-1793
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Transportation (Medical/Non-Medical) Old Forge—Daily	315-369-2830

Upcoming Holidays and Events:

Jan. 1st: New Years Day
Jan. 15th: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Feb. 14th: Valentine's Day
Feb. 19th: Presidents Day
Mar. 10th: Daylight Saving Starts
Mar. 17th: St. Patrick's Day
Mar. 29th: Good Friday
Mar. 31st: Easter

If you would like to help support Sharing the Spirit, or if you have additional comments, questions, or suggestions, please contact:
 Herkimer County Office for the Aging,
 Sharing the Spirit
 109 Mary Street, Suite 1101
 Herkimer, NY 13350

315-867-1121

HIICAP News for Winter 2024

January – March of each year is the Medicare Advantage (MA) Open Enrollment Period. Anyone in a MA plan on January 1 will be able to make one additional change to how they receive their Medicare benefits. Beneficiaries can change to a different Medicare Advantage plan, or switch to Original Medicare (with or without a Part D plan).

The **General Enrollment Period** is an opportunity for people who did not enroll in Medicare Part B when first eligible, and who don't qualify for a Special Enrollment Period, to enroll in Part B. The GEP runs from January – March of each calendar year, with Part B becoming effective the 1st of the month after enrollment. A late enrollment penalty of 10% of the standard Part B premium may apply for each 12 months that one went without Part B coverage.

2024 Medicare Costs

The standard **Medicare Part B monthly premium is \$174.70** and the **Part B annual deductible is \$240** in 2024. **Most Medicare beneficiaries qualify for premium free Part A** through their own or their spouses work history, those who do not will be able to purchase Part A. Individuals with less than 30 quarters of Medicare-covered employment in 2023 for \$505 per month, while those with between 30 and 39 quarters will pay \$278. The **Part A deductible is \$1,632** in 2024.

Medicare Cost Savings Programs

Until the **Medicare Savings Program (MSP)** income guidelines for 2024 are released in late March, the 2023 income limits of **\$2,280**(single) and **\$3,077**(married) will be used along with your 2023 income to determine your eligibility for the MSP in 2024. The benefits of qualifying for the Medicare Savings Program is twofold: You will receive Part B Medicare(\$174.70/mo) without paying for it and you will receive the Extra Help benefit for your prescription coverage.

The **Extra Help** benefit is a federal program that helps you pay for some or most of the costs of Medicare prescription drug coverage. If your monthly income is up to **\$1,843** for singles

(**\$2,485** for couples) and your assets are below \$17,220(single) \$34,360 (couple), you may be eligible for Extra Help. You can apply for this program online at www.ssa.gov or if you are receiving Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income or the Medicare Savings Program you will automatically qualify for Extra Help.

Another program available to New York residents 65 and over is the **EPIC program**. If your income is below **\$75,000** for singles, and **\$100,000** for couples you would qualify for the EPIC program. This program may pay all or a portion of your Part D premium and lower your copays for prescriptions. There are fee and deductible plans, your income determines which plan you qualify for.

If you are a Herkimer County resident and have questions about Medicare, or would like to apply for a Medicare Cost Savings Program, please contact—

HIICAP

Catholic Charities of Herkimer County

61 West Street , Ilion, NY 13357

315-894-9917 ext 252

Thank you!

Tai Chi Exercise Classes

Begins on Thursday, February 8, 2024



First United Methodist Church
127 North Prospect Street,
Herkimer, NY 13350
From 1:30-2:30 PM

The class will run every Monday and Thursday for 8 weeks (16 sessions total) If you want to improve your strength & balance come join us! **Please call to register for the class.**

There will be a limit of 15 participants, so Register Early! Call Herkimer County Office For the Aging At **315-867-1371**

8 Interesting Easter Facts

1. **Easter baskets have special symbolism:** They represent birds' nests and new life, especially when filled with eggs.
2. **Easter clothes used to be considered good luck:** Old superstition held that if you wore new clothes on Easter, you would have good luck for the rest of the year.
3. **The Easter Bunny originates from Germany:** The idea of an Easter Bunny delivering candy and eggs originated in Germany during the Middle ages.
4. **Americans eat about 1.5 million Peeps during Easter.**
5. **In 1953, it took 27 hours to make one Peep:** This was back when Peeps were still new, and they were handmade with a pastry tube. Now, it only takes 6 minutes thanks to a machine they call "The Depositor".
6. **The largest chocolate egg was over 34 feet tall:** It was produced in Italy in 2011, and weighed almost 16,000 pounds!
7. **Egg decorating started in Ukraine:** The tradition of creating pysanky (decorated eggs) was brought to the U.S. and influenced Easter traditions.
8. **In Switzerland, there is an Easter Bird instead of an Easter Bunny:** The cuckoo is a bird that symbolizes rebirth and growth in Switzerland, and they make a bit more sense than a bunny leaving eggs behind.

"This is my family's traditional meat pie recipe, which my mom made every Easter." -Rosemary DeLuke

Recipes

Easter Meat Pie

Crust: 1 3/4 cups Crisco

1 tsp. salt

7 cups flour

1 tbs. baking powder

3 eggs, beaten

3/4 cup warm milk

3/4 cup warm water

Filling: 3 slices diced ham

3 sticks sliced pepperoni

2 cubed basket cheese

1 lb coarse ricotta

1 tbs. black pepper

1/2 cup grated romano cheese

5 well beaten eggs

Step 1:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mix all of the ingredients for the filling together. Set aside.

Step 2:

Roll crust out in large cookie sheet (or two pie pans) and add the filling mix.

Step 3:

Cover with crust, and glaze the crust with beaten egg yolk.

Step 4:

Bake for approximately 50 minutes, then enjoy!



Christmas Gifts for Older Adults in Herkimer County!

Office for the Aging placed gift tags on the Christmas tree in the Office for the Aging in Herkimer. With the help of county employees, Legislators, local churches, Fidelis, Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield and many other community members and organizations, the Office for the Aging will distribute over 180 Christmas gifts to older adults in Herkimer County. The Office for the Aging partnered with the Old Forge Library to bring some joy to our older adults in the North Country. The older adults who receive these gifts are always so thankful that someone was thinking of them.

Office for the Aging staff and volunteers will deliver the packages to the older adults. The staff and volunteers are always greeted with smiles. These individuals appreciate the generosity of all of those individuals who contributed to this effort.

We hope to continue this event in 2024 and hopefully we will be able to provide additional older adults a bit of Christmas cheer. Office for the Aging staff would like to thank all individuals who assisted with this effort. Every gesture of kindness helps make our community a better place to live.

The Office for the Aging would like to remind community members to stop in and visit with an older adult during this time of the year. You will make their day.



Volunteer News

Volunteer Opportunities with RSVP

Adults who are 55 and older who want to volunteer may believe that there are limited options, or that if they don't have transportation then there is nothing they can do. With the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Catholic Charities of Herkimer County, there are many opportunities for volunteering. Here are some of the current sites that are available for you to volunteer at throughout Herkimer County:

Retired Individuals Driving Elderly (RIDE):

This is a volunteer-based program that provides transportation and companionship for older adults to their medical appointments. In order to volunteer to provide transportation, you will need your own vehicle. You can also volunteer to be a dispatcher for the RIDE Program, and help receive calls and arrange transports.

Food Pantries: There are eight emergency feeding programs in Herkimer County, you would assist in distributing food and grocery products directly to those in need. The eight locations include Dolgeville, Frankfort/Ilion, Kuyahora in West Canada/Poland, Little Falls, Salvation Army in Herkimer, St. Bartholomew in Old Forge, VanHornesville/Jordanville, and West Winfield Food Pantry.

Food \$en\$e: A food co-op program that offers quality food at a reasonable price that distributes once per month. You would assist in assembling the food packages. (Located in Ilion)

HOPE Ministries: A program designed to help the elderly remain independent by providing services such as shopping for or with a HOPE recipient, doing laundry, light housekeeping, friendly visiting, and non-medical transportation. For those without transportation, there are also friendly phone calls.

Herkimer County Office for the Aging would like to express our sincere appreciation to Eileen Manno from Frankfort and Carolyn Trimbach from Old Forge. Eileen and Carolyn have served on our Advisory Council for many years. These two individuals have given so much to our office and to their communities. They will be missed.



(Eileen Manno, Kathy Fox, Carolyn Trimbach)

Kateri's Thrift Store: Providing quality used clothing and household items to families. Volunteers would assist in receiving donations and serving clients (Located in Little Falls).

Health Insurance Information, Counseling, and Assistance Program (HIICAP): Volunteers provide clients with free, unbiased, and confidential information related to Medicare and options for medical and prescription coverage. Volunteers would be trained to perform Medicare counseling and data entry.

Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE): Volunteers with the WISE Program can assist both WSE facilitators and participants during the WISE program. Volunteers are also welcome to be part of the WISE Advisory Committee.

If you are interested in volunteering with any of these sites, contact the RSVP program today!

315-894-9917 x236

Food \$en\$e is a monthly food buying co-op for anyone who wants to stretch their grocery dollars. Food \$en\$e provides a monthly box of 12 -15 staple grocery items at a discounted price.

There are no qualifications, no subscriptions, and no requirements to participate in Food \$en\$e.

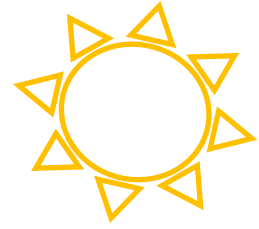
To place an online order with the Food \$en\$e Program or learn more about the Food \$en\$e Program, including the monthly menu, please visit:

www.foodbankcny.org

For more information call Catholic Charities of Herkimer County at
315-894-9917x254

**Don't forget on
Sunday,
March 10th, to
Spring your
clocks forward by
one hour!**

Why does Daylight Saving Time Exist?



The ritual of changing the clocks twice a year to get more daylight has been in place for more than 50 years. But debates in state legislatures and Congress show that there's some interest in stopping the process.

At least 45 states have considered or passed legislation to shift to permanent daylight saving time or permanent standard time. In 2022, the Senate passed the Sunshine Protection Act, which would move the US to permanent daylight saving time. But the bill has not received a vote in the House of Representatives.

Time zones in the US began in the late 1800s to help railroad companies coordinate along time and to reduce the likelihood of trains crashing due to differences in how time was kept. Before this, there were over 144 local time zones in North America.

The government didn't alter time zones until 1918, with the passage of the Standard Time Act of 1918. At that time, the Interstate Commerce Commission, which regulated railroads at the time, was put in charge of time zones.

In 1918, the agency started the first instance of daylight saving time in the US to help conserve fuel and power during World War I. The idea was that shifting time to get more daylight hours would reduce the need for lighting. After the war's conclusion, daylight saving time was abolished nationally, with some states continuing the practice.

The founding of the Department of Transportation led to the current version of daylight saving time with the passage of the Uniform Time Act of 1966.

Source: <https://usafacts.org/articles/why-does-daylight-saving-time-exist/>

Essentials for Winter Car Safety

Your winter emergency kit should include basic survival supplies, safety items, car maintenance tools, and winter clothing. These items will help you stay comfortable and hydrated if you ever get stuck on the side of the road or have to wait out a storm. Gather up your supplies, pack them into a storage bin or large backpack, and place your roadside emergency kit inside your car before venturing out into the cold weather.

Flashlight:

- Can help you find your way back to the road.
- Can be used to signal others for help.
- Be sure to bring extra batteries as well.

Bag of Cat Litter:

- Can be used for tire traction.
- Can be replaced with sand or road salt.

Snow Shovel:

- This will be used to keep snow from piling up around the car or burying it.
- Cars need to be visible to rescue teams, so limit the snow build up and be sure the tail lights are not covered.

First Aid Kit:

- Can help with minor scrapes.
- If daily medication is used, extras should be packed into the first aid kit.

Ice Scraper:

- This tool is always vital during the winter.

Jumper Cables:

- In case the car battery dies, you will need to jump start your car.
- Avoid any moisture near the cables.

Water:

- Dehydration is a serious threat when

stranded.

- Keep a large jug of water (preferably glass) in your car, and replace it every few months.

Blanket:

- Can keep you warm or be used as padding when working on your car.
- Consider bringing a reflective blanket or sleeping bag as well.

Cell Phone Charger:

- This should be kept in your car year round, also consider bringing a portable charger.
- If needed, print out an emergency contact list to keep in your car, in case your phone dies and you can use someone else's.

Reflective Triangles:

- Breaking down on the road can put you at risk of other drivers, so triangles will make your car more visible and protected.

Non-Perishable Snacks:

- Things like granola bars, nuts, crackers, dried fruit, and jerky.
- These should also be replaced every few months, or sooner if they expire.

Matches:

- Waterproof matches (or a lighter) can provide light and warmth in an emergency.

Toolkit:

- This can be useful year round in your car.

If you have the room, consider bringing some of the following items as well; Extra winter clothes, snow boots, duct tape, tire chains, empty gas can, tow strap, fire extinguisher, road flare, snow brush, and traction mats.

Source: <https://www.thezebra.com/resources/driving/winter-car-emergency-kit/>

Feel free to cut out this checklist to use for your own car!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight + Batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bag of Cat Litter/
Sand/Road Salt | <input type="checkbox"/> Blanket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Shovel | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone Charger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Reflective Triangles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Scraper | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Perishable Snacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumper Cables | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches/Lighter |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Toolkit |

“Every year for St. Patrick’s Day my mom will make these Irish Potato Candies (although she usually has to make a double batch). They are so easy yet so tasty!” - Hannah Napier

Recipes

Irish Potato Candy

Servings: **60**

Total Time: **30 mins**

- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 4 cups confectioners’ sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups flaked coconut
- 1 tbs. ground cinnamon

Step 1:

Beat cream cheese and butter together in a large bowl until smooth. Add confectioners’ sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth. Mix in flaked coconut.

Step 2:

Roll mixture into balls or potato shapes; roll balls in cinnamon. Place onto a cookie sheet and chill to set, at least 10 minutes. If desired, roll potatoes in cinnamon again for a darker color.



Volunteer Birthdays

January	February	March
1 Dave Manno	3 Heidi Benson	1 William Parody
4 Daniel Harder	8 Vicky Bandyche	2 Karen Noble
5 Nina Rumrill	8 Betsy Newman	4 Beth Margulis
6 Linda Vincent	8 Mary Ulasewicz	6 David Near
7 Nancy C. Smith	8 Joan VanSlyke	8 Carole Jean Crimmins
12 Barbara Cormia	8 Elizabeth C. Wilson	10 Carol Hadcock
13 Madeline Stehpenson	10 Ann Nathan	14 Martha Caliguire
15 Marlene Artessa	10 Elizabeth Ryan	14 Frances Pomichter
15 Cathleen Treen	18 George Rutt	18 Carol Okusko
17 Janet Darling	22 Martha Mamrosch	20 Marianne O'Donnell
21 MaryGee Estes	24 Gerald Fluharty	22 Paula Cooper
24 Christine Pettengill	25 Catherine Caesar-Brown	22 Margaret Harder
24 Angela Richards	25 Douglas Capraro	25 Joanne Kucerak
28 James R. Conover	26 Jean Stack	29 Patricia Haberek
28 Maryel Wallace		30 Nicholas Chuff
29 David Drake		30 Sandra Darrow
29 Donna Gage		30 Susan Tucker
		31 Ruth Solan

Rose Petal Sugar Scrub



1. Start with 1 cup of dried rose petals
2. Pulse the petals in a food processor until they become tiny flakes
3. Combine the crushed petals with 2 cups of sugar, 2/3 cup coconut oil, and 6-8 drops of your favorite essential oil for fragrance (optional)
4. Mix well and then spoon into a storage container. This recipe makes about 16-18 ounces of sugar scrub, so it fits nicely in a mason jar. (Lasts 2 weeks)

I have wings but I cannot fly, I am a royal but not a king, I lay eggs but I am not a chicken. What am I?

A Penguin

Spellbound

By Emily Brontë

The night is darkening round me,

The wild winds coldly blow;

But a tyrant spell has bound me

And I cannot, cannot go.

The giant trees are bending

Their bare boughs weighed with snow.

And the storm is fast descending,

And yet I cannot go.

Clouds beyond clouds above me,

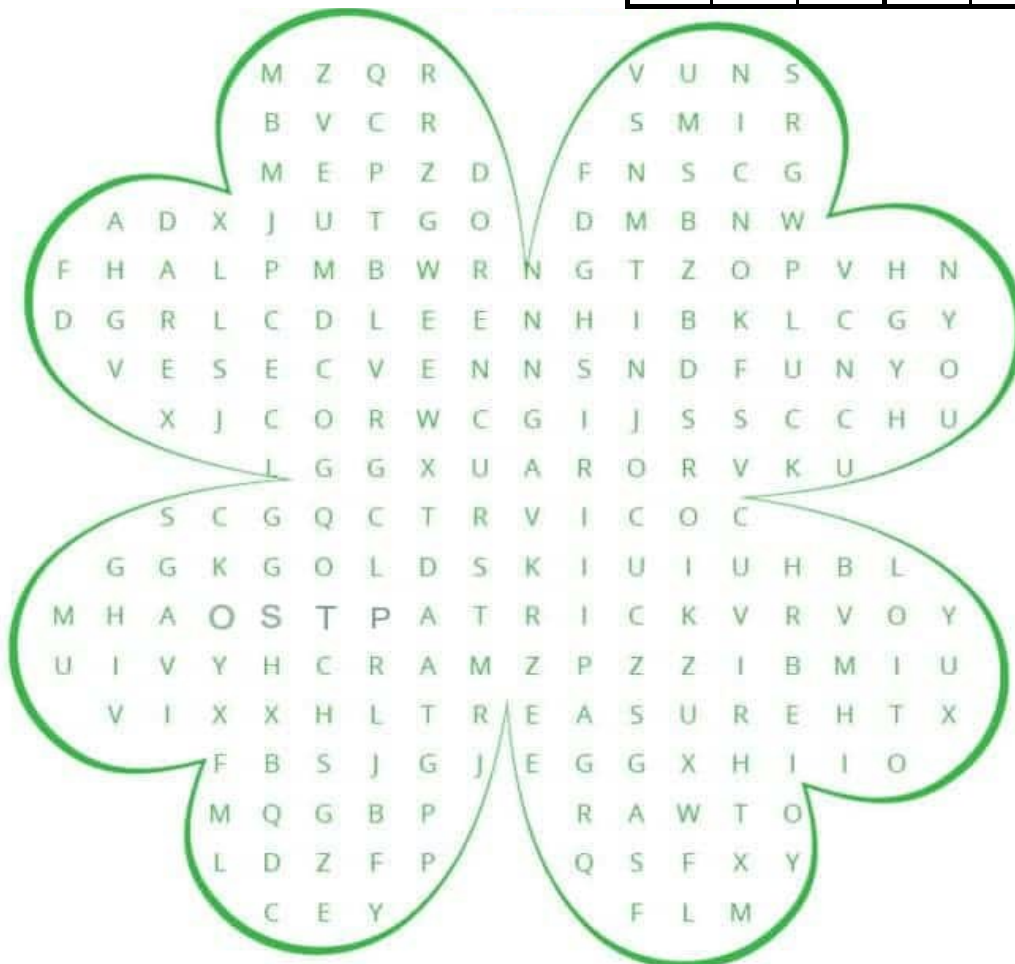
Wastes beyond wastes below;

But nothing drear can move me;

I will not, cannot go.

Just for Fun!

8		4						
9	6	1	4	7		2		
					1		4	
3	4			2				
	1							
	8	9			4	6	2	3
6			1	4			8	
1	2				7	3	6	4
	9	3	2	8				1



RAINBOW
ST PATRICK
TREASURE
IRISH
GREEN
LUCK
GOLD
MARCH
CLOVER

Join us today!

For more information
contact Hannah at
315-894-9917 x233

Or check out our website!
wiseherkimercounty.org



RSVP of Herkimer County is proud to offer the **Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE)** Program. **WISE** is a FREE 6-week program that celebrates healthy aging and empowers older adults to make healthy choices through interactive lessons.

Some topics covered in the WISE Program include Health & Wellness, Depression, Substance Misuse, Medication Use/Misuse, and Stress Management. Call us today for an opportunity to engage with your peers as you take charge of your health!

Sharing the Spirit
61 West Street
Ilion, NY 13357

