



## The Bullthistle Bulletin

Chenango County Area Agency on Aging  
5 Court Street  
Norwich, NY 13815  
607-337-1770



Office for  
the Aging

***July - August - September 2019 Issue***

### **SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM**

Farmers Market Coupon Booklets (\$20.00 value) will be available through our Agency again this summer! The booklets are available at **NO CHARGE** to you. Eligibility for the booklets is based on income and they are intended for Chenango County residents 60 years of age or older. Participating Farmers Markets accept the coupons for locally grown FRUITS and VEGETABLES.

You may contact the Area Agency on Aging at 337-1770 for more information. Staff will also be issuing booklets at our Senior Centers and at various Senior Housing complexes throughout the county. Again this year you can get more than one per household per eligible senior.



### **Early Reminder!**

Open Enrollment is October 15 - December 7 Call To  
Schedule An Appointment at 607-337-1770

# VA MISSION Act of 2018



Under the VA MISSION Act, Veterans can expect a variety of improvements to community care. Eligibility criteria will be different, a new urgent care benefit will be provided, and customer service will be better.

The process for receiving community care will be improved, including the following steps:

1. VA confirms Veteran's eligibility for community care under the new criteria.
2. A VA staff member assists the Veteran with scheduling the appointment or the Veteran schedules the appointment with their preferred community provider within the VA network.
3. Veteran receives care from a community provider in the VA network.
4. Community provider sends a claim to a Third Party Administrator or VA for payment.

In addition to new eligibility criteria, there are a variety of improvements under the VA MISSION Act that will make community care work better for Veterans:

- **Single community care program.** Existing programs will be combined into one single community care program. The Veterans Choice Program is coming to an end but some of its elements are being adopted into the new program. With one program and a single set of rules and processes, there is less complexity and likelihood of errors and problems.
- **Better customer service.** VA is implementing redesigned, streamlined internal processes, with improved education and communications resources for Veterans, our Veterans Service Organization (VSO) partners, and VA employees involved in community care operations. This will make administering community care easier and support excellent customer service for Veterans.
- **New urgent care benefit.** A new benefit will provide eligible Veterans with access to non-emergency care for certain conditions in the VA network of community providers. Veterans can go to any urgent care or walk-in care provider in VA's network without prior authorization from VA. There may be co-payments associated with this benefit depending on a veteran's assigned priority group and the number of times the benefit is used. **Important:** Details about the new urgent care benefit are not yet final.
- **New Community Care Network.** VA is establishing a new Community Care Network (CCN) of community providers that will be set up and administered through Third Party Administrators (TPAs). Once CCN is implemented, VA will directly coordinate with Veterans to schedule community care appointments (and in some instances continue to be able to schedule their own appointments) and support care coordination. VA's TPAs will also be required to make timely payments to community providers.
- **Modern IT systems.** VA is modernizing its information technology (IT) systems to replace a patchwork of old technology and manual processes that slowed down the administration and delivery of community care. Once in place, the new IT systems will speed up all aspects of community care-eligibility, authorizations, appointments, care coordination, claims, payments-while improving overall communication between Veterans, community providers, and VA staff members.

The new community care program will start when VA publishes final, effective regulations, expected June 6, 2019. At that time, VA's traditional community care program and the Veterans Choice Program will end, the new program will start, and the new eligibility criteria will go into effect. The urgent care benefit is also expected to be available starting June 2019.

The complete rollout of all six regions of the Community Care Network (CCN) is expected by 2020. Upgraded IT systems are also being implemented, with some expected to be completed in 2019 and others in 2020.

For more information as it becomes available or general questions please call Joe Coe, Veterans Service Officer at 607-337-1775.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



### **Chenango County Senior Citizen's Council, Inc. Grant News**

**By Deb Sanderson, Senior Council President**

The Chenango County Senior Citizen's Council, Inc. is pleased to announce that it has received a grant award of \$1750 from the Chenango Youth Philanthropy Council, a program administered by The Place in Norwich. The money received through the grant will be used to support activities at the seven senior centers operated by the Area Agency on Aging. Students from the Norwich and Sherburne-Earlville High Schools participated in this year's Philanthropy Council, awarding grants to community organizations through a competitive application process. Youth engaged in the Philanthropy Council learn about Chenango County, community needs, volunteerism and the impact it has on society. The awards were made possible through support from Chobani and the Community Foundation of South Central New York.

The Senior Council would like to thank the students of the Youth Philanthropy Council for recognizing and supporting the needs of senior citizens throughout the county. You are an outstanding group of young people and we're all happy to have you as part of our Chenango community.

## Older New Yorkers' Day - May 21, 2019

May is recognized in New York State and across the country as Older Americans Month. This important designation is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the enormous contributions older Americans have made to the country, their communities, and their families. The 2019 Older Americans Month theme "Connect, Create, Contribute" emphasizes the importance of social connections with friends and families, and that learning and engaging in activities is a lifelong endeavor. Our Chenango County volunteers were honored with a luncheon at our state capital in Albany on 5/21. Dignitaries in attendance included the Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul who gave the welcoming remarks.

### We would like to congratulate the following volunteers from Chenango County.



**Judy Wright**

Judy began volunteering as a teenager at the YMCA. She was very involved in swimming and found mentors. As a volunteer overseer at Hospice she decided to start volunteering herself to better understand what her volunteers experience. Judy was head of many leadership programs and is passionate about developing leadership in the residents in Chenango County-both in the youth and adult populations. Judy is still involved in the local municipal zoning board and traffic commission, and enjoys her work with CWS, working with people with special needs and disabilities.

Judy is a native of Norwich, NY. Judy has been actively involved in service and volunteering for more than 50 years. She has 3 sons and 10 grandchildren.



**"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention."**

**-Oscar Wilde**

Laurie first became a very active member of her community as a teenager, when she began volunteering after graduating from high school. She has continued volunteering in one form or another since. Laurie has volunteered at Chase Memorial Nursing Home in New Berlin, NY Senior Care activity department then started volunteering in 2009 with the Senior Center in New Berlin, NY. Currently she volunteers daily at the Norwich, NY senior center. She calls BINGO, hosts trivia, and helps with setting tables and clean up. On Saturday mornings Laurie volunteers at St. Theresa's in New Berlin by calling people who are no longer able to attend church but wish to stay involved in the church community, providing them with a reassuring voice. She has also been an Ombudsman for the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and takes part in the Veteran's Day Program at the Railroad Museum in New Berlin, where she honors all veterans. Laurie loves to sing and is a member of the Community Singers, a group that performs four concerts a year.



**Laurie Hotaling**

Laurie has been a lifelong resident of Chenango County. She helped take care of her mother and special needs brother and worked as a respite aide. Due to deteriorating health, Laurie had to retire, but put all of her efforts in to volunteering and helping others in the community.

## Staff Spotlight!

In each edition of the Bullthistle we will be introducing you to a member of our staff.



Hi, I am Kathy Miller and I am the New York Connects outreach worker. New York Connects helps individuals of any age learn about and access long term services and supports. For a year previous to transitioning to New York Connects, I was helping residents living in the Sherburne and New Berlin areas of Chenango County with Area Agency on Aging programs. Although born and raised in Oxford, I spent many years working in nursing facilities as a social worker in the Albany and Elmira areas. My husband and I returned and settled in Chenango County in the Spring of 2013. It has been great to be “BACK HOME.”



### **Interpretation Services Available**

Chenango County Area Agency on Aging offers interpretation services for more than 200 languages. To inquire about our agency's services for the aging at no cost to you, please call (607) 337-1770.

Chenango Condado Agencia de área sobre el envejecimiento ofrece servicios de interpretación para más de 200 idiomas. Para solicitar información sobre nuestros servicios de agencias para el envejecimiento sin costo para usted.

希南戈县地区机构老龄问题提供超过 200 种语言的口译服务。来电咨询有关我们机构服务的无代价地你衰老

Chenango County Area Agentur auf Alterung bietet Dolmetschdienste für mehr als 200 Sprachen. Über unsere Agenturen-Dienstleistungen für das Altern ohne Kosten für Sie zu erkundigen



# Memory Boosting Foods

Article Adapted by Debbie Zampetti, RD from “Types of Foods to Help Boost Your Memory” by Marisa Moore, MBA, RDN, LD



Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish and olive oil improve blood vessel health, thus reducing the risk of a memory-damaging stroke.

Our diet plays an important role in our overall health. It's not just about calories in versus calories out, our diets can help and hinder us in so many ways that scientists haven't even fully uncovered yet. Currently researchers are studying the relationship between diet and brain function, specially relating to memory loss and cognition. The recent studies have shown that there is one diet specifically linked to improved brain function, the Mediterranean diet! The diet has shown improved cognitive function, memory and alertness. In addition, a diet high in saturated fats are thought to have a negative impact on brain function as well as increased risk for a stroke.

## How else to improve/maintain brain health?

Control cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure

Quit smoking, which is associated with a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease

Walk more, exercising 3x or more a week has shown to reduce the risk of dementia

Maintain a healthy weight

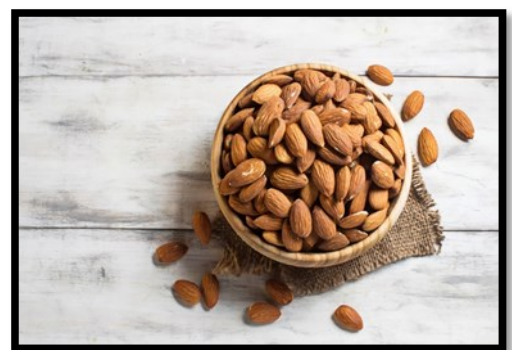
### Key Components to a Long-Lasting Memory!

**Veggies:** Vegetables contain a variety of micronutrients, cruciferous ones including broccoli, cabbage and dark leafy veggies are thought to improve memory.

**Brainy Berries:** Including blackberries, blueberries and cherries, try a handful of berries for a snack, or even as a topper for oatmeal or yogurt.

**Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Foods rich in Omega-3's are known to be crucial for brain health as they improve vascular health. DHA, one specific omega-3 has been shown to improve memory function. Some of the best sources of omega-3 include seafood, salmon, Bluefin tuna and sardines.

**Healthy Nuts:** Known for their positive effect on heart health, walnuts may play a role in improving memory function. Snack on a handful or add them to any oatmeal or salad for a brain boost and a great source of extra protein.



Want to discuss how to add the foods mentioned to your diet?

Contact me:

Debbie Zampetti, RD  
Consultant Dietitian  
607-377-1770

## Area Agency on Aging Secretary Retires

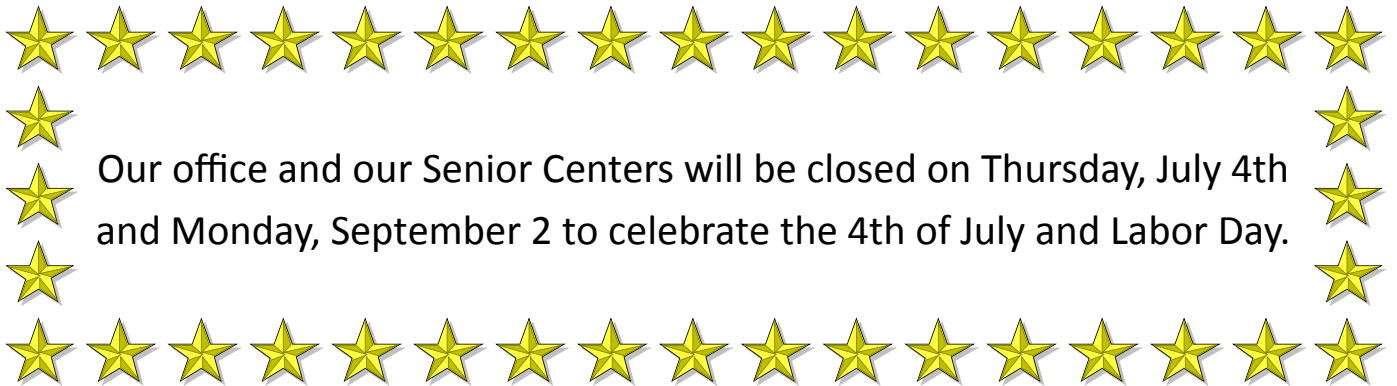


The Chenango County Area Agency on Aging wants to let everyone know that the Agency's secretary, Roe Pucci retired at the end of April.

After 14 years of service to the Area Agency on Aging and the Seniors of Chenango County Roe has taken the plunge into retirement.

We will miss Roe's kind nature and helpfulness with

*Congratulations!*



Our office and our Senior Centers will be closed on Thursday, July 4th and Monday, September 2 to celebrate the 4th of July and Labor Day.



### Flu Shot Clinic!

This years flu shot clinic will be held September 24, 2019, 9:30—11:30am, at the Norwich YMCA.

*Dear Marci,*



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***How should I make decisions about my Medicare coverage?***

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Dear Marci,

With Fall Open Enrollment coming up, I am thinking about changing my Medicare coverage. I might keep Original Medicare and enroll in a new Part D prescription drug plan, or I might enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan with prescription drug coverage. What factors should I consider when I am looking at different plans?

-Eva (Topeka, KS)

Dear Eva,

Fall Open Enrollment, which runs from October 15 - December 7, is the right time to review your current coverage, compare it with other options, and possibly make changes. The last change you will make during Fall Open enrollment will take effect on January 1, 2020.

Here are some questions to ask about any Medicare Advantage Plan that you are considering enrolling in:

- How much are the premium, deductible, and coinsurance/copay amounts?
- What is the annual maximum out-of-pocket cost for the plan? This amount might be high, but can help protect you if you have expensive health care costs.
- What service area does this plan cover?
- Are my doctors and hospitals in the plan's network?
- What are the rules I have to follow to access health care services and my drugs?
- Does the plan cover additional health care benefits that are not covered by Original Medicare?
- How will this plan affect any additional coverage I may have?



*Dear Marci,  
(Cont'd)*



Ask yourself these questions before choosing a Part D prescription drug plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan with prescription drug coverage:

- Does the plan cover all medications I take?
- Does the plan have restrictions on my drugs (like prior authorization, step therapy or quantity limits)?
  - ◇ **Prior authorization** means that you must get approval from your Part D plan before the plan will pay for the drug.
  - ◇ **Step therapy** means that your plan requires you to try a cheaper version of the drug before it will cover a more expensive one.
  - ◇ **Quantity limits** restrict the quantity of a drug you can get per prescription fill, such as 30 pills of Drug X per month.
- How much will I pay for monthly premiums and the annual deductible?
- How much will I pay at the pharmacy (copay/coinsurance) for each drug I take?
- Is my pharmacy in the plan's preferred network?
- If I have retiree coverage, will the Medicare drug plan work with this coverage?

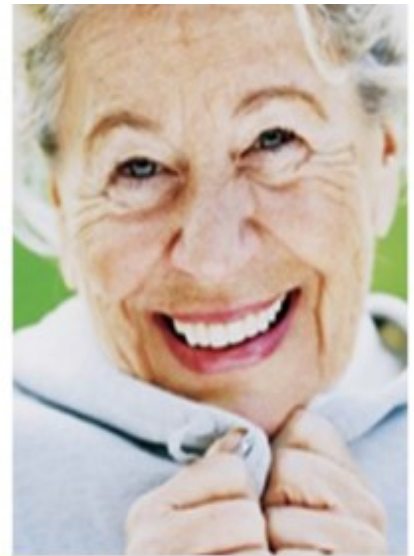
For both Medicare Advantage Plans and Part D prescription drug plans, you may also want to consider a plan's star rating. Star ratings are quality ratings that provide a measure of a plan's performance. Medicare scores plans in several categories, including quality of care and customer service. Ratings range from one to five stars, with five being the highest.

Keep in mind that a plan's star rating is only one factor to review when comparing plans in your area. Even though a plan has a high star rating, it may not be right for you. It is important to see whether the plan covers the health services and drugs you need and works with the pharmacies you use before considering its star rating. Also note that the star ratings in the Medicare & You handbook are not necessarily the most recent. For the most up-to-date, comprehensive star ratings, you should call 1-800-MEDICARE or use the online Plan Finder tool at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

You may also find it helpful to use Medicare's Plan Finder tool, which gives you a list of Medicare Advantage and Part D plans, the drugs they cover, and their estimated costs for the year.

-Marci

# Living Healthy Workshops



Do you have a chronic health condition or care for a loved one with a chronic health condition? Living Healthy Workshops can help you take charge of your life.

These workshops are **FREE!**

**June 12–July 17**  
**10:00am to 12:30pm**  
**UHS Vestal**

**4401 Vestal Parkway East, Vestal NY**

*“Now I have more energy than I’ve had in years. I’m calmer and more confident about my health.”*

## **Learn to:**

- ◆ Make better nutrition & exercise choices
- ◆ Deal with pain & fatigue
- ◆ Sleep better
- ◆ Talk with your doctor & family about your health
- ◆ Set goals & make a plan to improve your health & your life

To register for the workshop, please contact:

**Mary Maruscak at**  
**Rural Health Network SCNY**  
**607-692-7669 x 209**

Registration includes *Living a Healthy Life* book, relaxation CD, & healthy snacks.



## **Support for:**

- Arthritis
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Chronic pain
- Stress/Anxiety
- Other conditions

**Get connected.**  
Learn from others who have similar health concerns.



## ***SENIORS, It Is Your Day!***

Enjoy a **Free Day** at the **Chenango County Fair!!!!**

Event runs from **10:00 till 4:00 Thursday, August 8th**

Informational Displays

Live Entertainment

Ice Cream Social

Door Prizes

**BINGO!!!**

**Chenango County Area Agency on Aging Public Hearing**

**Walk-ins enter through Gate 1**

**Cars enter through Gate 3**

For more information call the Chenango County  
Area Agency on Aging at 337-1770

## **TIPS FOR ORGANIZING A MEDICAL HISTORY**

A trip to the emergency room made me realize why caregivers are advised to organize health information. Like many caregivers, I share the task of going with my loved one to appointments. My sister usually takes our mom to the dentist, audiologist and optometrist. I take Mom to her physician, dermatologist and podiatrist. We cover for each other when work or travel demands it. I felt prepared until an emergency came.



When mom broke her hip, I called an ambulance. When it arrive, I confidently recited Mom's Medicare number. When asked what medications she took , I pullout our basket of pill bottles. At the hospital, the questions got more complicated. Still, I knew enough to fill out the forms. Strangely, as I did the paperwork, I began to feel sharp pain in my lower belly. I was nauseous and feverish. I did not know it then, but I would be joining Mom in the hospital the next day with an emergency of my own, one requiring surgery and a six-day hospital stay. I realized that my mom's care was far to dependent on facts held only in my head. As primary caregiver, I managed the insurance, filled prescriptions and kept doctors' names and phone numbers in my password-protected data organizer. I knew I should organize Mom's records, but I didn't know how. As we both recovered, I looked for an easy way to keep her health information. I especially wanted an easy way to share it with others in case I am not around.

I now have a folder for paperwork that is portable and easy to maintain. It isn't just for emergencies. We take it to every doctor visit. Now anyone who has the folder can see when Mom had her last flu shot, what medications she takes and that she had a malignant mole removed in 1981. We can all see when all medical appointments are scheduled. Even my brother, who lives at a distance, could answer medical questions if he had to take Mom to the doctor while visiting.

### **Information to collect**

You probably have most of this information readily available. If not, begin with what you have and add information as you can. Useful information to collect includes:

- Health insurance card, Medicare cards, and so on
- Appointment reminder cards from health care providers
- A list of medications including dosages, frequency, date started and reason
- A medical history
- A list of emergency contacts, relationship, addresses and all phone numbers
- A sheet for recording the date of visits, the provider and any tests performed or instructions
- Any special logs such as blood pressure readings, blood sugar levels or symptoms
- A power-of-attorney, if one is used



## **TIPS FOR ORGANIZING A MEDICAL HISTORY (Continued)**

### **Easy organization**

Our system has to be easy to update because, like most caregivers, my family is stretched pretty thin. Here are some tips for collecting and organizing information: use a pocket folder or small three-ring binder that will hold several pages. We purchased a multi-page presentation folder with clear pockets from an office supply store.

- Use a bold color for the cover, such as red or yellow, so that it is easy to distinguish from other papers.
- Keep the folder in a handy location, such as a desk drawer near the entry. Make sure every potential caregiver knows where it is kept.
- Label the front boldly and clearly - EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION
- Use top loading, clear sheet protectors to hold papers. These make it easy to remove papers for photocopying or for handing to a healthcare worker.
- Pick up a business card from each healthcare provider you see. Cards usually contain the name, specialty, address, phone and fax number.
- Slip the business cards into vinyl page protectors meant to hold photos, baseball cards or disks. You can find three-ring page protectors like these at craft, hobby, or office supply stores.
- Each time you make an appointment, take the reminder card or jot the appointment details on a 3 x 5 card. Slip these cards into the page protector just as you did the business cards.
- Keep old appointment cards if you don't want to take the trouble of recording visit details elsewhere.
- When you add any information to a document, put the date at the top of the page to show how current the data is.
- List an out-of-state emergency contact to be used in case of a widespread disaster.
- Photocopy pages and cards and keep them elsewhere for extra protection.
- Search the Internet. Many websites provide blank forms for medical history, medication and other health records.

### **What should you keep in a medical history?**

- Name of physicians
- Known allergies or reactions to medications
- Medications including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbs
- Health conditions and date of diagnosis
- Dates of most recent exams, tests and immunizations
- Dates and reasons for hospitalizations
- Dates and details of surgeries
- Dates and length of major illnesses
- History of exposure to dangerous conditions or hazards
- Family history including illnesses or conditions of parents and siblings
- Cause of death of parents and siblings and their age at death

I'm pretty sure that I will never again find Mother's insurance cards inside an old purse looped over a hanger in the darkest corner of her closet. I hope I never again have to phone a doctor's office to relay information I didn't have with me at the appointment. But most of all, I'm confident that if I'm not around, someone else can tell the emergency room doctors what they need to know about my loved one.





**July 11 - 20, 2019 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**  
**(Afternoon only on 11th, Morning Only on 20th.)**

**Norwich High/Middle School Complex**  
**89 Midland Drive, Norwich, NY**

**What services will be offered?**

- **Medical:** Physical exams, school and sports physicals (bring your school form), blood pressure/disease screenings, general wellness and glucose screening. An array of providers will be available.
- **Dental:** Dental exams, fillings and extractions
- **Vision:** Vision screenings, glasses prescriptions, single lens glasses (subject to stock on hand)
- **Veterinary:** Spay, neuter, deworming and rabies vaccinations (Dogs and Cats only. Subject to stock on hand.)

**All are welcome! No income, insurance, or residency requirements.**

**No narcotics will be administered!**

**Walk-ins Welcome, Dental and Veterinary Must be Pre-Scheduled. For dental appointments, call (607) 337-4129. For Veterinary appointments, call (607) 334-9724 extension 3. To volunteer for this event, call (607) 334-8815.**

**We will start taking appointments on JUNE 3RD.**

For more information and updates, check us out on  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GreaterChenangoCares](http://www.facebook.com/GreaterChenangoCares) or  
email us at [greaterchenangocares@gmail.com](mailto:greaterchenangocares@gmail.com)



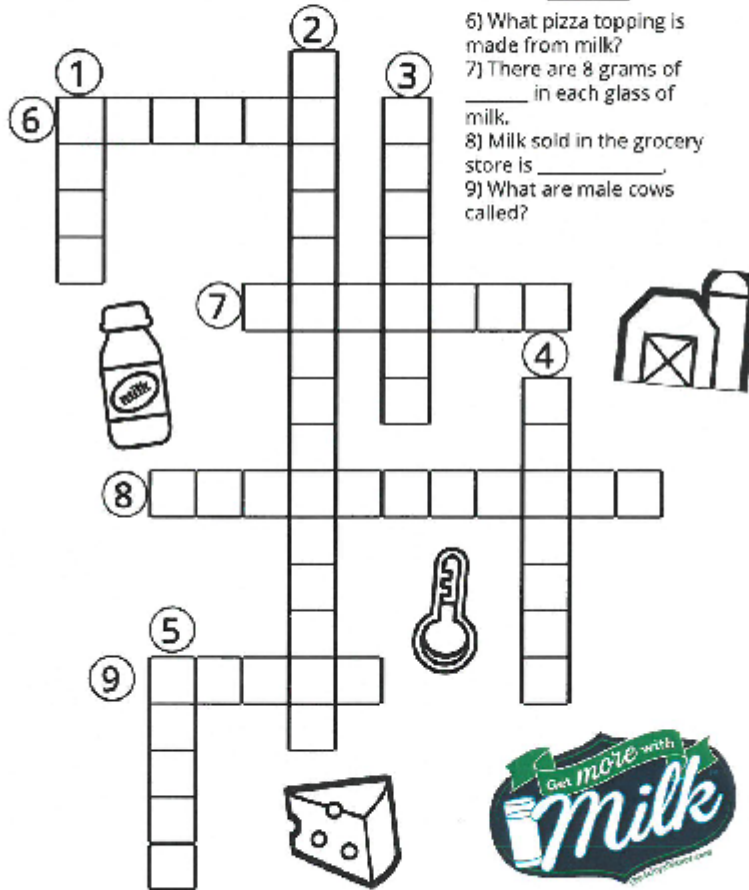
# CROSSWORD

## Down

- 1) What is a baby cow called?
- 2) What is June Dairy Month's slogan?
- 3) A cow drinks enough water a day to fill a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) Milk and \_\_\_\_\_ combine to make cheese.
- 5) Drinking milk helps build strong \_\_\_\_\_.

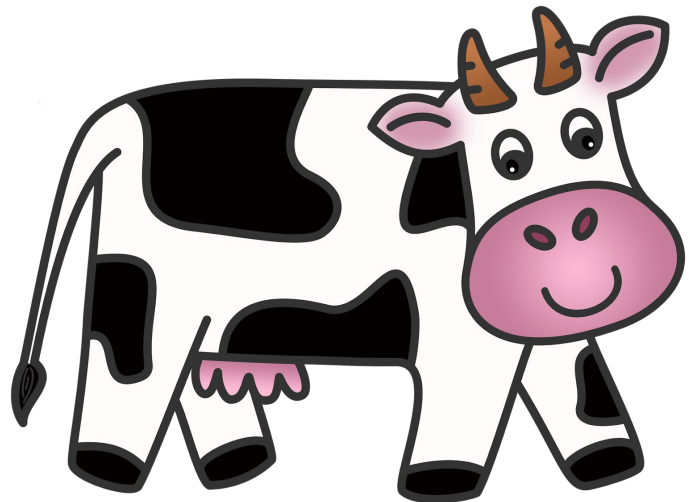
## Across

- 6) What pizza topping is made from milk?
- 7) There are 8 grams of \_\_\_\_\_ in each glass of milk.
- 8) Milk sold in the grocery store is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9) What are male cows called?

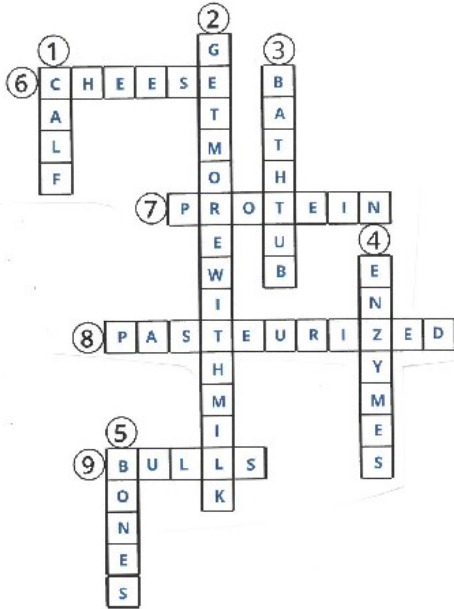


[thedairyalliance.com/junedairymonth](http://thedairyalliance.com/junedairymonth)

June is Dairy Month!



# CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS!



## HEAP

If you had HEAP in the 2018-2019 season keep watching your mail. Early outreach recertification applications should be arriving around the end of August, beginning of September for the 2019-2020 heating season.



## To Make a Donation, Subscribe or Change of Address

Please clip and send this coupon along with your contribution payable to or address change to:

**Chenango County Area Agency on Aging**  
 5 Court Street  
 Norwich, NY 13815

The Chenango County Area Agency on Aging appreciates and gratefully accepts financial contributions to help off-set needs beyond available resources.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**New** Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my contribution to go to:

- Home Delivered Meals
- Legal Services
- Health Insurance Counseling
- Where it is most needed
- In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

*The Mission of the Chenango County Area Agency on Aging is to advocate for, plan and provide a coordinated system of services designed to help county residents 60 years of age and older remain independent, secure and active in their community. The Chenango County Area Agency on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, national origin or sponsor, or sexual orientation.*