

## From the Supervisor's Desk

A couple of days ago I received a call from a 69-year-old woman in Copake who asked how to sign up for a vaccination. She has no computer.

Right now we are in a very stressful time, as residents under the age of 65 worry that they cannot yet get a vaccination, and residents 65 and over struggle to navigate state, county and pharmacy websites, trying desperately to get an appointment for a vaccination. At this point, Columbia County has been vaccinating designated groups, such as grocery workers, but so far the county does not have vaccines to vaccinate the 65+ population. As they state on their website:

- *NYS has directed that CCDOH **CAN ONLY** provide vaccine to people 65+ when vaccine doses provided by the state are designated specifically for this group (people 65+). Unfortunately, this is not every week and we have no control over when they will do so.*
- *The Federal government/NYS have directed that pharmacies be the primary provider of the COVID vaccine to 65+ people.*

The best advice that I can give right now, based on my own experience, is that residents should, if they can, go online to check availability of appointments at pharmacies. I know that people have had luck getting appointments at CVS. My wife and I got appointments at Walgreens in Troy.

The problem with going online to make a pharmacy appointment is that, unlike when you want to get an airline ticket and you can go to a site - say Travelocity - to compare what is available with numerous airlines, with the vaccinations you have to go to each site individually. So, you need to go to Walgreens, register, and then try your luck. And if that doesn't work, go to CVS. It is cumbersome, inefficient, and very frustrating. You feel as if you are at a slot machine, each time thinking that you are about to win, only to see another notice of "no appointments available."

What I can pass along is this: First, do not make an appointment in Massachusetts or Connecticut. We did that, only to be advised just before the appointment that contrary to the earlier emails we were ineligible. My advice is that when you go to sign up, instead of using 12516 as the zip code, enter a location where you would like to go to be vaccinated. We entered Catskill, Hudson and then Albany; that is how we were able to make appointments in Troy. Second, it seems that the websites are loaded with new appointments on the hour; we got our appointment when we logged on at 7:00 Sunday morning.

Finally, the Town Board recognizes that the process of going online to pounce on an appointment before it disappears may be daunting for some, but impossible for others. If you are a senior citizen and you cannot go online to secure an appointment, here are a couple of avenues you can pursue. First, call the Columbia County Vaccine Hotline for information: 518-697-5560, Monday – Friday 9am-4pm. They can give you

information and also take your name so that they can contact you if they have availability of vaccine in the weeks ahead.

Also, I am happy to announce that the newly formed Community Service Committee of the Copake Grange has reached out to me; they hope to be able to assist those who need help in making appointments for vaccines. You can check the Grange website for updates at [copakegrange.org](http://copakegrange.org) - or you may call and leave your name with the Town Clerk. Lynn Connolly will pass your name and contact information on to the Grange. If you are someone who wants to volunteer to help the Grange in this endeavor, please reach out to me personally.

On a happy note, the numbers in the county are finally dropping. There are no promises here, but we are going in the right direction. As of Wednesday, there were 277 active cases in the county but only 10 new cases. There are still 27 individuals who are hospitalized, with 2 in the ICU. There have been 81 deaths.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at 518-329-1234, Ext 1 or at [Copakesupervisor@fairpoint.net](mailto:Copakesupervisor@fairpoint.net)

Stay warm, stay safe.

Jeanne E. Mettler

Supervisor