



Office Closures:

FOR APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2026

Our office, dining sites & home delivered meal closures are as follows:

Monday, May 25, 2026 - Memorial Day  
Friday, June 19, 2026 - Juneteenth



Get Our Newsletter, OFA Events & More!

Want to be in the know about OFA updates, events, announcements and maybe even some activities going on within the community? Just call our office at 315-376-5313 and let us know you would like to be added to our email listing! You will get all the information “hot off the press” like our Aquatics & Walk with Ease schedules, informational Senior Forums, the Nutrition Program menu, as well as our annual events like Healthy Aging Day at the Fair, Fall Fest, or our annual Popcorn & Movie event. PLEASE NOTE: If you have a **twcny.rr.com email address**, we are not able to send out emails to you in this capacity due to settings made on Charter/Spectrum’s end. However, we would be happy to use an alternate email address if you have one. Another way to get the latest information & updates is to visit our website at [lewiscountyny.gov/departments/office-for-the-aging](http://lewiscountyny.gov/departments/office-for-the-aging).

HEAP Benefits

**Home Energy Assistance Program**

A reminder that the HEAP program still has benefits available! The regular HEAP program is scheduled to close on April 7<sup>th</sup>, or until funding for the program has run out. If you have already received your regular benefit and are in an emergency situation, the *Emergency HEAP* program opened on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. You will need a statement faxed from your fuel vendor to the Department of Social Services (DSS) stating that you are below a quarter of a tank with the date of your last delivery. This should be faxed to DSS at 315-376-5032. You will then need to call the HEAP Department at DSS and speak with them to apply for your emergency HEAP benefit at 315-376-5400, option 6. If you have not applied for the regular HEAP benefit and would like an application, or would like assistance filling out your application, please call our office at 315-376-5313.

**Income Guidelines:**

<u>HH Size:</u>	<u>Tier 1:</u>	<u>Tier 2:</u>
1	0 - 1,695	1,696 - 3,473
2	0 - 2,291	2,292 - 4,542
3	0 - 2,887	2,888 - 5,611
4	0 - 3,482	3,483 - 6,680
5	0 - 4,078	4,079 - 7,749
6	0 - 4,674	4,675 - 8,818



# NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK



National Volunteer Week is celebrated annually during the third week of April and this year it will be observed from April 19<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup>. This week-long celebration is about placing a spotlight on inspiring figures whose invaluable seeds of kindness through volunteering are bettering the community and our world in general. This significant celebration which was established in 1974 provides the perfect opportunity to say thank you. It also challenges us to do better and look for ways to be active participants, joining hands to impact our local communities and calling for more support.

This year, our Lewis County Office for the Aging volunteer program had 55 total volunteers! These volunteers help out in many different areas, such as greeting people, setting up the tables or helping serve the meals at our dining sites; the Friendly Visiting program has volunteers check in routinely with their placements by popping in to visit, have lunch or coffee, help with errands, or just call to check-in; the Senior Advisory Council members attend meetings to represent their district and take information back; other volunteers fill out greeting cards, shop, wrap or deliver gifts for our Santa for Seniors Program; and others will deliver Home Delivered Meals or deliver this quarterly newsletter to local businesses. In 2025, our 55 volunteers had a total of 1,498 volunteer hours and we thank each and everyone of you!

On Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> we will celebrate our volunteers at our **Volunteer Appreciation Event**. This event honors each and every one of our volunteers who have taken time out of their day to help our programs and local older adults in need. Whether it's an hour a week or 400 hours for the year, EVERY VOLUNTEER MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

During our **Volunteer Appreciation Event**, we always honor our *Volunteer of the Year*. This year we are honoring **Renee Dino!** Renee was a *Friendly Visitor* with a placement who had no close supports. Renee would pop in routinely to visit and help out with light housework and local errands and even offered to take the laundry home to wash, dry, fold & return. As time went on Renee noticed a significant decline in her placement's health and was always quick to notify our office of her findings. During this time, Renee advocated for her placement so she could receive other needed services from other local agencies. Because her placement found it difficult living in a second floor apartment, Renee also advocated in helping them find alternate housing. Together, with the help of another local agency, they were even able to connect with an estranged family member who lived out of state. Renee has gone above and beyond with her volunteering service this past year. She had a total of 121.75 hours spent with her placement. We thank you Renee for your caring heart and dedication you put into our Friendly Visiting program!

## HOW TO OBSERVE NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

### **Get involved**

Do more than applaud; let your impact be felt. One look around your community, and you find various ways in which you can lend your support.

### **Spread the word**

Volunteers are often overworked, so there's always a need for more people. Be a part of the movement to call on more volunteers by using your social media to send the message out.

### **Say thank you**

Appreciating volunteers goes a long way to making them feel good about their impact and driving them to do more. You could do personalized gifts, host an appreciation gala, write a note, email, or thank them in person.

If you would like more information, or are interested in becoming a volunteer through Lewis County Office for the Aging, simply call our office at 315-376-5313 and we'll connect you!



# COME VISIT A MEALSITE!



Do you or does somebody you know enjoy a good, home cooked meal, like to socialize, or would just like to get out more? Then we're inviting you to come visit one of our dining sites for all of the above! There are five dining sites located throughout Lewis County that you can try...Copenhagen, Croghan, Harrisville, Lowville and Lyons Falls.

Throughout this year, Public Health will be presenting at a few of our dining sites on different health topics, such as the one coming up in June, on Loneliness. Our dining sites also serve special meals throughout the year, like our **Easter Meal** coming up on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Why not call mom or dad and "take them out to dinner" for our **Mother's Day meal** in May, or the **Father's Day meal** in June? So, now that this long, harsh and cold winter is nearing the end, we invite you to get out with a friend or family member to one of our sites.....and don't forget to spread the word, because we all know that word of mouth is the most effective way for promoting positive things, like our dining site program!

If you plan to attend a dining site, you can RSVP by calling the dining site you'd like to attend, or you may call our meal line at 315-376-2661.

*2026 Meal Site*  
**PRESENTATIONS:**

Public Health will be presenting at our different meal sites on the following dates:

<b>STROKE AWARENESS</b>	Harrisville - Wednesday, March 4th Croghan - Wednesday, March 11th Lowville - Wednesday, March 18th
<b>LONELINESS</b>	Harrisville - Wednesday, June 3rd Croghan - Wednesday, June 10th Lowville - Wednesday, June 17th
<b>MEDICATION MANAGEMENT</b>	Harrisville - Wednesday, August 5th Croghan - Wednesday, August 12th Lowville - Wednesday, August 19th
<b>FALL PREVENTION</b>	Harrisville - Wednesday, December 2nd Croghan - Wednesday, December 9th Lowville - Wednesday, December 16th

**All presentations begin at 11:00am**

PLEASE RESERVE YOUR MEAL BY NOTIFYING THE APPROPRIATE MEAL SITE, OR BY CALLING OFFICE FOR THE AGING AT 315-376-5313.




## Special Meals:



### Easter Meal - April 2<sup>nd</sup>

- Ham with Gravy
- Mashed Potatoes
- Mixed Vegetables
- Dinner Roll
- Cook's Choice Pie

### Cinco De Mayo Meal May 5<sup>th</sup> -or- May 7<sup>th</sup> (TBD)

### Mother's Day Meal May 14<sup>th</sup>

### Father's Day Meal June 18th



### Suggested Contributions:

- \$4.00/meal - 60+
- \$11.00/meal - under 60

\*Contributions can be made by **cash, check**, through **SNAP** benefits, or **online** through our website at [lewiscountyny.gov/departments/office-for-the-aging](http://lewiscountyny.gov/departments/office-for-the-aging) and look for the **Donate Online** button.

# INTRODUCING SILVERSHIELD

With all the scams going around, especially targeting the older generations, NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and the Association on Aging in New York (AAA) bring you **SilverShield**. This service acts as a personal scam assistant. It is a simple way to check, report, and share suspicious messages or situations. This is not a free service, however New Yorker's do get 20% off, but if you are one of the first 30 people that we refer through our office to SilverShield, you will receive it for FREE! If this is something you or someone you know could benefit from, please call our office at 315-376-5313.



## STAY SAFE FROM SCAMS WITH SILVERSHIELD

20% Off for New Yorkers

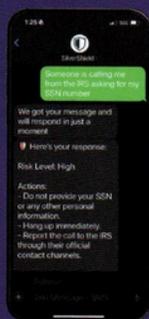


Residents of select counties may qualify for a **FREE** SilverShield license  
Email [info@silvershield.ai](mailto:info@silvershield.ai) to check eligibility

### Get Started Today

Visit [www.silvershield.ai](http://www.silvershield.ai)

Use Code NEWYORK for 20% off



Scan the QR with your phone camera to get started

### What is SilverShield?

Your personal scam assistant. A simple way to check, report, and share suspicious messages or situations.

- ✓ Instant scam checks via text and email
- ✓ Clear guidance on what to do next
- ✓ Easy reporting to FBI and FTC

# LIVING WELL WITH CHRONIC DISEASES



Sick and tired of being sick and tired? Well, take charge!! Sign up for the **Healthy Living** Program which is sure to help anyone with conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, heart conditions, high blood pressure, respiratory difficulties and chronic pain conditions.

**FREE Six-Week Workshop**  
**9:30 AM - 12:00 PM**  
**ALL CLASSES ARE WEDNESDAYS**  
**June 3, 10, 17 & 24; July 1 & 8**  
**Human Services Building**  
**5274 Outer Stowe Street, Lowville**

## YOU WILL LEARN:

- *How to work with your doctor*
- *How to manage your symptoms*
- *New ways of solving problems*
- *How to set and achieve realistic goals*
- *Communication skills*
- *Relaxation techniques*

**For each session you attend, you will receive a North Country Fruits and Vegetables Prescription Program voucher for \$25 provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension!**

**Snacks will be provided**  
**Sign up today as seating is limited!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
**OR TO SIGN UP**

call Lewis County Office for the Aging  
315-376-5313



**NY Connects**  
Your Link to Long Term  
Services and Supports



6 IMPORTANT

# Vaccines

for Seniors that are covered by Medicare

As we age, our natural defenses weaken, resulting in a higher risk for infection from vaccine-preventable illnesses. Fortunately, there are several vaccines which can help prevent these infections. The following six vaccines are 100% covered by original Medicare and Medicare Part D. If you have Medicare Advantage, you may have to use an in-network doctor or pharmacy to obtain these vaccinations at no out-of-pocket cost:

**Influenza (Flu)** – adults age 65+ who are managing at least one chronic condition are more likely to develop complications or become hospitalized with the flu. The flu shot prevents millions of illnesses and doctor's visits each year. Getting the shot doesn't guarantee you won't get sick but it does help lower the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and complications. Flu vaccination is recommended every year. A high dose version is available specifically for older adults. Flu season typically peaks between November and March so as long as the virus is still circulating, it's not too late to get your yearly flu shot.

**Pneumococcal** – this disease can cause pneumonia (infection of the lungs), meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord), and bacteremia (infection of the bloodstream). A weakening immune system means older adults are at greater risk and can face more severe side effects of the disease. Pneumococcal vaccine consists of two shots given about a year apart. Check with your doctor to see if you've had one or more doses.

**RSV** - the RSV illness affects the lungs and breathing passageways. It is highly contagious and typically causes cold-like symptoms. RSV can cause serious illness in older adults, especially those over 60 or with underlying health conditions like heart or lung disease. Vaccination is recommended for all adults age 75 and older and those age 50-74 who are at increased risk for severe RSV. You can get the vaccine at any time, but late summer or early fall is the best time to get it. Keep in mind the RSV vaccine is not something you need every year. If you already got the shot, you do not need another one right now.

**Covid-19** – due to a natural decline in immunity as we age, older adults face a greater risk of getting infected with covid and developing severe complications. This is especially true for those with other health conditions and those who've never received a covid vaccine. Ask your healthcare provider about the best time to receive a covid shot based on the time of year, your last covid vaccination, and any recent covid infections.

**Shingles** – one in three adults contracts shingles at some point in their life, the majority of whom are 60 years or older. Researchers believe the age-related decline in immunity can trigger the reawakening of the chickenpox virus within the body, leading to a painful skin rash which can have severe side effects like fever, long-term nerve pain, loss of appetite, and physical deterioration. CDC recommends two doses of shingles vaccine separated by two to six months for adults at age 50 and older.

**Hepatitis B** – this contagious virus infects the liver which can lead to liver damage. The liver and its function changes as you age. Your risk of contracting hepatitis B increases if you have hemophilia, end-stage renal (kidney) disease, diabetes, or other conditions that lower resistance to infection. Hepatitis B vaccine is given in a series of two or three injections, depending on the specific vaccine.

Speak to your primary care provider about which vaccines you may need to protect your health. Most vaccines are available at your provider's office, the pharmacy, or at Lewis County Public Health. If you have general questions about these vaccines, or if you do not have insurance coverage, you can call the *Immunization Program* at Lewis County Public Health at 315-376-5453.

# 2026 Benefit Options

The Office for the Aging is very aware of the pressures many older adults feel when doing their monthly budgeting. We have prepared a listing of several benefit programs that could make this budgeting for health care a bit easier. Review this listing and if there are any benefits for which you may be eligible, contact the Office for the Aging at 315-376-5313. We are available to assist with the application process.

## **Medicaid**

Eligibility Guidelines - Household of one - \$1,856 per month with resource limit of \$33,038; household of two - \$2,509 with resource limit of \$44,796

What It Can Assist With - Medical expenses and home care services

## **Medicare Savings Program**

Eligibility Guidelines - Household of one - \$2,494 per month; household of two - \$3,375 per month. No resource test

What It Pays - Medicare Part B Premium of \$202.90 per month (a savings of \$2,434.80 per individual for calendar year 2026); Reduces monthly Part D plan premium, possibly even eliminating; Reduces copays for prescriptions to as low as \$5.10 for generic drugs and \$12.65 for brand drugs

## **Extra Help through Social Security Administration**

Eligibility Guidelines - Household of one - \$2,015 per month; household of two - \$2,725 per month with resource limit of \$18,090 for an individual, \$36,100 for a couple

What It Pays - Reduces monthly Part D plan premium, possibly even eliminating; Reduces copays for prescriptions to as low as \$5.10 for generic drugs and \$12.65 for brand drug

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## **Winter Blossom's Often Requested Ham Salad**

This ham salad recipe is one I have been making for years and often requested. I recently traveled from NJ to Oklahoma to make a batch for one of my friends! It's fast, simple, and great on party rye for a cocktail party, on toast or a bagel for breakfast, on rye with lettuce, thinly sliced onions, and dill (or sweet) pickles, and mayo for lunch, or with pea soup as a sandwich for dinner. It's downright yummy!

Serves: 12

### **Ingredients**

1 ½ pounds cooked ham, chopped  
¾ cup mayonnaise, or as needed  
⅓ cup dried minced onion or to taste  
⅓ cup dill pickle relish  
¼ cup brown mustard

### **Directions**

Add ham to the bowl of a food processor; pulse until finely chopped but not pasty, 6 or 7 pulses. (You may need to do this in batches.) Transfer to a large bowl; repeat with remaining ham.

Stir mayonnaise, onion, relish, and mustard into chopped ham mixture until well combined; add more mayonnaise if mixture is too dry. Chill ham salad until ready to serve.

