

A circle is a group of people in which everyone has a front seat.

SENIOR FOCUS: Susan Stafford — Enthusiastic Advocate for Older Adults

Esther is a ninety year old woman who, up until a few weeks ago, had lived independently in her own home where she maintained an organic vegetable garden as well as beautiful flower beds. Esther enjoyed spending her days rising very early and then spending as much time as possible outside, so when she recently fell while carrying vegetables from the garden, she found herself in need of rehabilitation. A local nursing home became the location for what she hoped to be temporary rehabilitation. Life in a nursing facility brought challenges to Esther that neither she nor her adult children had anticipated. Her desire for organically grown food was not within the ability of the nursing home to prepare and her interest in rising early and going outside was also difficult for an already busy staff to facilitate. Even more challenging for her was her new role as a patient. Used to being independent and making decisions about her day, this new role of "patient" was one about which she was having to learn. Both she and her family were finding challenges in this new setting and there was a reluctance to voice some of their concerns to the staff or the administration. Esther was also finding that although her children had her best interest at heart, they often didn't really understand what it was like living in a long term care facility.

Certified long term care ombudsmen assist older adults and their families with navigating problems such as the one described above. Susan Stafford has been a certified long term care Ombudsman for over ten years. In 2001, Susan was in a serious automobile accident which required rehabilitation and hospital stays. She realized how important it was for her to have an advocate to assist her in managing her health care. Susan had worked as a medical technologist and she had also studied law prior to her accident. After the accident, she began to understand that returning to work full time might not be

possible, but she wanted to still be able to make a contribution to her community. A flexible schedule needed to be part of any plan she decided upon. While working at the Samaritan Center in Elmira, Susan became acquainted with Kim Salisbury who worked as an ombudsman at the Chemung County Office for the Aging. It was Kim who was very encouraging and supportive of Susan in her training to be an Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman program is a federal program administered by the state which in turn delegates running the program to local entities such as the Office for the Aging or Catholic Charities. There are regulations for each of these entities. There is also a State Ombudsman who can provide assistance. The rules and regulations are numerous and must be followed by all the volunteers. For example, a volunteer cannot have a conflict of interest with the facility they represent. There are also specific problems a volunteer can address and there are things they cannot do such as dictating how a doctor can treat a patient. An Ombudsman can deal with the cleanliness of a facility, but not medical treatment issues.

I asked Susan to share with me some of her thoughts on this very important program. "The work of an Ombudsman is complicated. You have to be an advocate for the older adult as well as a diplomat. You're working not only with the residents in a long term care facility, but also their families *and* the administration. Our focus is first and foremost on the resident – to advocate for them. But you're also dealing with other people as well." Susan's personal experience in a hospital and rehabilitation situation helps to inform her work as an Ombudsman. "I personally have been in circumstances that mirror some of what I see in a nursing home. Families often think they know what is best for the resident and often they don't!" She continued, "They



Susan Stafford

may have difficulty really understanding how it feels to be in a long term care facility." Confidentiality and patient rights are extremely important for the Ombudsman in carrying out the mission of the program. The Ombudsman must work to build trust with all parties involved.

Susan Stafford brings to her work a dedication and belief in the rights of all patients. She understands the challenges that families and patients confront and her personal experience helps to make her the effective Ombudsman that she is.

If you are interested in learning more about the Ombudsman program, or becoming trained as a volunteer Ombudsman, call Suzanne Motheral at the Office for the Aging, 274-5498.

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Lifelong, Enhancing the Second Half
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Lifelong's Annual Open House Come and Celebrate Lifelong!

Wednesday, December 11th, 2013 at 2 pm

All are invited to join in this free holiday event:
volunteers, participants, instructors,
board members and the entire community.

Entertainment and Refreshments
*Featuring: Lifelong's Senior Chorus
Lifelong's Senior Improvisational Theatre Troup*

No sign-up or reservations necessary
Bring a friend or family member!



Senior Services

Information and Referral

Tompkins County Office for the Aging provides information and referral services for individuals and agencies concerning an array of issues affecting older adults. If you have questions, our staff is ready, willing and able to serve your needs. Please call the **Tompkins County Office for the Aging** at 274-5482, or visit our website at www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa

Longview's Adult Day Program

Longview's Adult Day Program has become the home away from home for many Tompkins County seniors, offering companionship, recreation, safety and security. The daily fee of \$38 includes personal supervision, recreational programs, morning and afternoon snacks as well as a hot, nutritious lunch. Longview's Adult Day Program is open from 9am to 3pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information call (607) 375-6320.

Let it Snow...

The City of Ithaca code requires property owners, homeowners and landlords to keep sidewalks clear of ice and snow, and fines can be stiff. For many older adults who need some assistance with snow removal, this creates a problem. Individuals who cannot do their own snow shoveling may be able to find people willing to do this work for pay or as volunteers through the Tompkins County Office for the Aging (274-5482) or Lifelong (273-1511). Both agencies keep current listings of volunteer and paid help who are willing to assist older adults in downtown Ithaca as well as in rural areas of Tompkins County. If you're having difficulty clearing your walk, please call us.

Need a Break? Project CARE Might Help!

The **Office for the Aging's** Project CARE program is designed to provide caregivers with a much-needed break. Project CARE matches older adults and their caregivers with volunteers who provide friendly visiting, respite, or might even be able to assist with some light housekeeping, yard work or errands. If you or someone you know would benefit from some help with the difficult work of caregiving, please contact Trina Schickel at the **Office for the Aging**, 274-5491. Additionally, if you are interested in volunteering, please call the **Office for the Aging**, 274-5491.

The Registry

The Finger Lakes Independence Center has administers the Registry Referral Program. The Registry Referral is a free referral services linking individuals seeking independent employment to people who need care in their home. Opportunities include: elder companion, housekeeper, run errands, do yard work, cook, personal care aide, home care aide, LPN, RN. People looking for help can call and receive names of people who are willing to provide those services. Payment and other arrangements are made by the person seeking help with the person willing to provide the services. If you either need assistance or if you would be interested in listing your name as a caregiver, please call Cheryl at FLIC at 272-2433 or email: registryatFLIC@yahoo.com. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging

PERS — Personal Emergency Response System

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging offers Personal Emergency Response System to area seniors. PERS is a communications system which links an individual with the County's emergency medical response system even if that person is unable to use the telephone. The system provides round-the-clock protection for persons who are ill, frail, alone, or medically at risk. The Tompkins County Office for the Aging has units available for rental on a sliding fee scale. An Outreach Worker will make a home visit to demonstrate the system and to determine how and where the equipment should be installed. For more information please call 274-5482.

The **Senior Circle** is partially funded by the **Tompkins County Office of the Aging**.

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Morning

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Falls Prevention Tips for the Season

From Finger Lakes Independence Center
Tompkins County Falls Prevention Coalition

It is early December and the holidays are right around the corner. And, so is the winter weather. Now is a good time to think about how you can prepare to keep yourself, and those you love, safe from slips and falls. Whether you are planning a walk around the neighborhood, visiting friends and family or simply walking around your own home, there are things that you can do to prevent falls.

Leaves are everywhere this time of year. Leaves can hide sticks, stones and uneven surfaces on sidewalks. Leaves can be very slippery when wet or on a frosty morning and can also hide icy patches. The snow is coming, so dress accordingly. Wear sturdy, non-slip shoes or boots. Shoe grippers can provide added traction and may be attached to the bottoms of most shoes. To protect yourself take extra care when walking and do not be in a rush. Try to walk during daylight hours and bring a flashlight if you are out later in the day. If possible, walk with a friend. Two sets of eyes are better than one for detecting hidden hazards.

The holidays usually mean decorating. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention offers the following falls prevention tips when hanging decorations. First, recognize the possibility of falls. Use safer alternatives such as step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations. When using a ladder, make sure it is on a secure and level footing before climbing. Space the base of the ladder one foot away from the wall for every four feet it reaches up. Stay centered between the rails of the ladder. Do not overreach—move the ladder.

Beware of decorations on the floor. Look out for gift bags and suitcases, toys and snow boots, and all sorts of unexpected things when you walk. Secure extension cords, strings and wires away from paths of travel. Keep aware of the repositioning of furniture to accommodate decorations. Keep rooms well lit and use night lights so that you and your house guests can see and enjoy your decorations and navigate around your home safely.

During the holidays, try to keep a normal schedule. Be sure to eat regularly, drink plenty of water and take your medications as directed. If traveling, plan for unexpected delays. Carry with you enough medications for the trip and keep a list of all of your medications, dosages, and prescribing physicians in your wallet or carry on bags. Pack nutritious snacks just in case.

The Tompkins County Falls Prevention Coalition wishes you a safe and happy holiday season. For more tips on how you can prevent falls, check out the Tompkins County Falls Prevention Resource Guide. The guide is available online on the Tompkins County Office for the Aging website at www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa. Or, stop by the office at 214 West State Street in Ithaca and ask for a free copy.

Grocery Deliveries in Tompkins County



Tompkins County has some options available to consumers for delivery of groceries.

- P&C Fresh, 315 Pine Tree Rd. (at East Hill Plaza) offers online shopping and home delivery by means of a new online app called Rosie. Go to www.rosieapp.com Select your local retailer and shop for your favorite items. Choose between in-store pick-up (\$5.95 fee) or delivery at your home (\$9.95 fee).
- Another online service is www.USGROCER.COM.
- Orders are normally delivered within 1-5 business days and there is a \$4.49 fee for delivery and any order over \$25 is free. You may also order by phone at a toll free number, (800) 791-2114.
- In Dryden, Clark's Shur Fine will deliver on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Their phone number is 844-4251.

The **Senior Circle** is published four times a year by Lifelong, 119 West Court Street, Ithaca, NY 14850, and contains information on activities and services which add to the quality of life for older adults and assists them to maintain an independent lifestyle.

Caregivers' Corner



By David Stoyell

When Your Loved One Needs a “Health Care Advocate”

Some people may have trouble stating their feelings and concerns to their health care providers. Some may not understand or have difficulty remembering what is said or what is happening to them. Some may be too ill to speak up.

- Asking questions about my health care and test results.
- Keeping track of my medications.
- Making decisions about my treatment with my input.

The patient should discuss their expectations with a possible advocate and make sure they are willing and able to do these tasks. The patient will likely need to sign a release (HIPAA form) at the office of each health care provider that gives permission for the advocate to communicate with the provider about their health care information.

What's the difference between a “patient advocate” and a “health care proxy?” A patient advocate talks with the patient, supports them, and acts on their behalf. A health care proxy acts for someone only if the doctor judges that they are not able to make judgments and express their wishes.

Checking Self-Advocacy Skills

People can take a self-inventory to discover where they are strong health self-advocates and where they may need to improve...or enlist the help of a “health care advocate.”

- Able to reach health care providers when needed.
- Brings list of questions to each office visit and makes sure to get answers that they understand.
- Seeks up-to-date info about their disease(s) by talking to specialists and doing own research.
- Can put hands on health information when needed.
- Will ask for help from family, friends or others when needed.

A Patient Advocate (or Health Care Advocate) is a person the patient has chosen to support them and act on their behalf. He or she will talk with members of a patient’s health care team.

Helps as Much as Needed

Patient Advocates do not “take over” for their loved one. They let the patients speak for themselves, and do for themselves, as they are able. The patient enlists the help of a relative or friend with as many of the following tasks as needed:

- Arranging medical appointments.
- Being present when the doctor or provider speaks to me.
- Writing down information and instructions received from a health care provider.

Helpful Tips for Advocates

- Talk with the patient before appointments to write down questions the patient wants to ask.
- Let the patient speak for him or herself.
- Take notes on the answers and other things that the doctor says.

Report changes in the patient’s status to health care professionals, especially ones that aren’t obvious. For example, “Bill seems to have much less energy that he did last month.”

The most important role for an advocate is to understand and be supportive of the patient and the patient’s wishes. Above all, a good advocate needs to be a good listener. Bob Riter, of the Cancer Resource Center, writes that “most problems occur when loved ones confuse their own wishes and agenda with those of the patient. This isn’t done maliciously. More often it is based on assumptions of what’s best for the patient without actually asking the patient.”

He adds: “Some people don’t think of themselves as advocates because they aren’t loud and pushy. In fact, the best advocates are quiet forces who support mostly by their steadfast presence...One parent referred to his advocate as his ‘designated listener.’ What a perfect description. We should all have designated listeners.”

Health Care Advocates can be bridge-builders between providers, patients, and family members. Effective patient advocates let the health care team do its work and ask the patient and professionals how they can be helpful.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

The next series of **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** classes will be held on six consecutive Wednesdays, 5:00-6:30 PM, at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging starting April 2, 2014.

Enrollment in this free class is limited to 12, so early registration is advised. It is open to family caregivers who are seeking to learn to better care for themselves while caring for an older relative/friend. It is not intended for paid caregivers.

Please call David Stoyell at the Office for the Aging, 274-5492 for more information or to register.

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STAR Registration — Questions and Answers about the School Tax Relief Exemption

New Legislation requires all homeowners receiving a Basic STAR exemption to register with the New York State Tax Department in order to receive the exemption in 2014 and subsequent years.

This is part of a new initiative to protect New Yorkers against inappropriate or fraudulent STAR exemptions.

Who must register?

Resident homeowners who currently receive the basic Star exemption must register with the New York State Tax Department in order to receive the exemption in 2014 and subsequent years.

- Homeowners do not need to re-register every year.
- Based on the information provided in the registration process, the Tax Department will confirm homeowners' eligibility in future years.

Senior Citizens receiving the Enhanced STAR exemption are not affected by the new registration requirement. However, in order to receive Enhanced STAR, seniors must continue to apply annually or participate in the Income Verification Program.

Resident homeowners applying for STAR for the first time are not affected by this year's registration procedure.

To apply for STAR a new applicant must:

- Use Form RP-425, *Application for School Tax Relief {STAR} Exemption*, available on the Tax Department's Web site, and
- File the application with their local assessor.

When does registration begin?

Registration began **August 19, 2013.**

- The Tax Department mailed instructions to all homeowners who currently receive the Basic STAR exemption. The letters included a STAR code that homeowners will need to register.
- Because seniors who receive Enhanced STAR are not affected by the new requirements, they did not receive new instructions from the Tax Department.

How does a homeowner register?

Of the two ways, phone or online, the fastest and easiest way for

homeowners to register is through the Tax Department's Web site.

Online registration: www.tax.ny.gov

Homeowners will need their STAR code to register. In addition to being included in the instructions that were mailed to them, homeowners are able to find their STAR code through an online lookup or by calling the Tax Department at (518)-457-2036.

Online registration is a simple process that will require homeowners to provide some basic information about their eligibility for the STAR exemption. Homeowners will need to :

- provide STAR code and confirm the property address
- provide names and social security numbers for all owners of the property and spouses
- confirm that the property is the primary residence of one of its owners {married couples with multiple residences may only claim one STAR exemption}
- confirm that the combined

income of the owners is under \$500,000

- confirm that no resident owner receives a residency-based tax exemption from another state

Telephone registration: **(518) 457-2036**

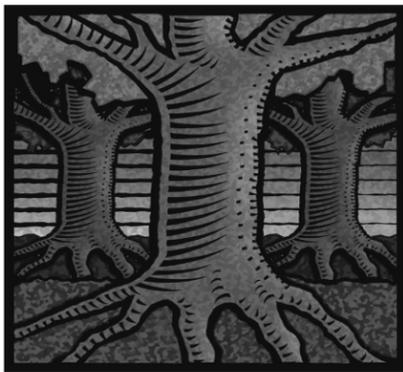
Homeowners may choose to re-register by phone. The Tax Department will also provide telephone support to any homeowners who have questions about online registration.

What happens when homeowners do not register.

The Tax Department will send homeowners additional letter reminders in **December, 2013** and **January, 2014.**

In **February 2014** the Tax Department will give assessors the names of any homeowners who do not register, or who were determined not to be eligible for STAR. The assessment roll entries for these homeowners will not include the STAR exemption.

Homeowners who the Tax Department found to be ineligible for STAR will have the right to administrative review within the Tax Department, and review before the State Board of Real Property Tax Services.



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Consumer Alert: Governor Cuomo Warns New Yorkers About Deceptive STAR Program Solicitations

Letters Offer to Complete Free STAR Application at a Cost

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in early November advised taxpayers to beware of solicitations offering a fee-based service to apply for the School Tax Relief (STAR) property tax exemption – when homeowners can apply for free.

New homeowners have received letters offering to enroll them in the STAR Program for a substantial fee equivalent to the full amount of the taxpayers' first year savings – which averages \$700 statewide and can be as high as \$3,000 for senior citizens in the Lower Hudson Valley and on Long Island.

“New Yorkers should not be fooled: registration to the STAR Program is free, convenient, and provides taxpayers with hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of dollars in property tax relief each year,” Governor Cuomo said. “I encourage any homeowner not receiving a STAR exemption to apply on their own and avoid disingenuous schemes that seek to charge you for the tax relief that is rightfully yours.”

STAR exemptions are the only New York State-funded property tax exemptions. There are two STAR exemptions: Basic STAR for homeowners with incomes under \$500,000, and Enhanced STAR for senior citizens with incomes under \$81,900. The deadline to register for the STAR Program is December 31, 2013.

To apply for STAR: Outside of New York City, homeowners should submit an application to their local assessor's office.

New STAR Registration Program

In order to eliminate waste and fraud in the STAR Program, homeowners who are already receiving the Basic STAR exemption are required to register with New York State Tax Department this year.

To be eligible for the STAR Program, the property must be the primary residence of the owners. Despite that requirement, a Tax Department study last year found that thousands of owners of multiple properties were receiving more than one STAR exemption.

More than 60% of the 2.6 million Basic STAR recipients have already registered for their exemptions. Online registration takes less than four minutes and can be done from the Tax Department's website. Homeowners without Internet access should call 518-457-2036 to register.

The registration deadline is December 31, 2013.

For more information:

- Register online at www.tax.ny.gov (registration materials are available in seven languages)
- Call 518-457-2036 to register by phone
- STAR Registration Media Center includes graphics, fact sheets and other press-friendly links
- YouTube video
- Online demo
- Follow the Tax Department on Twitter for real-time STAR Registration updates

NYS Lifeline; Discounted Telephone Service

The New York State Lifeline program helps income-eligible consumers stay connected and save money on their monthly telephone bills.

What are the benefits?

- Lifeline discounts on home telephone service can save consumers as much as \$250 a year through lower basic local service charges and a waiver of the federal subscriber line charge.
- Wireless customers can receive Lifeline benefits such as free minutes, reduced rates and free phones.

Only **one** Lifeline discount is allowed per household.

Do I qualify for the Lifeline program?

If you participate in any of the following assistance programs:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps)
- Medicaid
- Non-Service Related Veteran's Disability Pension or Veteran's Surviving Spouse Pension
- Family Assistance
- Safety Net Assistance
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8) National School Lunch Program

You will qualify if you meet the qualifying guidelines below:

Household Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Biweekly Income
1	\$15,512	\$1,293	\$597
2	\$20,939	\$1,745	\$805
3	\$26,366	\$2,197	\$1,014
4	\$31,793	\$2,649	\$1,223
5	\$37,220	\$3,102	\$1,432
6	\$42,647	\$3,554	\$1,640
7	\$48,074	\$4,006	\$1,849
8	\$53,501	\$4,458	\$2,058
For each additional person, add	\$5,427	\$452	\$209

How do I apply?

Step 1

Contact your telephone service provider to see if they offer Lifeline.

Step 2

Once you have verified that your telephone service offers Lifeline you may contact them and request to be included in the Lifeline program. Some service providers will have an on-line application process while others will mail you an enrollment package.

Step 3

Send your completed Lifeline application to your telephone provider.

If you have any further questions about Lifeline Discounted Phone Service, visit www.lifelinesupport.org or call the Office for the Aging at 274-5482.

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“New Health Insurance Marketplace Doesn’t Affect Medicare”

By Diane Dawson, CEO, Lifelong and HIICAP Coordinator for Tompkins County and Lisa Holmes, Director, Tompkins County Office for the Aging

With the launch of the new health insurance marketplace on October 1, 2013, which is intended to serve only those who have no other source of health insurance, there has been a great deal of confusion among our older adult population. Those ages 65 and older, or those disabled for 24 months, are eligible for Medicare. The Marketplace **won't** have any effect on Medicare. No matter how you get Medicare, whether through Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan, you'll still have the same benefits and security you have now, and you won't have to make any changes.

Do I need to do anything during Medicare Open Enrollment?

Each year the Medicare Open Enrollment time is October 15 to December 7. This is not part of the new Health Insurance Marketplace. During this time Medicare beneficiaries can review their health insurance needs and any changes that have occurred with their insurance plans. Plan enrollment changes made during Open Enrollment will be effective January 1, 2014.

We can assure our older adults that they will not lose their Medicare insurance coverage if they do not change plans. There is no reason to change plans if your current health insurance coverage meets your health

needs, all your medications are covered by the plan, the doctors you most frequently see accept your plan, and the costs of the plan are manageable for you.

Changes that might occur with insurance plans can be due to many reasons. For example, the plan terminated and no longer provides coverage in our area. You may move out of the coverage area of your current plan or have moved here from a different state and need a new plan. The plan may be sanctioned by the Federal government which indicates the plan did not meet Medicare performance standards or other requirements. No new beneficiaries can enroll in a plan that has been sanctioned until the sanction is lifted.

Enrolling in Medicare

There is a penalty attached to your insurance premiums for Part B and Part D if you do not enroll in Medicare when you first become eligible. This penalty is a percentage of the premium for the time you were not covered after you first became eligible. If you are working beyond age 65 and covered by employer insurance or covered by a working spouse's insurance beyond age 65, you can defer enrollment in Part B. If you are covered by creditable prescription drug coverage you

may also defer enrollment in Part D without penalty. However, once your employment coverage ends there is a limited time in which you must enroll in Medicare Part B and Part D. We urge all those approaching their 65th birthday to check in with Social Security three months before you turn 65 to enroll in Medicare Part A, and Part B if not covered as described above. Part D prescription drug coverage is also important. Often we hear, "I'm not taking any medications so I don't see why I need the insurance." It is important to enroll Part D prescription drug coverage when you are eligible otherwise the premium penalty for failure to enroll can follow you for the rest of your life and you will be paying more because of it.

Much of the media hype has been just that...hype. We encourage all those eligible for Medicare to check in with HIICAP counselors at the County Office for the Aging, by appointment, 274-5482, or with Lifelong, 273-1511 or visit the Medicare website at www.medicare.gov Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) trained counselors are certified by the New York State Office for the Aging and provide unbiased, accurate and complete information to you about the wide range of health insurance options

available to you. No high pressure marketing by insurance companies or fraudulent calls from those trying to take advantage of our older adults will be tolerated. The Senior Medicare Patrol Fraud Prevention hotline is 1-877-678-4697 and we urge you to report to that number any marketing activity that makes you uncomfortable concerning your health insurance coverage.

Finally, the Affordable Care Act has helped older adults in many ways including a wide range of preventive services that are covered including a "Welcome to Medicare" free physical, an annual wellness visit, and several screenings to monitor health conditions and detect illnesses earlier when treatments work best. Also, the Affordable Care Act has saved beneficiaries millions of dollars by each year moving another step closer to eliminating the coverage gap or "donut hole" for prescription drugs that caused them to suddenly have to pay full price for their medications after having paid thousands of dollars out of pocket. A July 29, 2013, press released from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services indicated that over 6.6 million seniors have saved over \$7 billion on medications.

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NY Connects: Long Term Care Assistance

NY Connects is a state-wide program offering information and referral for long term care services. The program is a partnership between Tompkins County Office for the Aging and Long Term Care Services through the Department of Social Services (DSS).

The purpose of NY Connects is to provide accurate and unbiased information regarding long term care needs. Information and assistance is available to Tompkins County residents of all ages at no cost.

NY Connects also takes referrals for such programs as Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP), Medicaid Home Care Services, in-home assessments and case management. Additionally, NY

Connects can take referrals for the Patient Review Instrument (PRI) which is the assessment required by NY State for placement in a nursing home.

Contact NY Connects, Monday through Friday, 8:30-4:30 pm at 274-5222.

The Home Energy and Assistance Program (HEAP)



HEAP is a federally funded, state-run program to help people with low income to obtain a heat benefit. If you received a benefit last year, you will receive an application in the mail by the end of September. If you do not receive an application, please call Office for the Aging at 274-5482.

If you have never received a HEAP benefit, you may call the Office for the Aging at 274-5482 and give them your information and an application will be mailed to you around the middle of November.

The Office for the Aging processes HEAP applications for the following people:

- Individuals over 60 years of age who are not receiving food stamps or public assistance
- Individuals under the age of 60 and receiving a disability benefit

Income Guidelines are:

Household Members	Monthly Income
1	\$2175.00
2	\$2844.00
3	\$3513.00

Furnace repair and replacement program opens November 12th. Please call the Office for the Aging (274-5482) for more information

1 and 2 bedroom moderate income rental apartments for seniors 62 years or older, or handicapped/ disabled, 18 years or older



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TTY# 800-421-1220
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Trumansburg, NY



www.betterhousingtc.org 

1 bedroom low income rental apartments for seniors 62 years or older, or handicapped/ disabled, regardless of age



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- * Income based rent
- * Utility allowance included
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Lifelong News

All events listed are held at Lifelong unless noted.

For more information and full listings of programs please check out our website at www.tclifelong.org Please call Lifelong at 273-1511 or email Jillian Pendleton at jpendleton@tclifelong.org to register for any of these events!

Reminder Lifelong will be closed:

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day—Dec.24 & 25
 New Year's Day-Jan. 1
 Martin Luther King's Day-Jan 20
 President's Day- Feb. 17



PACK UP ALL YOUR CARES AND WOES

For those of you who haven't made it to Letchworth State Park, here's your chance!

Join your friends at Lifelong for a one-day bus trip to this jewel of New York State in June 2014.

This trip will include a stop at Hidden Valley Animal Adventure Park and lunch at The Lodge, then on to the beautiful gorges and waterfalls of Letchworth. We'll stop at the main falls area near the charming Glen Iris Inn before returning to Ithaca.

If a week-long trip is more to your liking, come with us to Northern Michigan and Mackinac Island. Leaving September 21st, 2014, this trip may include Sault Sainte Marie, the Soo Locks, the Kewadin Sault Casino and a ferryboat ride to the beautiful and peaceful Mackinac Island where the only mode of transportation is by horse and carriage! Other points of interest include a tour of quaint Mackinaw City, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse and a visit to Colonial Michilimackinac – a 1700's era village. On your way home we'll stop at Frankenmuth, MI... "Michigan's Little Bavaria".

More information will be available as soon as we finalize plans and itineraries. Check out our website at www.tclifelong.org for updates.



Handicraft Gift Shop

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Holiday Gift Inventory:

Raggedy Ann & Andy Dolls
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The handcrafted gifts made by local seniors at unbeatable prices!



Three of the Lovely Ladies who volunteer in Lifelong's Gift Shop.
 Betty Jean Harris, Jean Hyde and Gladys Diamonds

Best Prices on Holiday & Greeting Cards in Town!

A Thank You from Lifelong



Lifelong would like to give a special thanks to one of the AARP Safe Driving Class participants for donating funds to the Lifelong Learning Program for a new portable speaker, needed for programming.

LIFELONG LEARNING SPRING SEMESTER

We are so excited about the upcoming catalog for the spring semester of Lifelong Learning. Every semester, we strive to offer a wide array of topics and this semester proves no exception. From watching and discussing Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln" to Motor Racing (Grand Prix, LeMans etc); from making a Hungarian folk art beaded necklace to "Being Human: Life Lessons from the Frontiers of Science"; from Culture, Politics, Architecture and Food of Contemporary Thailand to learning more about Arthritis, Nutrition and the importance of Ergonomics.

With the help of our community partners, we've been able to extend some of our courses to the surrounding area. We hope you'll join us for what we believe is a great selection of classes, workshops and presentations both here at Lifelong and in communities throughout Tompkins County. We are proud to offer Lifelong Learning opportunities in Newfield, Lansing, Trumansburg, Groton and Dryden.

A complete list of offerings will be available at Lifelong, 119 West Court Street, or online at www.tclifelong.org. Membership is a requirement for participation in any fee-based Lifelong Learning course. Dues are \$20 annually for an individual or \$30 annually for a household. There is a registration cost of \$50 for one course, \$40 for each additional course, \$30 per workshop, \$10 per presentation. We want everyone to be able to take advantage of these classes. Need-based scholarships, for a maximum of 3 fee-based classes, are available for anyone who is unable to afford the cost of registration.

We rely on, and very much appreciate the time and energy so generously donated by our volunteer instructors. Program ideas and volunteers are always welcome.



AARP Driver Safety offers the nation's first Real Possibilities and largest refresher course designed specifically for older drivers. The Smart Driver curriculum meets standards for driver improvement, based on research, expert opinion, and many years of implementation experience. While the course is designed for the specific needs of older drivers, it is suitable for all drivers, regardless of age.

The course, offered over a one-day or two-day period for a total of six hours of classroom instruction, is dedicated to helping older drivers stay safe, educated, and confident behind the wheel. Per state regulations, most course participants receive a multi-year insurance discount for completing the course. (The discount is determined by an individual's insurance company.)

2014 AARP Safe Driving Courses at Lifelong:

Jan. 22 (Wed.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.
 Jan. 29 (Wed.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Feb. 8 (Sat.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.
 Feb. 15 (Sat.) 1:00-5:00 p.m.

March 8 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (includes a lunch break)

April 5 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 April 12 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.



Call 273-1511 today to register, spaces go fast!

All participants must bring their driver's license and AARP membership card (if a member) to both sessions.

The fee is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members, to be paid by check or money order payable to AARP.

For the first class session, please show up 15 minutes early to complete the registration process.

Northside-Southside News

Northside-Southside is a multicultural program of Lifelong that is open to all seniors providing them the opportunity to participate in daily activities with peers such as shopping, meals, games and special events that promote cultural education and awareness.

(all programs are free unless otherwise noted)

To register for any of these events please call Lifelong at 273-1511 or email Jillian Pendleton at jpendleton@tclifelong.org

December 2013—March 2014 Schedule

December

Gathering: Wednesday, December 4th from 9:30am-10:30pm. We will discuss and finalize plans for the Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon in January and program plans for the Nine Weeks of Celebration.

Game time/WII Bowling Tournament: Tuesday, December 10th at 1pm. Not strong enough to pick up a bowling ball? YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE! Join us for "team fun" and just a touch of competitiveness! No prior experience is necessary!

Special Event: Wednesday, December 18th from 10am-11:30am, Africana Librarian, Eric Acree will come and present on the origins of Kwanzaa, a celebration of African American culture.

Shopping: Tuesday, December 17th from 9:30am-1:45pm visit the Shops at Ithaca Mall.

Join In Nine Weeks of Celebration:

January

Gathering: Wednesday, January 8th at 10am at Lifelong.

Special Event and Lunch: Thursday, January 16th doors open at 11:30am for the Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Luncheon at the Southside Community Center at a cost of \$15. Catered by Feel Good Foods, displayed art work by Khalil Bey, musical styling's of Ajoli Airewele and with special guest speaker. Contact Lifelong at 607.273.1511 for more information.

Shopping: Tuesday, January 21st from 9:30am-1:45pm at the Shops at Ithaca Mall.

Presentations:

Thursday, January 23rd from 2-4pm, Eric Acree from the Africana Library at Cornell will speak on Martin Luther King, Jr. and Our American Dream.

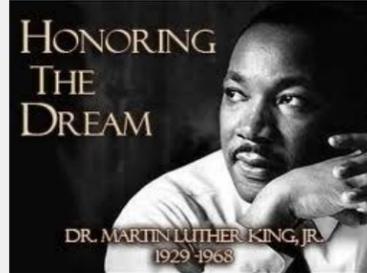
Wednesday, January 29th from 10am-12pm, Artist Khalil Bey will give a hands-on art workshop. Materials Fee—\$10.

February

Presentations/Workshops/Trips: Fridays, February 7-28 from 1pm-2pm, Hip Hop for Seniors Dance Class: there is a \$5 per class fee (\$20 for complete series): Dance your way through an hour of really fun jazz/funk/hip hop dance moves set to pop, and hip hop music. Class is great for beginner and intermediate dancers. A short warm up is followed by a fun dance combination that is built upon and repeated. Each week a new combination is taught. Class ends with a short cool down. New students are always welcome to drop in! **Clothing:** Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Plan on Attending!

LIFELONG'S NORTHSIDE/SOUTHSIDE PROGRAM PRESENTS



the 29th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. luncheon January 16, 2014

at the Southside Community Center,
305 South Plain St., Ithaca.
Doors open at 11:30 am.
Pre-registration is appreciated but
walk-ins are welcome.

Please call 273-1511 to reserve your seat.
Cost for the Luncheon is \$15.

Trip and Lunch: Tuesday, February 11th A trip to Onondaga Historical Association Museum and Research Center from 8:15am-Approximately 3:30pm. This trip will include a tour of the museum, a multimedia presentation of the local underground railroad and the Jerry Rescue Film. Don't worry we will be sure to visit the gift shop before making our way to lunch in Syracuse. Admission is \$4.00 and lunch is at your own expense.

Thursday, January 13th from 10am-12pm: Eric Acree from the Africana Library at Cornell will speak on Black History through Film

Shopping: Tuesday, February 18th from 9:30am-1:45pm at the Shops at Ithaca Mall.

Wednesday, February 26th from 11am-12pm: Bob Eller will give a guitar and vocal performance of music from his role models, including B.B. King, Ray Charles, Little Richard, Sam Cook and Elvis Presley.

Wednesday, February 6th at 10am-12pm, Chef Ralph Moss will teach Down Home Southern Cooking with a Healthy Twist. Spaces are limited; there is a \$10 materials fee.

March

Presentation/Special Event: Thursday, March 6th from 2pm-3pm, Eldred Harris, owner of Diaspora, will present on Days of Fire and Birth of a Hip Hop Nation. A discussion of the Political-Economy of NYC and the South Bronx in particular during the late 60's and 70's and trace the very beginnings of the Hip-Hop culture.

Thursday, March 13th from 2pm-4pm: Eric Acree from the Africana Library at Cornell will speak on Black Literary Tradition.

Shopping: Tuesday, March 18th from 9:30am-1:45pm at the Shops at Ithaca Mall.

Gathering: Wednesday, March 19 at 10am-12pm at Lifelong.

Lunch: Thursday, March 20th from 11:30am-1:30pm at Ithaca Ale House (meet at Lifelong at 11am)

Game time: Friday, March 21st from 1pm-3pm at Lifelong

Join us and start having fun today!



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RSVP

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

K. Minnix, RSVP Director
 Joyce Billing, RSVP Program Assistant
 273-1511 or rsvp@tclifelong.org



Become a Community Builder with RSVP

You can join the 450+ Tompkins County Volunteers, age 55 and over, who are stepping up to do crucial jobs in our community that might otherwise go undone. Volunteer as little or as much as you want. It's up to you!

Call **273-1511** Today

RSVP Volunteers

- Connect with the community and make new friends
- Share their skills and gain new ones
- Develop self-esteem and confidence
- Feel needed and valued
- Support do-good nonprofit agencies

I took up volunteering in retirement. Giving back to the community, having a sense of purpose and the feeling of satisfaction in getting something good done are three reasons I continue to volunteer. —Shirley Jabo

RSVP Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon



The 36th Annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was held on Saturday, November 2nd at the Trip Hotel in Ithaca. Gray skies did not dampen the festivities as nearly 150 RSVP volunteers and guests gathered together and were treated to lunch, a fascinating speaker and drawings for prizes donated by 32 local businesses. Katie Aldridge spoke on the writing of her recently published book "No Freedom Striker" and her journey of discovering his letters and eventual writing of the book. Five RSVP Volunteers were honored for their service in the community. Comments from guests who attended were very positive as expressed by one RSVP Volunteer.

"Thank you for a most delightful Volunteer Recognition Luncheon which was filled with lots of TLC. The guest speaker this year was particularly enjoyable and enlightening. The sincerity and inclusiveness of all the speakers was evident."— Barbara West, in an email to RSVP staff after the Luncheon.

Thank You to these Wonderful Sponsors.

Their generosity is essential to the continued work of RSVP in Tompkins County. Their monetary support allows us to recognize our dedicated volunteers and ensures the continued collaboration between volunteers and community not-for-profits.

RSVP Sustaining Sponsors

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www.drydenmutual.com

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THANK YOU to these local business that so generously donated door prizes for the 2013 RSVP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

Please remember them next time you are shopping for services, a great place to dine out, something for your home or for a gift.

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 American Crafts by Robbie Dein
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 Art Berkey
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 Business is Blooming
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 Fifteen Steps
 Fine Line Bistro
 Handwork
 HEP Sales
 Home Green Home
 Homespun
 Kitchen Theatre
 Lifelong Gift Shop
 Little Venice
 Maxie's Supper Club
 Master Craft Custom Framing
 Monsour Jewelers
 Moosewood Restaurant
 Rasa Spa
 Six Mile Creek Winery
 Taste of Thai
 The Frame Shop
 The Rose Restaurant
 Titus Gallery

Special Volunteers Recognized

Every year the RSVP Staff ask our not-for-profit agencies to recommend a volunteer who has shown extraordinary service to them and the community during the year. From the many names received, five outstanding individuals were chosen to recognize this year.



Marie Benedetti: Prisoner's Legal Services of New York and National Audubon Society recommended Marie for her willingness to lend a hand, her professional approach to her work, and her upbeat personality.

Mary Edsall Golway: Immaculate Conception Food Pantry Director Lillian Tuskey said Mary is every manager's dream volunteer. She has done every job at the pantry, generously giving of her time and talents.



Ellie May: For 9 years, Ellie has been a HIICAP (Health Insurance, Information and Counseling and Assistance Program) Counselor, working nearly every Medicare Clinic during Open Enrollment each year, along with helping to train and mentor new counselors.



Marie Powers: Works both in the Gift Shop and the Human Resources Department at Cayuga Medical Center, she always volunteers for the extra task, never complains and is jolly and a very pleasant to everyone.

Helene Croft: Helene does just about everything we ask her do and is a great resource to RSVP and Lifelong. She handles enormous amounts of data entry daily and still asks to do more.



Thank you so much for all you do in our community.

RSVP Office Hours

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday 1-4 pm

We Love To See Volunteers!

Drop-ins welcome but it is best to make an appointment.
 Please check in at the front desk at Lifelong.

Coming Soon: 2014 Tax Season



FREE Tax Preparation

Seniors 60+

Individuals

with income below \$31,000

Families

with income below \$52,000

273-1511

Appointment scheduling begins January 13, 2014

Appointments available:
January 30 through April 12, 2014
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays only
Lifelong 119 West Court Street
Downtown Ithaca

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program is sponsored in Tompkins County by the IRS and Lifelong, Tompkins County Senior Citizens' Council, Inc.

Volunteer Opportunities— Become a Community Builder with RSVP

We have been contacted by the following organizations that they are in need of volunteers. Do you have extra time or know of another senior who would be perfect for the job?

Tompkins County Public Library – receptionist

Family Reading Partnership – read to young children and stock children's books throughout Tompkins County

Mentor to Student Program, 4-H (male to male) – mentor at-risk boys

Lifelong Handcraft Gift Shop – shop clerk

Rescue Mission Thrifty Shopper Store – clerks and sorters

Catholic Charities – sorters for Free Clothes Closet

American Red Cross – Blood Drive volunteers for reception and the canteen

Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library – handyman or woman for building maintenance jobs

FISH (Friends in Service Helping) – provide individuals with transportation to medical appointments

Project CARE (Tompkins County Office for the Aging) – provide respite and support to caregivers as well as companionship to homebound seniors

Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program - TCE Tax counselors

RSVP—Greeters are needed for the upcoming 2014 tax season.

Check-It financial counseling and organizational assistance to older or disabled adults.

HIICAP Provide health insurance information and counseling to seniors.

To learn more about how you can be a Tompkins County "Community Builder," call 273-1511 and talk with K Minnix

From the IRS:

Six Good Reasons Why You Should Become a Tax Volunteer

If you're looking for a way to help your community, then consider becoming a tax volunteer. The IRS is looking for volunteers now who will provide free tax help next year.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly are community-based programs. They provide free tax return preparation for people who need tax help but can't afford it. People with low-to-moderate incomes, seniors, people with disabilities and those with limited English skills usually qualify for this free service.

Here are six good reasons why you should become a VITA or TCE volunteer.

1. No previous experience is required. Volunteers receive specialized training and have the option of serving in a variety of roles. If you're fluent in a language other than English, you can help those who do not speak English.
2. IRS provides free tax law training and materials that allow volunteers to prepare basic individual income tax returns. Volunteers learn many aspects of tax return preparation. This includes tax deductions and credits that benefit eligible taxpayers, like the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Credit for the Elderly.
3. The hours are flexible. Volunteers generally serve an average of three to five hours per week. Volunteer programs are open from mid-January through the tax filing deadline, which will be April 15, 2014.
4. Volunteer sites are located in communities throughout the nation. You'll find them in neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls and other convenient locations. VITA and TCE sites offer free electronic filing for both federal and state tax returns.
5. Veteran and non-veteran volunteers may be able to help military personnel and their families.
6. As a volunteer, you become part of a program that has helped people file tax returns at no charge for more than four decades. With VITA and TCE, you do make a difference. It's people helping people. It's that simple.

Interested? Contact K Minnix at RSVP/Lifelong 273-1511 or Brian Zapf at Alternatives Credit Union 273-4611

RSVP Monthly RSVP Prize Winners

Every month, we have a random prize drawing to reward 2 lucky RSVP volunteers. More than 120 RSVP volunteers have been recognized since this program began 2009.

October Winners:



Bonnie Rayburn – Volunteering for over 5 years at the Danby Food Pantry and for the Family Reading Partnership.

Jeffrey Bieder - An RSVP volunteer for almost 2 years as an aide at the Lansing Library.

November Winners



Robert Anderson - Bob has been a Tax Counselor for RSVP Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) for over 10 years.

John Sholeen - A RSVP volunteer for 6 years, he volunteers at the Ulysses Philomathic Library and as a Gadabout Driver.

December Winners



Lois Gosse-Volunteering at Kitchen Cupboard and American Red Cross for 8 years.

Maryann Pratt is currently volunteering at Loaves and Fishes.

Thank You to Our Prize Donors:

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from the CRC Newsletter:

Congratulations to the wonderful Gret Atkin who was named as Cancer Resource Center Volunteer of the Year at their recent annual meeting and celebration.

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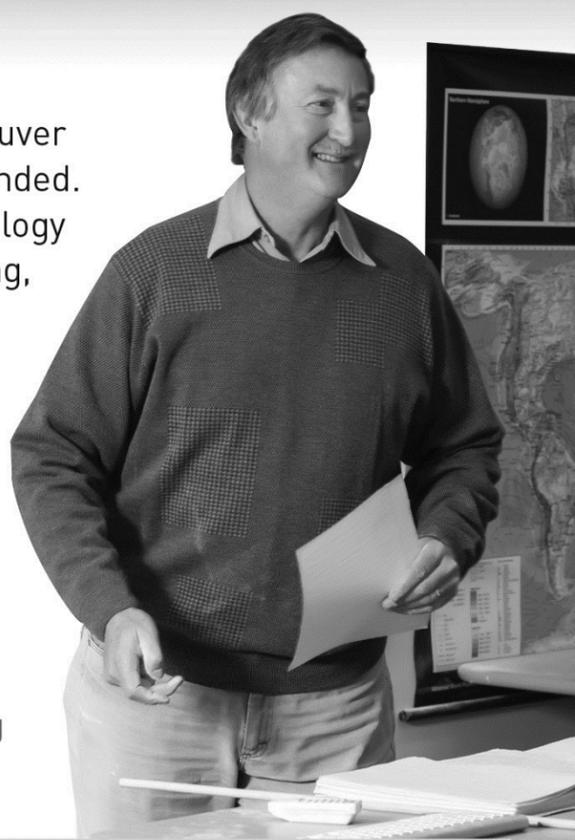
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Wealth Management Advisor
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