

# LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



## SPECIAL BULLETIN: COVID-19 UPDATES

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2021

### #RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



Spring is the theme of the past couple weeks at Lexington—getting out and enjoying the weather and planting and enjoying springtime flowers, fruits and vegetables! Here are a few stories of spring at Lexington from across the agency:

- The men at Meco go for regular walks and hikes regardless of the season or weather, but now that it's spring they have been taking the opportunity to use their outings to clean up the community! Pictured are Doman and David picking up litter on the Rockwood Trail.
- April was a bittersweet month for the Feura Bush family, as they observed the one-year anniversary of the loss of two of their family members, Bonnie and Danny. The whole house came together to honor and remember their friends by having a balloon release in their memory. Everyone wrote messages to Bonnie and Danny on their balloons before they released them. It was an emotional but memorable day! Thank you to the whole Feura Bush team for supporting everyone through emotional times in such a caring and nurturing way.
- In April, we hosted three fun Experience events for the people we support! Groups from 10 Lexington homes enjoyed food, movies and ever-popular Bingo at 465 N. Perry Street, the Nigra Arts Center and Schoharie. Pictured is Karen Cartwright filling out her Bingo sheet in Schoharie. See page 6 for details on more upcoming Experience events in May!
- The women from 24 Second Avenue visited Quest 1 Day Hab for a lesson on healthy cooking! They had a wonderful time making and enjoying their own flatbreads. Thank you to the Quest 1 team for supporting so many people to learn about nutrition and how to make healthy meals!
- The Eagle Mills family recently lost one of their own. In Bethany's memory, they all decorated flower pots and planted forget-me-nots, so they will soon have beautiful flowers in her honor. Thank you to everyone on the Eagle Mills team for supporting everyone through this difficult time!
- It was gardening day recently at Bridge Street, as they started planting vegetables and flowers!
- Chuck Alley decided to give back to the community by donating several bags of cans to benefit the Hope Volunteer Fire Company in Northville! Thank you to Chuck for his generosity and to everyone else who supported him with this project!
- The weather is finally nice enough to enjoy picnics outside! Pictured is Barry from Robert Street enjoying his first picnic of the year.

# MESSAGE FROM SHALONI



Dear Lexington staff members,

I hope you are all well as are your families.

Currently we have three employees positive with COVID-19 and a total of 11 employees out on quarantine. We have no homes on enhanced PPE or quarantine.

Since March 1, we have had 15 COVID-19 positive employees. Of that 15, six have been positive since April 1. None of the employees had been vaccinated. During that time, exposure to a positive employee resulted in one person we support becoming positive. She had not been fully vaccinated at that time and has recovered since. Despite exposure to the 15 positive employees, no one we support or employees that have been vaccinated had to quarantine nor did they become positive.

I can't emphasize enough how important vaccination is in obtaining #LexingtonImmunity. The virus is still here, and can still enter our agency through those that have not been vaccinated. Fulton County is still designated as "very high risk" when it comes to COVID-19 by the New York Times when compared to other areas around the country. As of April 28, the 7-day positivity rate in Fulton County was 2.5%, in Schoharie County it was 1.1% and in Albany 1.8%.

Our vaccination rates are as follows:

An amazing 95% of the people we support in our residential program have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and most have already received their second dose. Of those living in the community, 49.5% have received a vaccination.

Our COVID-19 vaccination numbers for employees are promising – but do not yet get us out of the woods or to #LexingtonImmunity. The total number of vaccinated employees is at 54.7% of the total eligible. This breaks down by location as follows:

- Schoharie staff are at 54.4%
- Fulton staff are at 57.1%
- Albany staff are at 34.5%

Our goal is to have 70% of our staff vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus before we can fully reopen programs and services. Please consider getting the vaccine if you haven't already. You will see later in this newsletter how you can get it. Please ask your managers/nurses for information about the vaccine. We will provide you with whatever information you need, including a conversation with Dr. Cope or Dr. Luz, so that you can make an informed decision.

As more and more of us get vaccinated, it also brings us closer to being able to see and meet face-to-face. We haven't done that since October of last year, before the second surge. It was great to see you in-person at those meetings at which we welcomed Schoharie County to our family, where we talked to you directly about the new staffing models, and also about the agency's future. Dan and I miss meeting face-to-face with you, whether at these October meetings, a Nurturing Environment meeting, or any number of other get togethers. Although Zoom and Microsoft Teams for some of us have now become a way of life as far as meetings are concerned, in-person meetings can never be replaced. Face-to-face meetings are still important for building strong relationships, are more focused and productive, and more clearly communicate goals and objectives. We want more than ever to be able to see you face-to-face, to get your input and opinions, and to discuss where the agency is going. We hope to get back to that very soon – in a safe way.

Thank you for everything you do, every day, for the people we support, for each other, and for Lexington. We appreciate you and are grateful for your work every single day.

Best,

*Shaloni*

## COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION

### ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

New York State has now opened the vaccines to anyone 16 and older, but still is prioritizing frontline and essential workers. Vaccines are now available at pharmacies, hospitals, local public health departments at different locations and Federally Qualified Health Centers statewide (like the SUNY Albany site and the Utica site at SUNY Polytechnic). If you want to get your vaccine, here are some of the ways to do it:

- To make an appointment at any of the state-run sites throughout New York State, visit <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov> or call the New York State COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline at 1-833-697-4829.
- Many pharmacies in our area are now offering COVID-19 vaccinations. You can schedule a vaccine at CVS or Walgreens through the stores' apps, available in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store, or you can contact individual stores/pharmacies near you for information.
- Contact your county's Public Health Department or monitor their Facebook pages for vaccine information:
  - **Fulton County Public Health** - [www.fultoncountyny.gov/public-health](http://www.fultoncountyny.gov/public-health) | [facebook.com/Fulton-County-Public-Health-Department-171315776341585](https://www.facebook.com/Fulton-County-Public-Health-Department-171315776341585)
  - **Albany County Public Health** - (518) 447-4580 - [www.albanycounty.com/departments/health](http://www.albanycounty.com/departments/health)
  - **Schoharie County Public Health** - (518) 295-8365 - [www4.schohariecounty-ny.gov/departments/public-health/](http://www4.schohariecounty-ny.gov/departments/public-health/) | [facebook.com/SchoharieDOH](https://www.facebook.com/SchoharieDOH)
- You can also continue to contact our #LexVaxChamps for help finding a vaccine:
  - **Albany:** Teresa Wands, (518) 332-5674
  - **Fulton:** Kelly Green, (518) 736-4193
  - **Schoharie:** Liz Weingarten, (518) 295-8130 ext. 230

### COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION SHEETS

To help employees make an informed decision about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, we have created an information sheet that contains links to credible medical and scientific resources, links to videos (including those from Dr. Cope), and information from the CDC, the WHO and our Public Health Departments. You can access the information sheet at <http://bit.ly/2NGINzf>.

We have also added a fact sheet about the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine to the Vaccine Information page on our website. You can find it as well as sheets about the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines along with other helpful information at <https://thearclexington.org/vaccine>.

### FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE SECOND DOSE OF THE VACCINE

Our vaccine schedulers would like to connect with you after you receive your second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. They would like to confirm that you received the second dose and ask you a couple of follow-up questions. If you haven't already talked to these schedulers, please contact them so that we have your information:

- **ALBANY:** Donna Steenburgh, (518) 568-3102
- **FULTON:** Kelly Green, (518) 736-4193
- **SCHOHARIE:** Liz Weingarten, (518) 295-8130 ext. 230

Please also send a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination record card, which lists the dates you received the vaccine, where you got it and which vaccine you were given, to the following staff members:

- **FULTON/ALBANY:** Rene Craig, Gloversville Day Hab/Burke ([craigr@thearclexington.org](mailto:craigr@thearclexington.org))
- **SCHOHARIE:** Katie Epting, TPI Building, Schoharie ([eptingk@thearclexington.org](mailto:eptingk@thearclexington.org))

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER GETTING A COVID-19 VACCINE

From the Centers for Disease Control and Dr. Kevin Cope

While the COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you from getting COVID-19, it also may be accompanied by some side effects. These are normal signs that your body is building protection against the disease.

### COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE:

- Arm pain
- Arm swelling
- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Headache

### HELPFUL TIPS:

- If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking over-the-counter medicine, like ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- To reduce discomfort at injection site:
  - \* Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area
  - \* Use or exercise your arm
- To reduce discomfort from fever:
  - \* Drink plenty of fluids
  - \* Dress lightly

### WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR:

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

### REMEMBER:

- Side effects may feel like flu and even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need two shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require two shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.

It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds and wash your hands often.

## EXCELSIOR PASS

New York's Excelsior Pass provides a free, fast and secure way to present digital proof of COVID-19 vaccination or negative test results. Think of it as a mobile airline boarding pass, but for proving you received a COVID-19 vaccination or negative test.

You can store your Pass digitally on your smartphone with the Excelsior Pass Wallet app, available for free from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. You can also print your Pass from the Excelsior Pass website and bring it with you.

Businesses and venues can scan and validate your pass to ensure you meet any COVID-19 vaccination or testing requirements for entry. Along with your Pass, you'll be asked to show a photo ID that shows your name and birth date to verify that the Pass belongs to you. Adults may hold passes for accompanying minors. Once you and your party enter an establishment, you will still be asked to follow state and CDC guidance regarding social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.

Participation in Excelsior Pass is voluntary. New Yorkers can always show alternate proof of vaccination or testing, like another mobile application or paper form, directly at a business or venue.

You can find more information on the Excelsior Pass at <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/excelsior-pass>. They also have a question and answer line that is open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.: 1-844-699-7277.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR VACCINE CARD

Here is some helpful information from an April 7, 2021, New York Times article titled “What You Need to Know About Your Vaccine Card.” The full article can be found on the Times’ website at [www.nytimes.com/article/covid-vaccine-card.html](https://www.nytimes.com/article/covid-vaccine-card.html).

### HOW SHOULD I SAFEGUARD MY CARD?

Start by taking a picture of it with your phone, so you’ll have the information in your photo library, and emailing it to yourself as backup, said Dr. Uchenna Ikediobi, an assistant professor of general internal medicine and infectious diseases at Yale University.

Laminating your card will make it more durable if you’re planning to carry it around in your wallet, though there has been some concern about lamination because it would prevent information from future booster shots from being added. But Dr. Ikediobi said that this “may be a moot point if new cards are issued after a booster shot, as would seem likely.”

A number of companies have jumped in to offer free lamination. Staples is offering free lamination of vaccine cards for those who have gotten their doses, according to Jocelyn Moruzzi, a spokeswoman for the office goods retailer. The offer is valid at all of the company’s United States locations with the offer code 81450 and does not yet have an end date.

People can also get their completed vaccine cards laminated for free at Office Depot and OfficeMax stores nationwide using the code 52516714 through July 25.

### ARE THERE OTHER BENEFITS?

Yes. Aside from the health benefits of getting the vaccine, there are also other perks that come with your vaccine card. Businesses across the country, from bars to marijuana dispensaries, have been offering perks to those with a COVID-19 vaccination card. Krispy Kreme, for instance, said last week that for the rest of the year, it would give one free glazed doughnut per day to anyone who presents proof of a COVID-19 vaccination.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF I LOSE MY CARD?

Getting a new card is easy enough if you got vaccinated at a pharmacy like Walgreens. Ms. Brown said that anyone who loses their card should return to where they were vaccinated and a pharmacy employee can print out a new card from the patient’s electronic records.

Vaccinations are also tracked by state health departments, so you can reach out to your state’s agency to get a replacement card, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The agency lists contact information for the Immunization Information System in each state, which tracks vaccinations, on its website:

### NEW YORK (EXCEPT NEW YORK CITY)

**Call:** (518) 473-4437

**Web:** [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/information\\_system/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/information_system/)

**Email:** [nysiis@health.state.ny.us](mailto:nysiis@health.state.ny.us)

## EMPLOYEE TOWN HALL MEETING ABOUT THE VACCINE WITH DR. COPE

If you were unable to attend the January 21 Zoom meeting with Dr. Cope, where he talked about the COVID-19 vaccine and answered employee questions about it, you can access a recording of the meeting at <https://youtu.be/IRjGJXiOUl>. For other resources for employees regarding the various COVID-19 vaccinations, the benefits of getting them, what to expect when you get them and more, please visit [thearclexington.org/vaccine](https://thearclexington.org/vaccine).

## LEXINGTON ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE CENTER

### THE EXPERIENCE: OUTING EVENTS FOR THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

If you and the people you support are looking for some fun new things to do, please join us for a series of special experiential events at the Nigra Arts Center, 465 N. Perry Street and 121 Opportunity Drive! Houses are invited to come enjoy movies, games and food in private family-unit rooms. These events will be designed to mimic community outings as closely as possible. If you are interested in signing your house up, please call (518) 661-9932 to reserve a slot. Limited slots are available, so don't wait!

**BINGO NIGHT | WEDNESDAY, MAY 12 | 3:00 P.M.**

Win Bingo Bucks that can be cashed in for awesome prizes! Be sure to bring cash for the concession stand. Capacity: Nigra Arts Center—2 houses; Johnstown—3 houses; Schoharie—3 houses.

**DINNER AND A MOVIE | FRIDAY, MAY 21 | 3:00 P.M.**

Make your own pizza and enjoy it while watching charming rom-com Mystic Pizza! Capacity: 2 houses per location.

### REMEMBER TO PICK UP YOUR CO-OP ORDERS!

Please remember to pick up your orders from Tri-City Foods on the dates below. If you have any questions, please contact Lynette May (for Oppenheim or Johnstown) at [mayl@thearclexington.org](mailto:mayl@thearclexington.org) or Tammy Ruise (for Schoharie) at [ruiset@thearclexington.org](mailto:ruiset@thearclexington.org).

- **SCHOHARIE**—Friday, May 14 | 3:30-4:15 p.m., 121 Opportunity Drive, Schoharie
- **OPPENHEIM DAY HAB**—Tuesday, May 18 | 3:10-3:30 p.m., 405 Co. Hwy 114, St. Johnsville
- **JOHNSTOWN DAY HAB**—Thursday, May 20 | 3:30-4:30 p.m., 465 N. Perry Street, Johnstown (by the gas tanks)

### FOR SCHOHARIE: JEAN EMERSON SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORED BY LEGACY OF LOVE

Lexington employees and their friends and family who live in Schoharie are welcome to apply for the Jean Emerson Scholarship! The program awards two scholarships of up to \$1,000 per year to those who plan to pursue or continue their career in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Scholarship winners will be eligible for a paid internship at Lexington. To learn more about this opportunity and how to apply, please visit <https://bit.ly/3ac7Hyf>. Applications are due by **May 28**.

### PARTICIPATE IN HEALTHCARE WORKER TRIBUTE!

The Broadalbin-Perth Senior High School Choir is planning a tribute to healthcare workers for their Spring Virtual Concert, and they need your help! The performers would like to feature photos of Fulton and Montgomery County frontline healthcare workers while they sing, to honor your work in keeping all of us safe during the pandemic. If you would like photos of you or your team to be included, please email them to Alex Hitrick at [hitricka@bpcsd.org](mailto:hitricka@bpcsd.org) by no later than **May 14**. Be sure to wear your PPE gear!

### ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED ZOOM ACTIVITY CALENDAR

The Engaged and Empowered day hab program offers daily social groups, activities, games, crafts, trivia, meetings and more to the people we support! See the full May calendar and participation information at <https://bit.ly/2R7yC7s>.

### CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS ZOOM CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES

Creative Expressions offers a selection of art classes, games, puzzles, musical performances, virtual tours and other activities via Zoom every month! To view the May calendar of events and get the participation information, please visit <https://bit.ly/3uggE16>.

### WELLNESS 2GETHER CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Wellness 2gether hosts Zoom activities between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. every weekday! There are games, karaoke, educational sessions and more. No registration required—just log into Zoom! See the May calendar and details at <https://bit.ly/3sYCN2N>.

### VIRTUAL IN-HOUSE MUSIC

Virtual in-house music is available for any Lexington home! See the May performance schedule at <https://bit.ly/32VIeJt>. If you would like to schedule music for your house, please contact Tammy Miles at (518) 775-5475 or [milest@thearclexington.org](mailto:milest@thearclexington.org).

## PAUL NIGRA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS

Lexington employees get a 10% discount at the Nigra Arts Center! Just enter the code **LEXEMPLOYEE** at checkout to redeem. We offer free classes to the people we support. If your house, program or someone you know wants to take a class, please call (518) 661-9932 or contact Maria Nestle at [nestlem@thearclexington.org](mailto:nestlem@thearclexington.org) to sign them up. The Arts Center is located at 2736 State Highway 30 in Gloversville. For full listings of the classes and events offered, visit [www.pncreativeartscenter.org](http://www.pncreativeartscenter.org).



### ART SHOW FEATURES AWARD-WINNING PHOTOGRAPH BY LEXINGTON EMPLOYEE!

The Nigra Arts Center's current 2021 *Adirondack Life* Art Show features an award-winning photograph by Lori Semprevio, a hab coordinator at Lexington! Lori's photograph, "Polliwog Pond Portage," placed second in the "People, Pets & Places" category in *Adirondack Life* magazine's 2021 Photography Contest. This contest is open to all amateur photographers who seek to capture the beauty of the Adirondacks in their images, and the Nigra Arts Center's invitation-only art show helps expose their work to a greater audience! Congratulations to Lori on her winning photograph and for being featured in the art show! To see her photograph, visit [adirondacklifemag.com/photo/2021\\_Winners/photo2021.php](http://adirondacklifemag.com/photo/2021_Winners/photo2021.php) or come see the show in person until May 13.

### MAY CLASSES AT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

Check out our adaptive arts class calendar at <https://www.pncreativeartscenter.org/adaptivearts>! The Nigra Arts Center offers adaptive arts classes and social activities through Zoom and in person. In-studio classes are offered for Lexington homes to participate in as a single "family unit," with only one house participating at a time. All are welcome to participate in any Zoom class! Pre-registration is required – call (518) 661-9932 or email Hailey Lozier at [lozierh@thearclexington.org](mailto:lozierh@thearclexington.org) to sign up.

### COME VIEW OUR CURRENT ART SHOWS!

The Nigra Arts Center's 2021 Quilt and *Adirondack Life* Art Shows will be on display through **May 13**! Plan to see them during their run **weekdays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. or Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** The shows will also be displayed virtually on the Nigra Arts Center's website, [www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows](http://www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows), and Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/PaulNigraCenter](https://www.facebook.com/PaulNigraCenter).

### CHECK OUT OUR VIRTUAL ART SHOWS!

Virtual tours of our art shows are available on Facebook or at [www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows](http://www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows)!

### RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Previous resources can be found at [thearclexington.org/wellness](http://thearclexington.org/wellness) or [thearclexington.org/family-connections](http://thearclexington.org/family-connections).

- **United Concierge Medicine: The Virtual ER**—Lexington's Telemedicine provider (1-844-484-7362).
- **Project Connect Pandemic Helpline**—A 24-hour helpline to support people with disabilities, their families and members of their support teams. Click the link for details about what services are offered or call the helpline any time at **888-847-3209**.
- **Information on COVID-19**—News, information and resources regarding COVID-19 from New York State.

### LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The online digital archive of Lexington Happenings, which includes active links to all the resources and documents highlighted, can be found at [thearclexington.org/lexington-happenings](http://thearclexington.org/lexington-happenings)! If you have questions or would like to submit information for a future newsletter, please contact Megan Balsler at [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org) or (518) 661-9932.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

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