

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

Senior Focus: An interview with Sue Perlgut

by Liza Burger

Sue Perlgut retired from leading the Sr. Theatre Troupe at Lifelong after 23 (!) years and we are so grateful for her talent, perseverance, and ongoing enthusiasm for this program. The Troupe still meets at Lifelong and welcomes new members. I was interested in learning about how the Troupe came to be and about what led Sue to play such an integral role at Lifelong.

Sue, I'd love to start with your background and how you came to work in film.

Well, that takes me all the way back to high school where I loved working with our theater director. He was a young man and I learned everything I knew about directing by watching him. I was the student director since I was a little too shy to get up in front of people if you can believe that! I just imbibed everything this man taught – he was phenomenal.

When I went to college, for some reason I didn't get involved in theater. After college however, I got very involved in the women's movement in New York City and joined the street theater troupe called *Burning City Theater*. It was an experience! We performed on the street, in the parks, and at colleges including Cornell. Because I was so involved in the women's movement, it became clear to me, once we did a play through Burning City Theater about our lives as women, that I wanted to work with women. Burning City was a mixed gender group. I started talking to the women about forming a women's theater troupe. We had meetings and workshops and eventually started *It's All Right to Be Woman Theater* which performed stories from our lives for six years in New York City. It was a seminal experience in my life and it was phenomenal! I'm not a person who

always lives in the moment but I knew at that time it was a special moment and that was not going to be my whole life. We performed all over and were very well received. It was fabulous! When I became a filmmaker I made a film about the troupe.

That sounds amazing! Can you tell me about how the Sr. Theatre Troupe began?

When I moved to Ithaca the theatre experience of stories from our lives still resonated with me. I kept thinking about this and finally I came up with the idea of working with seniors telling stories from our lives. I contacted Lifelong about 23 years ago or more and they said, "Sure, let's try it!"

Did you know about Lifelong before that time?

I knew about Lifelong but I probably thought I was too young which was just not true! I asked Natasha Tall (a long time Lifelong member) to come with me to talk to Lifelong about doing the Senior Troupe because I thought she'd be great in a theatre troupe. Initially, we started it together but then she wanted me to just be the director. Natasha was in the Troupe for years and years and was so phenomenal. We had a great time.

With the Troupe, we started telling stories of our lives and having people act (stand up and move around), but you know, we were a lot older. After the first two performances the Troupe turned to me and said, "We're not doing this anymore! No more jumping around, no more memorizing. We need to have our scripts!" So, I developed a way of performing which is what I call choral theater, where there's a soloist who reads their script, and then the choir fills in with the soloist. It worked because people really don't want to memorize - I knew I never wanted to again - so it worked beautifully.



Sue Perlgut



Members of the Lifelong's Senior Theatre Troupe

While I was doing all this I was doing other things in my life. I had jobs and I retired and thought about doing a play called, *101 Ways to Retire or Not*. I got a small grant from Community Arts Partnership (CAP) to write this play and one of the things I wanted to do was to have, behind the actors, the actual video of the

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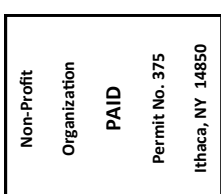
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Senior Services

NY Connects

NY Connects Tompkins County Office for the Aging provides information, assistance, and referrals for Long Term Services and Supports for people of any age and any income. Long Term Services and Supports are for medical and non-medical needs.



Tompkins County Office for the Aging

NY connects can provide information about:

- Personal Care Services
- Caregiver Supports
- Respite Care
- Financial Benefits
- Education and Counseling
- Care Coordination
- Transportation
- Health and Wellness
- Plus, other services to help you remain as independent as possible

NY Connects staff can assist you between 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. By phone: (607) 274-5482 or 1-800-342-9871

Or visit us on the web at www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa

Free language assistance (interpretation and translation) services available.

Joy for All Companion Pets

The Office for the Aging has several animatronic cats and dogs available for "adoption". These interactive pets offer support, comfort, and companionship to older adults. If you or someone you know would be interested in a companion pet, please contact the Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482

The Registry

The Finger Lakes Independence Center administers the Registry Program. The Registry is a free referral service linking individuals seeking independent employment to people who need care in their home. Opportunities include elder companion, housekeeper, run errands, do yardwork, 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 FLIC at 607-272-2433 or email: info@fliconline.org. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Help with yard work

The Office for the Aging/ NY Connects

maintains a listing of people who are willing to do yard work for older adults on either a paid or volunteer basis. If you need some help with your yard work, please give us a call at 607-274-5482.

Tompkins County Office for the Aging Generations of Care Respite Project

February 27 – May 5, 2023

Currently enrolling caregivers. Free to qualified participants.

Ithaca College students, currently enrolled in a health, aging or related program, are available to provide respite breaks to caregiver's, who live with and care for an aging Tompkins County resident, with any diagnosis. Age limits apply. All students have received the evidence-based respite training REST (Respite Education and Support Tools) along with other trainings. The stress of the caregiving role is long recognized and to maintain one's own health to continue in this role, respite is one of the many services recommended for the caregiver. This program allows caregiver's the much-needed break they need to care for themselves, whether that is attending an appointment, pampering, exercise class, movie, shopping, or meeting with friends while knowing that a capable student is providing social interaction, companionship, and care for your loved one.

Please contact Dawn Sprague, Project Coordinator, at Tompkins County Office for the Aging via email at dsprague@tompkins-co.org or phone at (607)274-5499, for more information or to participate in this project.

YOU'RE INVITED

#OlderAmericansMonth
ACL.gov/OAM

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH
AGING UNBOUND: MAY 2023



TOMPKINS COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING
Aging Better. Together

Open House to celebrate Older Americans Month

Friday, May 12, 2023, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

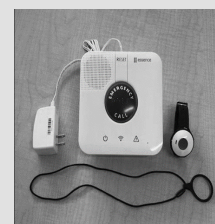
Tompkins County Office for the Aging
214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St.

May is Older Americans Month and to celebrate we are having an Open House. Come and peruse our informational tables which will include some of our community partners! Help us recognize our 2023 Outstanding Volunteers during a brief presentation and stay for a bite to eat and participate in a raffle to win a gift basket of goodies!

Feel free to join us anytime between 1 pm and 4 pm. Recognition of our Outstanding Volunteers will begin at 2:00pm. Please RSVP to Caryn Bullis at cbullis@tompkins-co.org or call 607-274-5450.

Personal Emergency Response System

Ranging from \$25/month to \$45/month, the Office for the Aging has a few different Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) unit options to assist in keeping you safe at home and on the go.



We contract with Doyle Medical Monitoring, to provide the units, technology, and emergency response call center.

Doyle has units that can work solely in the home, or on the go, as well as units that can detect a fall.

The units are wirelessly connected with a pendant that can be worn around the neck or on the wrist, depending on the type of unit that is being used. The pendants are lightweight, can be worn in the shower, and have an easily identifiable button that can be pressed if the client has a fall or a medical emergency.

When the button is pushed, an alert is activated on the unit. Within 60 seconds, Doyle's 24/7 response center will respond on the unit and can call emergency services if it is determined they are needed. For any questions, or to sign up for one of these units, clients can call the Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482.

In addition, if you would like to find ways to make your home safer and be less at risk for falls, the Office for the Aging does FREE FALLS home safety assessments. Outreach Workers can walk with you through your home to identify any potential hazards and give you recommendations on how to remediate them. For more information, or to schedule one, please give the

Longview's Social Adult Day Program is currently enrolling!

Older adults in the Ithaca community are invited to join us to socialize and enjoy shared activities and interests with peers. Families find relief (and joy) knowing their loved ones are well cared for in a friendly, supervised setting while away from home. **Enroll now, the program will reopen on July 11, 2023.**

Friends arrive at 9 a.m. and gather round the table for coffee and conversation, followed by a full day of interesting and engaging things to do together (exercise, news & events, nature walks, crafts, games, cooking, baking, etc. Lunch and healthy snacks are provided and the program adjourns at 3 p.m.

For more information, contact the Program Coordinator at 607-375-6323, adultday@longviewwithaca.org or visit our website www.longviewwithaca.org

Caregiver's Corner

Have You Read a Good Book Lately?

By: Cheryl Willer

Reading can provide an opportunity for self-care. Reading can be an opportunity to learn about something we have an interest in, or perhaps a way to support our role as a Caregiver. The Tompkins County Office for the Aging has several resources and books that you may be interested in borrowing that are great resources for Caregivers. We also welcome new additions to our library, so please let us know if you have any recommendations. Check out the following books for Caregivers if you're looking for guidance and inspiration. These books for Caregivers may help you achieve the balance you're after.

1. "The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementias and Memory Loss", by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins

Authors Nancy L. Mace, MA, and Peter V. Rabins, MD, MPH, explain what causes dementia, how to manage the early stages and how to find appropriate living care options for those with dementia. It includes guidance on how to get outside help and how to address various financial and legal issues.

2. "A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents – and Ourselves", by Jane Gross

Elderly care expert and journalist, Jane Gross, writes about her experiences as caretaker for her 85-year-old mother. She details how to face challenges when relocating a parent, how to deal with Medicare and Medicaid, and how to adapt in a new role as a caretaker.

3. "Caring for Your Parents: The Complete Family Guide", by Hugh Delehanty and Elinor Ginzler

This guide from AARP provides recommendations on topics including how to locate quality health care, how to organize caregiving from afar and how to deal with Medicare. This caregiver book includes resources like consumer action groups and help lines to navigate elderly caregiving.

4. "Chicken Soup for the Soul: Family Caregivers – 101 Stories of Love, Sacrifice and Bonding", by Joan Lunden and Amy Newmark

This book is a collection of stories from 101 authors, including celebrities like television personality Leeza Gibbons, who have cared for family members at homes or in outside facilities. Topics covered include being part of the "sandwich generation" and caring for both children and adult parents, caring for a parent with Alzheimer's disease and caring for a senior as a young adult.

5. "The Complete Eldercare Planner: Where to Start, Which Questions to Ask and How to Find Help", by Joy Loverde

This practical guide includes checklists, worksheets, and action plans for tasks like creating a long-term care plan and managing the financial aspects of adult caregiving. It also includes tips for communication, navigating senior living arrangements and arranging care from afar.

6. "The Conscious Caregiver: A Mindful Approach to Caring for Your Loved One Without Losing Yourself", by Linda Abbit

Author Linda Abbit, a caregiving professional, shares advice for taking care of older parents while avoiding burnout and exhaustion. The book includes tips on how to balance caregiving for a loved one with staying financially secure and maintaining mental health.

7. "Coping with Your Difficult Older Parent: A Guide for Stressed-Out Children", by Grace Lebow and Barbara Kane

This book provides communication tips for dealing with challenging parents and contentious behaviors. It provides guidance for how to deal with aging parents who exhibit critical, negative, or hostile behavior and how to deal with issues that may impair an aging parent's safety, like driving. The book includes sample dialogues addressing various difficult scenarios.

8. "How to Care for Aging Parents: A One-Stop Resource for All Your Medical, Financial, Housing and Emotional Issues", by Virginia Morris

This book about aging parents is a comprehensive look at common issues, including how to know when to intervene, how to choose a long-term care option and how to pay for long-term care. It also includes tips for "caring for the caregiver" and caregiving from a distance.

9. "How to Say It to Seniors: Closing the Communication Gap with Our Elders", by David Solie

This book by geriatric psychology expert David Solie provides tips to caregivers for how to communicate with the elderly who have unique goals including the desire for control in their daily lives and for their legacy.

10. "Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos into Confidence", by Gail Sheehy

Author Gail Sheehy outlines nine steps for family caregiving, drawn from experiences in her own life as a caregiver. She gives examples of various situations adult caregivers face and offers strategies to cope.

11. "When Caregiving Calls: Guidance as You Care for a Parent, Spouse or Aging Relative", by Aaron Blight

Author Aaron Blight draws on experience as a family caregiver, owner of a home care company and researcher and lecturer to provide caregivers with advice on how to cope with caregiving challenges. Blight explains how caregiving shapes family relationships and how caregiving affects those who are being cared for and those who are providing care.

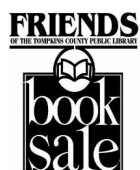
12. "When the Time Comes: Families with Aging Parents Share Their Struggles and Solutions", by Paula Span

Journalist Paula Span collects stories of families who have had to deal with caring for elderly family members. Stories cover emotional challenges, navigating elder care options and how to find practical solutions that work for whole families.

13. "Strength for the Sandwich Generation: Help to Thrive While Simultaneously Caring for Our Kids and Our Aging Parents", by Kristine Bertini

The author addresses the multiple complexities that arise for the millions of middle-aged adults caring for both their children and their elders, providing the caregiver with resources and information that include strategies for caring for the self, children, and elders; handling financial strain; and addressing moral and ethical dilemmas. A licensed clinical psychologist, author Kristine Bertini shows midlife readers how to balance their demanding and multiple roles while also making meaning and finding genuine happiness in their complex world.

Don't forget, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging has great resources available including pamphlets, a lending library, a quarterly newsletter, a caregiver group, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, and monthly presentations of interest to caregivers. Reach out to the Caregiver Resource Coordinator today at 607-274-5486.



2023 Spring Sale:

May 6-8, 13-15, 20-23.
Hours: 10am-4pm

Senior & Disabilities Day,
May 17, 10am-4pm
60 years & older

Book enthusiasts 60 & over and those with disabilities that make shopping difficult can shop on "Senior Day" which is the Wednesday between the 2nd & 3rd weekends, May 17, 2023, 10:00am - 4:00pm. Your helper must stay with you and cannot shop separately.

Please bring your own reusable bags, boxes or bins.

Looking for space to hold a community group meeting or a gathering of friends and family?

Lifelong rooms are available for rent outside of business hours.

The spaces available include a large activity room, smaller conference rooms, and a kitchen.

Interested parties should contact us directly at 607-273-1511



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

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.



TOMPKINS COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Aging Better, Together

Tompkins County Office for the Aging Seeks to Recognize the Contributions of Volunteers in Our Community

Do you know of an older adult (age 60+) who has done something special for the community?

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is now accepting nominations for volunteers who have made significant contributions to the community through civic engagement. Awards will be presented during the Office for the Aging's Open House in May as well as during Older New Yorker's Day which will be held virtually this year (date TBD).

Nominations should be in the form of a letter and should include activities, achievements, and the reasons that the individual should receive the award. Please include contact information for both the nominator and the nominee in the letter.

Send your nominations to the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St., Ithaca, NY 14850 (email: cbullis@tom-pkins-co.org or fax 607-274-5495) by **Friday, April 14, 2023**. Contact the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482 for more information.

* Past awardees include: Joel Abrams, Barry Adams, Phyllis Allen, John Anderson, Fred Antil, Irene Asay, Joan Barber, Barbara Barry, Ardie Bennett, Nancy Bereano, Beverly Blanchard, Lucy Brown, Mary Cambreco, Joseph Cimmino, Betty Conger, Joe Anna Deas, Mary Pat Dolan, Elizabeth Doppel, Ann Doren, Frances Eastman, William Eisenhardt, Rebecca Elgie, Charles Elliot, Carina Emerson, Martha Ferger, Bernie Fetterly, Fred Fladd, Richard Flaville, Sue Ford, Helen Garvey, Gertrude Gray, Lisa Gould, Gladys Hamilton, Beth Harrington, John "Holly" Holingsworth, Jean Hyde, Nancy Istock, Leon Lawrence, Debra Levine, Ilma Levine, Harriet London, Louise Matosich, Paul McGraw, Mary Mente, John O'Connell, Ray Oglesby, Joan Ormondroyd, Jim Quest, Jean Robinson, Ken Robinson, Theresa Robinson, Marie Romano, Frank Schaefer, Bill Sherwood, Margaret Snow, Ted Sobel, Robert Spaulding, Phyllis Stout, Richard Tabor, Eunice Tabor, Amanda Ufford, and Jack Warren



HIICAP
Health Insurance Information,
Counseling and Assistance
Program

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH HIICAP 2023 (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program)

Call for personalized, free HIICAP counseling at LIFELONG: 607-273-1511 or Office of the Aging: 607-274-5491

Medicare Savings Program 2023 - monthly income (based on 2023 FPL)

- **2023: Qualifying Individual \$2280.00 individual, \$3077.00 couple – does NOT look at assets**

Benefits:

- Pays for your Part B premium (2023 standard premium = \$164.90/month)
- **Automatically** enrolled in "Extra Help" program, which reduces co-pays for medications.

Extra Help Program 2023 Eligibility - Partial Extra Help

- **Gross monthly income <\$1843 and assets up to \$16,660 (individual)**
- **Gross monthly income <\$2485 and assets up to \$33240 (married couple)**

Benefits:

- Assistance with Medicare Part D (drug) costs (premiums, deductibles, and co-pays)

EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage Program)

Eligibility:

- at least 65 years old
- resident of NY state
- Enrolled in Part D or Medicare Adv. Plan with Part D
- **Annual income under \$75K (individual) or \$100K (married couple)**
- Cannot be receiving full Medicaid **but** can use with a spend down.

Benefits:

- Entitled to a special enrollment period once/year- can use to enroll in or change Part D or Med. Advantage with D.
- Lowers Part D co-pays (cost of medications)
- Can cover Part D-excluded meds (Rx vitamins, Rx cough & cold)

Join Lifelong for a free Medicare Basics Presentation

via zoom on

Monday, May 8, 2023 from 4:30-5:45pm



Medicare Basics is an introduction to the federally administered health insurance program that provides coverage to persons 65 and older, and persons under 65 who are disabled. Our presentation will cover the different ways you can receive your Medicare benefits, how Medicare works with other health insurance, and financial-assistance options that may be available to you. Be your own advocate! This presentation will provide you with some clarity on how to be an informed consumer.

Presented by Liza Burger, Executive Director of Lifelong, and certified Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) counselor. In addition to offering presentations, certified HIICAP counselors offer **FREE**, non-biased 1:1 health insurance counseling at Lifelong. Telephone, zoom, and in-person HIICAP appointments are available.

Please contact Lifelong to provide us with your email prior to the presentation if you'd like handouts emailed to you: lburger@tclifelong.org, or ph: 273-1511.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/99311400704>

Got Medicare Questions?

Lifelong's Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program (HIICAP) offers assistance to persons of all ages who are trying to understand their Medicare coverage. If you have questions about Medicare and related insurance, or if you are having trouble paying for Medicare, or any related problems or issues, please turn to HIICAP.

HIICAP's certified volunteer insurance counselors are currently providing personalized counseling over the phone or via zoom, or in person to individuals who have questions about Medicare.

Frequently HIICAP is helping people understand the framework of Medicare:

Part A is hospital insurance;

Part B is medical insurance;

Part C is the option of a Medicare Advantage Plan (through a private insurance company); and

Part D is Medicare prescription drug coverage (also through a private insurance company).

In addition counselors provide information on Medicare supplement policies. The most common concern brought to HIICAP is the issue of cost – keeping insurance and health care costs within each person's budget. Those concerns are addressed in a number of ways, including:

- Informing persons with low incomes about options which can assist them: the Medicare Savings Program, the Part D Extra Help Program, and Medicaid;
- Comparing the costs and the coverage offered through Medicare supplement policies and Medicare Advantage Plans;
- Taking a look at New York State's EPIC program, which can help with drug costs.

In each appointment, the starting point is your individual situation, your questions and concerns.

If you wish to talk with a certified counselor, please call Lifelong at 607-273-1511 and we will get back to you to set up an appointment.

Tompkins County Office for the Aging (COFA) also has HIICAP certified counselors. Call COFA at 607-274-5491.



Tips on dealing with excess calls and mail related to Medicare.

While nuisance calls and possible scam phishing happen to everyone, it appears that older adults are targeted more often. This is especially true during Fall Open Enrollment Period (October 15 to December 7) when people who have health insurance through Medicare can choose to change their coverage and the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (January 1 through March 31) when people who have a Medicare Advantage plan can change their plan. Private companies who contract with Medicare to provide Medicare Advantage Plans and stand-alone Part D plans (Rx prescription coverage) might call and/or send mail promoting their products, with the intention of selling insurance to new customers. Some Medicare recipients find this invasive, especially the phone calls at mealtime. Here are some suggestions to reduce unwanted calls and mail.

Do Not Call Registry

The Federal Trade Commission manages the National Do Not Call Registry. Users can register home and mobile phones for free. This will limit sales calls. Charities, political groups, debt collectors and surveys can still call. It can take a month for the registration to be effective.

Be aware that this service will not limit scammers.

Go to DoNotCall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236) from the phone you want to register. It's free.

If you register your number at DoNotCall.gov, you'll get an email with a link you need to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration.

Opt Out Registry

The Opt Out Registry will limit mailed credit and insurance offers. This registry is operated by the major credit bureaus and endorsed by the Federal Trade Commission Consumer Affairs Department. Go to optoutprescreen.com or call 1-888-5-OPT-OUT (1-888-567-8688). For more information: <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/prescreened-credit-insurance-offers>

Some things to keep in mind:

- Medicare and Social Security do not solicit or call and ask for information. Do not give your personal information to a caller claiming to be from Medicare. This could be a scam and could lead to your identity being stolen.
- When googling Medicare, Social Security or other government sites, make sure that you are accessing the official site that ends in **.gov** such as <https://www.medicare.gov/> or <https://www.ssa.gov/>
- Look for the "s" in the website address, the URL: <https://>. This indicates that this is a secure site. General website addresses using [http](http://) without an "s" are not secure and will not protect your personal information.
- Be SMART with your phone. If you need assistance setting up your phone, Lifelong and the Tompkins County Public Library offer individual assistance.
- Use your contacts to list family, friends, and businesses that you want to talk to. Do not answer the phone if caller ID does not recognize the caller from your contacts list. If it is important, the caller will leave a message.
- Activate and check your voice mail. Keep your mailbox and voice mail cleaned out. There is a limited amount of space and will give the message: "the mailbox is full".
- Do not be afraid to HANG UP on an unwanted call.

Where to get creditable information about Medicare, Medicare Advantage and Part D plans:

Every year the Medicare Counseling Program (HIICAP) at Lifelong prepares a spreadsheet with up-to-date information regarding Medicare Advantage plans available in Tompkins County. The 2023 spreadsheet for Medicare Advantage plans and a list of stand-alone Part D drug plans are available both at Lifelong (607 273-1511) and Tompkins County Office for Aging (607 274-5491). Staff at both locations also provide Medicare counseling face-to-face, by zoom, or over the telephone.

Lifelong is located at 119 W Court St. and Tompkins County Office for Aging is located at 214 W State St. Both are in downtown Ithaca.

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwinding - End of PHE May 11, 2023.

Annual reassessments resume July 1, 2023

Affects: Medicare Saving Program (MSP), Extra Help, traditional NYS Medicaid, NYSOH or MAGI Medicaid (Fidelis and Molina), and Medicare enrollment at 65 for MAGI Medicaid enrollees, Child Health Plus, and NYS Essential Plan.

A Public Health Emergency (PHE) has been in effect since March 2020, the beginning of the Covid Pandemic. This will be ending in May 2023. **Starting July 1, 2023 all Medicaid programs will resume annual recertifications.** These have been suspended for the last three years during the Public Health Emergency. If you receive Medicaid insurance benefits, here are some tips to get ready for recertification.

- Do you receive Medicaid benefits from the local Department of Social Services (DSS), Fidelis, or Molina?
- Have you moved in the last four years? Does your Medicaid insurer have your current mailing address?
- Do you open and read your mail?
- Do you know what your recertification date is? Is this date after June 30, 2023?
- Did you turn 65 during the Public Health Emergency that started in March 2020 and will end in May 2023? Do you have Medicaid provided by Fidelis or Molina?

Why are these important?

If you have moved or if you do not open your mail, when a recertification notice is mailed out and not responded to, you may be at risk having your Medicaid benefits cancelled the beginning of the following month. You might find this out from your pharmacy when you go to pick up a prescription or from your provider when you call to schedule a visit.

Before the Public Health Emergency, if you were on Fidelis or Molina Medicaid (also known as NYSOH or MAGI Medicaid), at the time you turned 65, you would be reassessed for eligibility for Medicaid with the local Department of Social Services. Some Medicaid recipients will lose their Medicaid when they go on Medicare, and some will continue to be eligible for Medicaid benefits. There might also be other federal or state assistance available depending on current income.

The local DSS cannot reduce or discontinue coverage for any Medicaid or Medicare Savings Program (MSP) recipient prior to July 1, 2023. This also applies to NYSOH or MAGI Medicaid. If recipients experience termination of benefit before July 1, 2023, call the local DSS at (607) 274-5680 to address this.

Contributors: Tompkins County DSS, Medicare Rights Center, Lifelong Health Insurance Information, Counseling, and Assistance Program (HIICAP).

"I define connection as the energy that exists between two people when they feel seen, heard and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship." Dr. Brene Brown

Project CARE Friendly Visiting Program

Project CARE is a friendly visitor program free to Tompkins County residents age 60 and over, where a volunteer and Senior are matched together and enjoy weekly visits with each other. Volunteers provide companionship, especially to Seniors who are experiencing social isolation or loneliness and can support older adults and caregivers in a variety of ways according to their needs. Weekly visits are a wonderful opportunity for volunteers and seniors alike to form a caring bond.

What would a weekly friendly visit mean to you...?

- Comfort to ease the loneliness or social isolation
- Conversation to break the silence
- Laughter to lighten your mood
- Friendship to fill your heart

Please **contact Dawn Sprague, Project CARE Coordinator at 607-274-5499** or by email at dsprague@tompkins-co.org, if you would like to discuss this opportunity further, would like to sign up for a weekly friendly visitor, or if you are interested in becoming a Project CARE volunteer.



Lifelong News

All events listed are held at Lifelong unless noted.

For more information and full listings of programs please check our website at www.tclifelong.org

Please call Lifelong at 273-1511 or email **Amy Campbell, Program Director**, at acampbell@tclifelong.org to register for any of these events!

A Line from our Executive Director, Liza Burger



Spring has arrived and with it comes new beginnings! Please join us in wishing all the best to Teri Reinemann, who has left her position with us and extend a warm welcome to Amy Campbell who has joined Lifelong as our Program Director. We're confident that Amy will be a valuable addition to our team.

Lifelong has been bustling over the last few months, and as I write this, we are more than halfway through our tax season! Under the skilled leadership of Khaki Wunderlich, we expect that our certified volunteer tax preparers will complete more than 800 returns this year, in only an 11 week period. Kudos to these dedicated folks on providing such an important service to our community. We are also partway through Lifelong's spring semester-based Class Offerings, and our Activities related to health & wellness and creative arts, as well as Social Groups are ongoing. Our upcoming **Summer Catalog** (June/July/August) will be available for pick up at Lifelong toward the end of May, and please note that we don't mail this issue to our members.

In other exciting news, we are thrilled to announce the launch of our **newly revamped website!** Our new site offers a fresh design and enhanced functionality, making it easier than ever for you to navigate and find the information that you need. You'll now be able to not only join or renew your annual membership to Lifelong, but this site also allows for online class registration for those who prefer this method. It also includes an up-to-date calendar of classes, activities, social groups, services, and events! We hope that you'll enjoy exploring our new site (www.tclifelong.org) and we welcome any feedback you may have.

Keep an eye out in the weekly email newsletter and on our website for tickets and information on Lifelong's **upcoming annual meeting and luncheon on Thursday, May 25th at noon at the Hotel Ithaca**, the first held in person since 2019! We would love to have you join us to get an overview of Lifelong from the past year, enjoy lunch with Lifelong members, board, and staff, and celebrate the winner of the Barbara Hulbert Volunteer Award. Many thanks to Red Feet Wine Market for the donation of wine for our "wine pull" at this event!

Now in its third year, Lifelong will be again hosting an **Online Silent Auction from June 1-9!** We've already begun to collect donations for this event which has been well supported in the past. Join in on the bidding fun once the auction goes live in June at: <https://www.32auctions.com/Lifelong2023> !

Warmly, Liza



You are cordially invited to attend.

LIFELONG'S 71st Annual Luncheon & Meeting

Thursday, May 25, 2023

12:00 Noon — 2:00 p.m.

The Hotel Ithaca, 222 South Cayuga Street, Ithaca
(parking available)

Guest Speaker! Wine Pull! Raffle Baskets! And more!

Choose 1 lunch selection when registering for event:

- Quiche and Fresh Fruit (Vegetarian) *or*
- Chicken Caesar Salad served with Warm Rolls *or*
- Portobello Mushroom Sandwich and Fresh Fruit

A donation of \$25 covers lunch and gratuities

Registration ends on May 12th.

Register online at www.tclifelong.org or
by calling Lifelong at 607-273-1511

Lifelong Summer Offerings



Enhance your Summer at Lifelong!

Expand your horizons and beat the heat in our AC!

Take advantage of one or more of our activities and learning opportunities with your Lifelong membership. An active social life leads to better health, so please join us! This Summer sees some returning activities along with the new!

Limber up for Summer with some weekly Yoga. Yoga promotes flexibility, blood flow and overall wholeness through intentional and fluid movement. Classes are held Mondays from 12-1 in our large activity room. Beginners are welcomed and encouraged!

Want to get out in the fresh air and explore new places? Join us for our Summer Walking program. The group meets every other Wednesday at 9:15am at Lifelong. Walks begin at 9:30 prompt. For exact scheduling check www.tclifelong.org or call Lifelong.

John Burger has added a chair Tai Chi class to our Lifelong Activity schedule. Tai chi can help to lower tension, increase strength and improve wellness all from a supported, seated position. Class meets on Mondays from 10:45-11:45

Do you have a flare for the dramatic? Do you like comedies, melodramas, or tragedies? Come on down to our Readers Theater. Instead of acting on a stage, join us in bringing the text alive through our voices, gestures and facial expressions as we read a variety of scripts. The group meets the last Friday of every month from 1:30-3:30.

Get a better understanding of the human body through our 6 week, "Fundamentals of Anatomy" series, led by Dave McCune. Sign up now and glean some helpful and informative anatomical knowledge. The instructor's wealth of knowledge and experience in Physical Therapy is very informative. Come down Mondays, April 3-May 8, 2023, from 2:30—4:00. The class is \$40 for all 6 classes.

Dance, dance, dance! Keep your moves alive and your smile wide! Lifelong offers Square, Round and Line Dancing. Come join our lively group on Fridays, 2:00-4:00.

Are you a World Cinema buff? Don't miss our summer film series, World Cinema Part XI, hosted by Ron Krieg. Take a cinematic tour around the world! Films include, *Cabeza de Vaca*, *Three Colors Blue*, *Three Colors Red*, Woody Allen's *Match Point*, and many more. Drop in fee of \$10 per class or \$40 for the series.

Looking for some comradery and support? You are not alone. Participate in our Alzheimer's Support Group. We meet the first Wednesday of every month from 5:30-7:00 pm. Take some time for yourself and come down and join us. Chat, share, listen and recharge. Lifelong membership is not required. Everyone is welcome!

Register early to secure your first choices!

"Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow."

-Anthony D'Angelo

See you soon!

Lifelong Spring Events:



**May 3, 2023: Mother's Day Celebration
12:00-1:30**

**May 10, 2023: Lifelong Volunteer Fair
10:00-12:00**

**May 25, 2023: Lifelong Annual Meeting
Ithaca Hotel, Noon**

June 1-9, 2023: Third Annual On-line Silent Auction

Mark your calendars Today:



Monday, May 29th - Memorial Day

Monday, June 19th—Juneteenth

Coming in Spring....**Lifelong's
Third Annual On-line Auction
June 1-9, 2023****Presenting Sponsors:****Cayuga Medical Medical Center****Travis Hyde**Email: lburger@tclifelong.orgAuction website: www.tclifelong.org**Why Join Lifelong?**

Lifelong is a vibrant, active community center in Ithaca for all adults 50 and over. Lifelong helps adults stay active by learning new things and living healthier. The organization offers a wide variety of classes and opportunities.

Lifelong offers classes in health and wellness, conducted by experienced instructors who create classes that represent a holistic philosophy of the mind, body and spirit. Classes are fun, engaging and meet you at your current level of wellness. There are many classes offered on site at the Lifelong building at 119 W. Court Street in Ithaca. There are some off site classes in Brooktondale, Lansing and Trumansburg as well. Off site wellness classes do not require a Lifelong membership.

There are a limited number of on-going creative arts classes offered at this writing, such as the Clay Studio and Senior Theatre Troupe.

Lifelong Learning Classes offer semester-based classes intended to stimulate conversation, challenge our thinking, and provide opportunity for connection both with class instructors (all volunteers) as well as classmates. Classes offered vary from semester to semester and range from topics in history, technology, film, art, health, politics and more. Classes may be held in-person at Lifelong and offsite locations, and/or virtually. Hybrid programming is sometimes offered. Lifelong Learning classes are taught by volunteer instructors who, while not paid, do receive \$40 credit towards Lifelong classes. You can reach out to the Program Director if you would be interested in leading a class at Lifelong.

Lifelong also offers a variety of social groups who share a common interest and come together on a regular basis. Groups are offered for scrabble, bridge, writing, a women's social group, pinochle and reader's theatre to name just a few.

During Ithaca's warmer months, Lifelong offers a bi-weekly Walking Program, as well as a Ladies Senior Golf.

Travel opportunities through Collette Tours are offered several times each year to places such as the Canadian Rockies and Alaska. Lifelong members receive a \$50 discount on Collette Tours booked by designated dates.

Lifelong's Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program (HIICAP) offers assistance to persons of all ages who are trying to understand their Medicare coverage. If you have questions about Medicare and related insurance, if you are having trouble paying for Medicare or your prescription drugs, or if you have any related problems or issues, please turn to HIICAP. You can work with a trained, certified Health Insurance Counselor who can answer your questions.

Each tax season, Lifelong offers free tax prep of both federal and New York state returns at the Lifelong location in Ithaca, as well as at the Trumansburg Ulysses Philomathic Library and the Dryden Southworth Library. All seniors, age 60+ (with spouses of any age), all individuals with disabilities and families with incomes below \$60,000 are eligible. The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program is sponsored by a grant from the Internal Revenue Service and receives additional financial support from Lifelong and the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. A Lifelong membership is not required to take part in the TCE tax program.

For over 50 years, the Tompkins County Senior Citizens' Council, now known as Lifelong, has helped adults 50 and older stay active in the community, learn new things, and live healthier. Benefits of membership include:

- *Eligibility to participate in Lifelong Learning & onsite activities held at 119 W. Court St. (may require Additional fees)
- *Eligibility for \$30/month unlimited Health & Wellness Activities
- *Eligibility for \$30/month unlimited Creative & Language Arts Activities
- *Discounted TCAT bus passes
- *25% discount on Cornell Concert series tickets
- *25% discount on Ithaca YMCA membership
- *10% discount on first year of Love Living at Home (www.lovelivingathome.org)
- *Free Science Center passes
- *Free parking only for your visit to Lifelong (on a first-come, first-served basis)
- *Supporting Lifelong's mission to be a vibrant and active community center
- *Free in-person technology assistance from volunteers
- *Access to the Virtual Senior Center
- *\$20 off coupons at Mary Durham Boutique
- *\$50 discount on Lifelong travel bookings with Collette Tours

Feel free to stop by the Lifelong location to check out our offerings, or check out our website at <https://tclifelong.org> for information and our current catalog. We would love to meet you!

**Square, Round and Line
Dancing at LIFELONG!**

119 W. Court St.- Ithaca

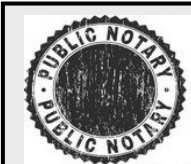
Join us EVERY Friday -- 2 - 4 pm

- for FUN -

**MUSIC, DANCE and
SOCIALIZING****-square dances with
live caller****-line dances****-round dances****-no partner needed****-socializing with LOTS of FUN!****Parking in front and rear of Lifelong building....
rear parking enter off of Buffalo St.****Cost: \$5 and active Lifelong membership****COME AND CHECK IT OUT !****Lifelong Ladies Senior
Social Golf Program****Play golf; have fun; meet new people:
exercise; and socialize!**This program is **not a league**. No scores are kept.

Season goes on from May to September on Wednesdays.

Each golfer must be a member of Lifelong, pays her own golf fees, which includes green fees, cart, and lunch.

**Informational meeting at Lifelong on
April 19th at noon**Interested in Joining? For more information, schedule, and to register online, head to www.tclifelong.org under "Social Group" or contact:Karen Koyanagi at 607-273-1511 or email: kkoyangi@tclifelong.org**There is a limit of 60 players!****Golf Package emails arriving in April for returning players, contact Karen if you have not received one.****Notary Public Service available at Lifelong****Free of charge****To arrange an appointment email Liza Burger at lburger@tclifelong.org**

SNAP Emergency Allotments Ended in February

February was the last month that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients were able to receive the temporary emergency allotments that were provided throughout the pandemic. Beginning in March, all SNAP households received their normal monthly SNAP benefit, for as long as they remained eligible. To learn more visit www.otda.ny.gov/EA-SNAP.

Below is a list of several food pantries located across Tompkins County. Some of these food pantries run anywhere from once a month, to as often as several times a month, and can be utilized by anyone. The dates, hours, as well as addresses can be searched online. For more information, please call the Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482.

Baptized Church of Jesus Christ (Ithaca)

Caroline Food Pantry

Danby Food Pantry

Dryden Kitchen Cupboard

Enfield Food Pantry

Freeville Food Pantry

Groton Food Providers

Immaculate Conception (Ithaca)

Lansing Food Pantry

Newfield Kitchen Cupboard

Southside Community Center (Ithaca)

Trumansburg Food Pantry



“Spring Forward” with Better Sleep and Energy – Tips to Combat Spring FOODNET Fatigue.

By Jianxin Huo, MPH

Cornell Dietetic Intern at Foodnet Meals on Wheels

Feeling extra sleepy during springtime? It is likely that you are experiencing “spring fatigue”. People may blame Daylight Saving for taking away an hour of sleep as we move the clock an hour ahead (FYI – Daylight Saving in 2023 begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 12). Not only the change in daylight hours can impact your sleep routine, but other environmental and nutritional factors can also influence your sleep quality and energy level. Here are some tips to combat spring fatigue.

Better sleep habits and sleep environment:

Follow a regular bedtime routine and sleep schedule to make sure you get at least 7-8 hours of sleep. Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. If possible, keep your room temperature at 60-67 degrees Fahrenheit for optimal sleep.

Nutrition:

Proper nutrition can both fuel your body and improve sleep. Eating enough vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat proteins during the day will charge you up with energy, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Nutrients like tryptophan (an essential amino acid from protein foods) and B vitamins help regulate your sleep hormones and sleep/wake cycle. It’s recommended that you finish your dinner three hours before bedtime to allow the sleep/wake cycle to work normally. Avoid eating a high-fat diet because it may reduce your sleep quality and make you sleepy during the day. If you are feeling too hungry to fall asleep, feel free to have some light snacks like milk, low fat yogurt, fruit, or a slice of wheat toast.

Hydration:

Keeping hydrated during the day will help you feel less tired. Aim for 6-8 glasses of water every day (as always- ask your doctor first!). You may enjoy other healthy beverages like milk, 100% fruit juice, coffee, and tea. Be mindful that the effect of caffeine can last up to six hours in your body, and therefore you may want to stop having coffee or tea in the afternoon or evening.

Exercise:

Staying physically active during the daytime can boost your mood and energy and reduce stress. This may also help you to better adjust your sleep cycle after the daylight saving time shift. As the weather gets warmer, take advantage of outdoor walking to enjoy natural light and fresh air to refresh your mind and mood. If you prefer to stay indoors, moving around in the house or doing some simple stretches are also beneficial.

Rememory Block Party

Speakers:
Ithaca High School
Ithaca College
Cornell University
Lifelong
Southside
GIAC



April 29, 2023
Southside Community
Center: 10-1 PM
320 Wait Ave: 2-5PM

feat. book giveaway, food, music, + storytelling
for Ithaca’s Black and Indigenous communities of all ages!
free transportation available from downtown Ithaca
-a BIPOC exclusive event-



To learn more visit www.rememorylibrary.org
This event is sponsored by We Need Diverse Books and Lifelong’s Mosaic Program



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of those you leave behind.

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to begin your planning at
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(607) 387- 8151
www.ness-sibley.com



LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

LTCOP is looking for volunteers to serve as *advocates*, conduct *facility visits*, and resolve *concerns* for residents in long-term care facilities.

Contact us today!

Call us at 607-274-5498
Email pchevallard@tompkins-co.org

WWW.TOMPKINSCOUNTYNY.GOV/COFA/VOLUNTEERS

DO YOU LIVE IN CHEMUNG, SCHUYLER, OR TOMPKINS COUNTIES? &

DO YOU HAVE:

- Excellent communication skills
- The ability to problem solve
- A commitment to dignity and respect
- A desire to make a REAL difference
- Two hours a week?

5 Minutes to Better Balance!

By Amy Campbell, Lifelong Program Director



Looking to improve your balance? Research shows that regular balance training for seniors can significantly reduce the risk of falls.

Nearly 1 in 3 adults over age 65 will fall each year. It's no surprise that falling is the number one cause of injury among senior adults.

Falls can lead to serious injury, including hip fractures or other broken bones, head injury, brain injury, and even death.

There is good news! Engaging in just 5 minutes of balance training daily can lead to significant improvements and lower the risk of falling.

Ready to start improving today? Try some of these beginner exercises.

The only equipment you will need is a chair or counter to hang on to!

- **Close Leg Stance:** Stand behind chair or at counter. While holding onto back of chair or counter place feet together and stand up straight looking straight ahead. To increase difficulty hold on with one hand only or slowly alternate your hands and loosen grip. When you are ready to go a bit further, try doing this with your eyes closed while holding chair or within easy reach of a stable surface.
- **Heel to Toe Stance:** While standing behind chair place one foot in front of the other about 6 inches apart. Slowly work towards moving front heel to touch rear toe to increase difficulty. Switch feet. If this is too easy try it with your eyes closed!
- **Single Leg Stand:** Stand behind chair or counter. While holding on slowly lift one foot up off of the ground and hold for 10 seconds. Switch feet.
- **Clock work:** Stand sideways behind a chair or counter. Using foot furthest from chair extend toe forward and tap the 12 O'clock position. Slowly work your way around the dial, from 12, 3 to 6 then switch sides.

Do you have 5 minutes? Get started today and have a steady summer with more fun and adventure and less risk of falls!

CAYUGA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Grant Cooper, Interim Music Director

Special offer! Mention "Lifelong2023" to receive 20% off tickets!

APR 23 Chamber Music

Remarkable music by Arensky, Ligeti, Martinu

MAY 13 Orchestral Finale

Music by Haydn, Anna Clyne and more. Arrive early for our Wine Pull and Raffle Basket Bonanza fundraiser!

MAY 28 Chamber Music

Incredible hidden gems by Turina, Sarasate, Louise Farrenc

JUN 15 Family Concert

Family Concert & Storytime events include a chance to try the instruments. Free admission!

607-273-8981

CCOithaca.org



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Understanding In-Home Care for those needing support with Alzheimer's and Dementia care, safety in the home, long Covid and PCA1 care

We also provide:
Transportation to community events and appointments and NEW service transportation to and from same day surgeries - Support for prescribed exercise and diet plans
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Assistance with daily activities (bathing, dressing and ambulatory assistance)

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- Customized care plans that fit skill level and personalities
- Continuity of caregiver - Dementia & Alzheimer care and safety
- Providing activities and interactive caregiving, safety solutions
- Personal care, companionship & housekeeping, respite care
- Emphasis on monthly activities such as: newsletters, recipe cards etc. to help stimulate as Covid taught us isolation is detrimental to seniors.

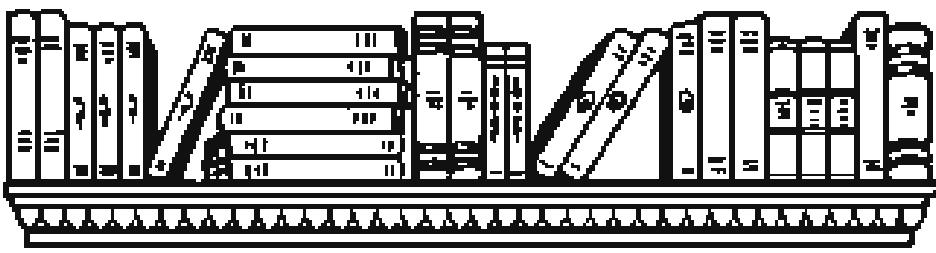
All Caregivers are carefully Screened, Insured and Bonded.

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McGraw House Senior Apartments

- Studio & One Bedroom Apartments for Income Eligible Seniors (age 62 and older)
- Located in Downtown Ithaca - close to shopping, library, restaurants, places of worship, medical offices, etc.
- Access to Public Transportation
- Dining Facility with Evening Meals
- Preference provided to eligible Veterans/Surviving Spouses residing in NYS
- Roof Deck, Gardening, Laundry Facilities, Off Street Parking
- WELCOMES DIVERSITY & ENCOURAGES INDIVIDUALITY

(607)-272-7054
221 S. Geneva Street, Ithaca
www.mcgrawhouse.org

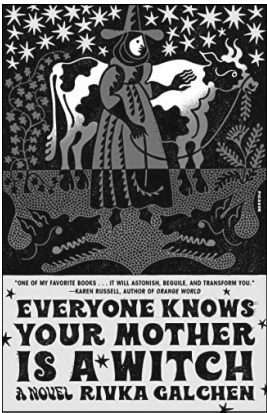


The Book Nook

A feature from the Tompkins Public Library

Find out what's happening at Tompkins County Public Library!
 Visit www.tcpl.org or call 607-272-4557.
 Browse and borrow our digital books anytime!

Rivka Galchen's *Everyone Knows Your Mother is a Witch* is a fictionalized



account of the historical 17th century witch trial of Katharina Kepler. Kepler was the mother of German mathematician Johannes Kepler. Galchen draws on historical documents to reconstruct the story. The narrative is partly trial transcripts and partly Kepler's account as dictated to her neighbor Simon.

Kepler is an engaging narrator, aware of both the injustice and the absurdity of her situation. She is prone to aphorisms, and thankfully Galchen comes up with truly original ones. This is far from an uplifting story, but neither is it a dour slog. The pettiness of local power struggles and the prejudice toward an illiterate elderly woman are illuminated in a tone that is more wry and matter-of-fact than heavy-handed, and Katharina is a protagonist with a remarkable amount of charm. Galchen has created a historical narrative that gives lively voice to someone who is much more than just a victim of persecution.

TCPL offers a variety of book clubs for all ages. Check them out at <https://www.tcpl.org/book-clubs>. All Library programs are free and open to the public.

Locally owned and operated.

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Scam Alert



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 October 20, 2022

IG Warning: Offers to Increase Your Social Security Benefit Are from Criminals

Criminals Continue to Impersonate Government Agencies

DO NOT CLICK
<https://1gov-ssapp.com/system-ssa-logout>

That unexpected offer from the Social Security Administration (SSA) to activate a benefit increase is from a criminal and not the real SSA. Do not share personal or financial information. Do not click on links or respond. Report suspected scams to oig.ssa.gov/report.

Criminals continue to impersonate SSA and other government agencies in an attempt to obtain personal information, money, or download malware onto phones.

Recent reports indicate that criminals are trying to trick people into sharing personal and financial information over the phone or through deceptive text and email messages that lure recipients to a fake Social Security website. Criminals falsely advise recipients to apply to receive Social Security benefits or extra money, such as a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), or to set up an online account. The message may also provide fake contact information for SSA.



"Scammers are relentless in their attempts to lure you to their fake websites or to get you to respond in any manner to their fictitious offers. I urge members of the public to ignore unexpected messages and unsolicited offers. This simple step will help protect you from a scam," said Inspector General Gail S. Ennis. "Also, be alert for unusual business practices and contact Social Security directly with questions or concerns regarding SSA matters. Never click on the link."

"We are deeply concerned that fraudsters continue to find new ways to impersonate government agencies to deceive people into providing personal information or money," said Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security. "I strongly urge people to be vigilant, and ignore suspicious emails, texts, or letters. If you receive a suspicious message, do not click on any links or attachments."

Ignore suspected scams and report them to oig.ssa.gov. Reporting these scams helps us identify emerging scam tactics and trends and protects others.

HOW A GOVERNMENT IMPOSTER SCAM WORKS

Recognizing the signs of a scam can help you avoid falling victim to one. These scams primarily use telephone to contact you, but scammers may also use email, text message, social media, or U.S. mail. Scammers **pretend** to be from an agency or organization you know to gain your trust. Scammers say there is a **problem or a prize**. Scammers **pressure** you to act immediately. Scammers tell you to **pay** in a specific way.

TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Do not take immediate action.** If you receive a communication that causes a strong emotional response, take a deep breath. Hang up or ignore the message. Talk to someone you trust.
- Do not transfer your money! Do not buy that gift card!** Never pay someone who insists that you pay with a gift card, prepaid debit card, Internet currency or cryptocurrency, wire transfer, money transfer, or by mailing cash. Scammers use these forms of payment because they are hard to trace.
- Be skeptical.** Do not believe scammers who "transfer" your call to a government official or law enforcement officer, or who feed you a number as proof. Scammers can create fake numbers and identities. Do not trust your caller ID.
- Be cautious** of any contact claiming to be from a government agency or law enforcement, telling you about a problem you don't recognize or an unsolicited offer. Do not provide your personal information, even if the caller has some of your information.
- Do not click on links or attachments.** Block unwanted calls and text messages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SCAMS

Visit the ftc.gov/scam to read about common scams.

Scammers frequently change their approach with new tactics and messages to trick people. We encourage you to stay up to date on the latest news and advisories by following SSA OIG on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook or subscribing to receive email alerts.

An interview with Sue Perlmut (Continued from page 1)
people that were going to tell me about their lives in retirement. The first person I recorded was my friend Lenny Gibbs. I had a young filmmaker, Chris Julian, helping me. We were taping Lenny and I turned to Chris and said, "Oh my gosh this is not a play, this is a documentary!" I had never made one and knew nothing about film except that I loved to go to films and I loved film. I got in touch with CAP and they agreed to turn this into my first documentary, *101 Ways to Retire or Not*, which I'm pretty sure you have in your library at Lifelong. That's how I fell into it! CAP has also supported the Sr. Theatre Troupe financially for many years through grant funding.

After I made that first film I knew this was what I wanted to be doing so I started to make more documentaries. One was about Hospicare called *Beets and Beans: Living and Dying with Hospice*. Another one was about our former Assembly woman Connie Cook, who decriminalized abortion in NY State in 1970. It was called *Connie Cook: A Documentary* and I also made one about my theatre group in NYC. Another great thing that happened is that Pegasys, is our local cable access channel, agreed to videotape the stories of the Sr. Theatre Troupe so we have a whole archive, including ones that I videotaped myself.

How did you manage the Sr. Theatre Troupe during the peak of the pandemic?

During the pandemic we did online classes and then I did outdoor videotaping of our stories taped in my backyard. Another story was taped in my office with the doors open. We participated in outdoor performances at the Hangar Theatre's outside stage and we also shared the videos as part of Spring Writes, a literary festival that ran the program online during the pandemic.

Can you give me a better idea of how the group works together?

Well, we would meet once a week and we would brainstorm themes and then the troupe voted for a theme. The Troupe over the 23 years changed. People come and go. As some people got older, they would leave, other new people would join, so it was a changing cast of characters. But one thing they all were able to do, with guidance from me and others, was write. So we picked a theme, let's say "friendship", and we would talk about it. Everybody would go home and come up with a story under 500 words about the theme. They would then return and read their story and the rest the Troupe would say, "I didn't understand this," or "What did you mean by that?" We would talk about it and they would edit their story and it would get tighter. With their finished story we would fill in as a Troupe. For instance, there was a story about an anniversary party which included a champagne cork and we actually used a digital cork noise. The Troupe would sing or talk. One theme was about travel, which was so much fun, and we made maps to use as props.

What were some of the other themes over the years that you've used?

Let's see, there was Friendship, Travel, 50 Years Ago, Cars, Trust, Movies, to name a few. Before the pandemic we performed at Lifelong, as well as four or five times each season at McGraw House, Kendal, the library, and even at a conference for seniors in Binghamton.

There was a fantastic conference on Seniors and Creativity at Ithaca College, and we did a part of our piece there. I did a theatre workshop there too. One of the people that I was very close to in New York City when I was doing street theater, was Susan Pearlstein, an amazing woman who developed a whole program on creativity and aging. She is a well-known name and came to this creativity conference. She was telling me about these books she wrote about theater and I learned then that she and I separately developed the same

way to do theater!

Do you have any stories about the group over the years that you think would be fun to share?:

Rehearsals were a lot of fun, because weird things would happen and we would laugh a lot! In fact rehearsals were almost more fun than performances. We would rehearse and then something funny would happen, like they would do something wrong. But it was funny and we laughed. One or two times we took the weird thing that they did and put it in the play because it was so perfect! For a while I would do improv exercises with the Troupe. We had a lot of fun doing those.

I know you still have a lot of irons in the fire for other projects that you're hoping to pursue or that you're pursuing now.

Well, I'm busy being co-chair of the board of Cinemapolis which is a great thing to be involved with. I'm working with a group called *End Abortion Stigma*. I wrote a play about abortion and I'm performing it to college students and others. I'm still showing my films, including my documentary on Connie Cook. I'm reworking a film that I did called *Women's Wisdom*, where women talk about what advice they would give other women. I'm about to start a project featuring older women social activists, some of which will take place at Lifelong. I'm getting a lot of my work archived including the *Connie Cook* film and the *It's Alright to be Woman Theatre* film, both of which are going to be archived at Cornell. I have just recently had a discussion with the History Center since I probably have filmed more than 100 interviews of people in Ithaca, and they will archive those.

Is there a place that people can look online to find out more information about you or about your projects?

CloseToHomeProductions.com is my website and that will let you connect with films and documentaries that I've done. I'm still perking along! I'm always looking for those now 85 to 90 year old people who are still doing creative things. This encourages me to keep going because you know, really, I could put my feet up and read a lot of murder mysteries!

Thank you SO much for sharing these stories of YOUR life, and for sharing your gifts as the leader of the Sr. Theatre Troupe for so many years!

**New Home for
Tompkins
Veterans Affairs
Clinic**



Tompkins County Veterans seeking health care with the local VA clinic will find the clinic has a new home.

The Tompkins-Cortland County Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is now at **2309 N. Triphammer Rd, in the Cayuga Shopping Center**. It was relocated from its long-time home in Freeville. It opened its new doors during the week of Feb. 27. Valor Healthcare of Dallas, Texas, now operates the clinic.

According to the Syracuse VA Medical Center, Valor Healthcare operates clinics for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in 55 locations around the country, including in New York State. The Tompkins-Cortland VA clinic treats more than 1,800 Veterans. All Veterans currently enrolled in care at the clinic received a letter notifying them of the move.

Find more information about this new clinic online at <https://www.va.gov/syracuse-health-care/locations/tompkins-county-va-clinic/>.



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Janie E. Bibbie: Tompkins County Poet Laureate

By Ann Bohman



Poet laureate, a title first granted in England in the 17th century, is a tradition carried on throughout the United States at many state and local levels. Janie E. Bibbie was named the Tompkins County Poet Laureate on February 7, 2023 by the Tompkins County Legislature. Janie, who has been a Tompkins County resident for over 50 years, was both surprised and honored by this appointment and is looking forward to her 2-year tenure.

Janie earned both her undergraduate and Master's Degrees from Ithaca College, while working there full time. She began as a receptionist, then was promoted to a secretary position and later to the personnel office. As an employee, Janie learned that one of the benefits was the ability to take courses at Ithaca College. She realized this was a wonderful opportunity and began taking one, 3 or 4 credit class, at a time. Most summers she also took one or two classes, and over the course of 12 years she was finally able to earn her undergraduate BS in Business Administration. Still working full time, she earned her Master's Degree in Corporate Communication in another 4 years. Janie's hard work and persistence had paid off.

Janie's love of writing began as a child, when she loved to write little stories. She is saddened that she did not keep any of these creations. Of course, she was asked to write to complete Ithaca College course assignments, but as a younger person, Janie rarely wrote poetry. It was much later in life, when Janie's husband, William, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, that she began writing in a journal to record her experiences. Writing this journal was her way of processing her journey as her husband

progressed through Alzheimer's and Janie never intended it to be made public.

However, her journal was compiled into the book, "Alzheimer's: Up Close and Personal", in 2019. This book contains several poems. It was after this that poems began coming to Janie more regularly. Janie's husband passed away about 2 years ago. She has recently published a total of about a dozen books of poetry on various subjects.

In Janie's words, "Generally, when I wake up in the morning, there is a poem trying to come out that's wonderful and I just start writing and the words just flow. So I feel like I don't have to work hard. Sometimes things rhyme and sometimes the words are just kind of variant."

Janie had seen an invitation from the Community Arts Partnership for nominations for the upcoming Tompkins County Poet Laureate position. Although an individual can self-nominate, and she thought it might be an interesting experience, Janie decided against nominating herself. Some of her friends, however, did nominate her and Janie was surprised by an email saying that she was one of 8 persons nominated for the Tompkins County Poet Laureate position.

Then began the real work becoming an actual applicant to this honored position. Part of the process was to submit an artistic resume, which Janie had never done before. She was to include links to presentations she had done, as well as a plan for possible projects if she were to become Poet Laureate. The rest is history. Janie E. Bibbie is Tompkins County's Poet Laureate for 2023 and 2024.

The role of the Poet Laureate is to connect with the community, advocate for poetry in schools and other locations and do presentations of the appointee's own work. Janie is planning to encourage other people to write poetry during her two year appointment, because she says, "Getting poetry into people's lives is wonderful."

Janie is a Lifelong member and looks forward to a future opportunity to do a reading at Lifelong of both her poems and excerpts from "Up Close and Personal."

Many Lifelong members have had Alzheimer's or dementia touch their families, so we look forward to sharing in Janie's poignant readings. Janie also encourages members of other community organizations to reach out to her to have her do readings and presentations, so she can share her love of poetry while she serves as the county's Poet Laureate.

Janie can be reached at write2jeb@gmail.com . Her books can be purchased locally at Legacy Café (at the Ithaca Airport), Odyssey Books and Buffalo Street Books. I am looking forward to Janie's community connections as she connects us with the magic of poetry.

Ithaca Twiddle Muff Makers

For years, Ruth Morton, a 96-year-old great-grandmother in Rochester with family in Ithaca, has knit hats and teddy bears for hospital patients.



Over the past few years, she's switched to knitting "twiddle muffs" for elderly dementia patients (soft, warm fidget tool muffs with strings and buttons and attachments for calming mental stimulation). Ruth started giving the twiddle muffs to her daughter and granddaughter to distribute in Ithaca, which they have done through social media groups, asking who could use one for an elderly relative. Multiple nurses and staff from local nursing homes requested batches to distribute to their residents.

Ruth got to work knitting many of them and has knit several hundred twiddle muffs herself at this point. It has worked well to knit them with synthetic, non-wool yarn, that is easiest to wash, and they are still best used for individual elderly folks rather than shared in a facility so that they need to be washed less frequently.


The demand grew larger than the supply as COVID spread in 2020. They started a Facebook group called the Ithaca Twiddle Muff Makers.

Here others can learn how to make twiddle muffs, share patterns, ask each other questions, and coordinate knitting them and giving them to local care facilities. The group came together virtually last winter to knit a bunch of twiddle muffs for Ithaca-area elderly dementia patients. For example, one group goal was to collectively knit 26 twiddle muffs to give to one local nursing and rehabilitation center last winter.

Ruth herself has knit most of the twiddle muffs that the group has distributed to individuals and facilities over the past two years in Ithaca.

Those who would like a twiddle muff for an elderly relative with dementia can contact the Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482 or stop in to pick one up.

VOLUNTEER FAIR

 **Lifelong** - 119 West Court Street-

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023

10am-12pm

- Visit booths from Tompkins County non-profits who are looking for volunteers.
- Talk directly with Volunteer Coordinators and Active Volunteers
- Pick up an updated listing of volunteer opportunities in our community!







Rudy Paolangeli Presents
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A count down of the
TOP TEN ORIGINAL SONGS
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1940's, 1950's and 1960's
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