

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

## Senior Focus: Alice Michton, A Woman Without a Bucket List

By Trina Schickel, Aging Services Specialist

*ABOUT once a month I run across a person who radiates an inner light. These people can be in any walk of life. They seem deeply good. They listen well. They make you feel funny and valued. You often catch them looking after other people and as they do so their laugh is musical and their manner is infused with gratitude. They are not thinking about what wonderful work they are doing. They are not thinking about themselves at all. ...David Brooks, New York Times. April 11, 2015*

My recent visit with Dr. Alice Michton was inspiring. It filled me with such warmth and joy, that I found myself thinking about the elements of a joy-filled life – what are the roots and branches of that life and even further, what are the fruits of such a life? Alice is seventy years old and therefore can perhaps rightly spend some time reflecting on the various elements of her life with me this crisp, fall morning.

Born in New York City and raised on Long Island, Alice, by her own admission, has been blessed with what she refers to as “dumb luck.” Her father was a cardiologist and her mother a psychiatric social worker. She recalls that when her mother decided to return to graduate school in the 1950’s, she experienced a bit of grief from

her friends for that decision. “My mother was a fighter: a tough broad, but at the same time stylish and elegant.” Both her mother and her father were important role models for Alice as she grew into womanhood.

Alice enrolled at Cornell University as a sixteen year old, but after her first year, which she said was difficult because she missed her family, she took a year off and then returned to complete her degree in Spanish Literature. “I loved Cornell, the area and the people.” she said.

Her studies in Spanish and Spanish literature proved to be fortuitous in the long run, for when Alice was thirty years old; she made the decision to go to medical school. Her parents were not happy with the decision. “Perhaps they were concerned that I was too old to begin a new, demanding career and I also had decided to go to medical school in Spain. I think at the time they were worried that I would be so far from home and we didn’t have the easy communication that we do today.”

Alice began her studies in the town of Santiago de Compostela where she also worked 20 hours a week doing translation and teaching English as a second language to support her academic work. “I learned so much in Spain in general – how people elsewhere live and how their cultures are so different from my own. In Spain, the family is the center and outside friendships did not seem as important as they did in the US. There was also little crossing of class lines which I observed particularly in the academic setting.”

After completing her studies in Spain, Alice returned to the US to do a residency in Connecticut at Danbury Hospital which she said was extremely valuable to her. She later practiced medicine in Syracuse, NY. “I loved the emotional part of practicing medicine – the times spent with patients were wonderful. But I also recognized the need for a break from medicine, so I managed to live in a community away from my practice and I stayed involved with other

interests. I played percussion and sang in a Brazilian Samba band. I also play flute and guitar.”

When Alice’s mother developed dementia, and moved to Brookdale Senior Living here in

*(Continued on page 7)*

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Please complete the Senior Circle Survey on the back page or go online: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQJMLB3](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQJMLB3)



### Exercise Your Way To Good Health *by Lucia Sacco, Lifelong Executive Director*

Do you know that Lifelong offers exercise programs throughout Tompkins County? As you think about your hopes for the coming year, don’t forget to address your health and well-being. If your New Year resolution is to be stronger and more flexible, Lifelong can help. So put on your comfy clothes, grab your sneakers, bring some water and take that first step to a healthier you. Check out the list to see what classes appeal to you. Classes are located in various locations through the county. For more information contact Lifelong at 273-1511 check out our website at [www.tclifelong.org](http://www.tclifelong.org) and be sure to “like” us on Facebook!

**Enhance Your Fitness** is an evidence-based exercise program that helps participants at all levels of fitness become more active, energized, and empowered to sustain independent lives. Classes focus on stretching, flexibility, balance, low impact aerobics, strength training exercises, and deep breathing exercises.



**T’ai Chi** promotes balance, flexibility, coordination, and reduces pain. T’ai Chi is also known to lower the risk of falls, increase energy levels, enhance sleep, and reduce stress and anxiety. Using precise, fluid movements, T’ai Chi will dissolve tension, increase your strength, cardiovascular fitness, and leave you with a greater awareness, calmness, and overall sense of wholeness.



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# Senior Services

## Information and Referral

The **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 us on the web at [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa](http://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 \$45 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, for more information about Project CARE.

## The Registry

The Finger Lakes Independence Center has administers the Registry Referral Program. The Registry Referral 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 Cheryl at FLIC at 272-2433 or email: [registryatFLIC@yahoo.com](mailto:registryatFLIC@yahoo.com). This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging

## PERS

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging offers Personal Emergency Response Systems to area seniors. By a push of a button, our PERS system links an individual with the Doyle Emergency Response Center. Doyle's trained operators will have your information on their screen as they speak with you to determine the type of assistance you need. If you cannot speak or they cannot hear you, they will either call the individuals that you provided on your customized contact list or 911. Doyle provides 24 hour/seven day a week coverage. Call the Tompkins County Office for the Aging to speak to an Office for the Aging outreach worker who will explain the program and help you to determine if a PERS is right for you. The outreach worker will then visit your home to demonstrate, install and instruct you in the proper use of the equipment. If you are interested in a PERS unit, please call, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 274-5482.

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## Kinship Caregiving

This column most often is addressed to those caring for aging spouses, parents or other older adults in need of such care. Another group of family caregivers who often need support are kinship caregivers.

“Kinship Caregivers” are grandparents, relatives and family friends who are full time caregivers of children. They may or may not have legal custody, but the common thread is that they have become full time caregivers because the parents of the children cannot provide the care. The causes are diverse, including parents who are incarcerated, mentally ill, have abandoned their children, are deceased, or who have substance abuse problems. Some parents need temporary caregiver help due to military deployment, employment duties or other personal needs.

### Issues Faced by Kinship Caregivers

Some of the concerns faced by kinship caregivers are obvious: What financial assistance is available? What are my legal rights? Other concerns may be less obvious. Though kinship caregivers may have experience raising a family, it may have been a while since they've parented young children or arranged for child care, immunizations and other children's health care services. There may be challenges communicating with schools to best support a child's educational needs or get special education services if needed.

Some of these children will have emotional or psychological needs which may be entirely unfamiliar to someone parenting for the second time around. Exposure to trauma can lead to regressive behaviors (bed-wetting, headaches, clinginess, etc.). Supportive services/counseling may be needed.

### The Kinship Navigator

If you have taken on the primary responsibility of caring for children of relatives or friends, the New York State Kinship Navigator was created to help you learn about your legal rights, available financial assistance and much more. It is

operated out of the Catholic Family Center in Rochester and serves all 62 counties in New York via a toll free call center and website. Look for information online at [www.nysnavigator.org](http://www.nysnavigator.org). or Call 877-454-6463

Their kinship specialists provide individual assistance by connecting folks to their network of kinship professionals, attorneys specializing in family court, as well as experts on public assistance, social security and education law.

At their website, you can also email kinship specialists, read articles by well-known kinship experts, and subscribe to their monthly “Kinship News” to learn about new events and press releases affecting kinship care.

### Tompkins County Services

Local kinship caregivers can also contact Family and Children's Service of Ithaca regarding two programs for kinship caregivers:

**KINECT-** Kinship caregiving families who need help accessing resources for the children or the caregivers, or would benefit from supportive counseling or training, are invited to contact the Kinship Caregiver Education, Counseling and Training (KINECT) program at Family and Children's Services (607) 273-7494 or email Marisa Matsudaira at [mmatsudaira@fcsith.org](mailto:mmatsudaira@fcsith.org). Most families in the program will receive services for three to six months which may include assessment of needs, aid in connecting to community resources, counseling, and advocacy within family court, DSS, and school systems. Families will also be provided access to individual and group training and peer support groups for youth.

**Kinship Caregiver Support Group-** Some have found it immensely helpful to attend the free local support group for “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” facilitated by a social worker at Family and Children's Service. Connecting with others facing similar challenges can help kinship caregivers find the strategies and support

## Caregiver's Corner



**David Stoyell**  
Tompkins County Office of the Aging

they need to balance the demands of child care with self-care.

This free, confidential support group is open to grandparents, or other relatives, raising their grandchildren. It generally meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, although it will not meet in December. It meets from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in Ithaca and free childcare is provided upon request. Please call 273-7494 to register before attending.

### The Bottom Line

The bottom line for kinship caregivers is the same for all family caregivers—don't go it alone. Get the help you need to have some balance in your lives. Have a “care plan” for yourself as well as for those entrusted to your care. Make some connections that will serve you well when you are feeling alone or overwhelmed in your roles.



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.

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## Changes in Medicare for 2016

By Elizabeth Schneider, HIICAP Coordinator at Lifelong

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced the 2016 premiums and deductibles for the Medicare inpatient hospital (Part A) and physician and outpatient hospital services (Part B) programs.

### Part B Premiums

Before looking at the whole picture, let us understand what is happening with the Part B premium. As the Social Security Administration previously announced, there will be no Social Security cost of living increase for 2016. As a result most people with Medicare Part B will be “held harmless” from any increase in premiums in 2016 and will pay the same monthly premium as last year, which is \$104.90.

However, some beneficiaries are not subject to the “hold harmless” provision; they will pay \$121.80. Those are the folks who: (1) are not collecting Social Security benefits and will enroll in Part B for the first time in 2016; or (2) are dual eligible beneficiaries who have their premiums paid by Medicaid; or (3) are beneficiaries who pay an additional income-related premium. These groups account for about 30 percent of the 52 million Americans expected to be enrolled in Medicare Part B in 2016.

Since 2007, beneficiaries with higher incomes have paid higher Part B monthly premiums. These income-related monthly adjustment amounts affect fewer than 5 percent of people with Medicare. These high income beneficiaries will pay an additional amount. Individuals who file an individual tax return and have income from \$85,000 up to and above \$214,000, or couples who file a joint return and have incomes from \$170,000 up to and above \$428,000, will pay a Part B premium between \$170.50 and \$389.80.

If you have questions about these changes or about other aspects of Medicare and related insurance, call Lifelong’s HIICAP -- Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program at 273-1511. We are happy to answer your questions.

<b>Part A premium</b>	Most people don't pay a monthly premium for Part A (sometimes called “premium –free Part A”). If you buy Part A, you'll pay up to \$411 each month in 2016 (was \$407 in 2015).
<b>Part A hospital inpatient deductible and coinsurance</b>	You pay: \$1,288 is the 2016 deductible for each benefit period (\$1,260 in 2015) Days 1-60: \$0 coinsurance for each benefit period (\$0 in 2016) Days 61-90: \$322 is 2016 coinsurance per day of each benefit period (\$315 in 2015) Days 91 and beyond: \$644 in 2016 coinsurance (was \$630 in 2015) per each "lifetime reserve day" after day 90 for each benefit period (up to 60 days over your lifetime) Beyond lifetime reserve days all costs (all costs in 2016)
<b>Part B premium</b>	Most people pay \$104.90 each month (\$104.90 in 2016). (See initial paragraph at the top of this article for further explanation on the Part B Premium.)
<b>Part B deductible and coinsurance</b>	Annual deductible is \$166 in 2016 (\$147 in 2015). After your deductible is met, you typically pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount for most doctor services (including most doctor services while you're a hospital inpatient), outpatient
<b>Part C premium</b>	The Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans) monthly premium varies by plan. Compare costs for specific Part C plans.
<b>Part D premium</b>	The Part D monthly premium varies by plan. Compare costs for specific Part D plans.



Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman

## Contract Awarded to Tompkins County Office for the Aging for Regional Ombudsman Program

Tompkins County Office for the Aging has been awarded, through a competitive process, a five year contract for \$113,000 each year with the New York State Office for the Aging and the Office of State Long Term Care Ombudsman. Tompkins County will administer the Ombudsman Program in a newly created region which will include Tompkins, Schuyler and Chemung Counties.

The mission of the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare, human and civil rights of people living in nursing homes and adult care facilities. Volunteers are a vital component of the Long Term Care Ombudsman program. They are certified and professionally trained advocates who resolve issues with long term care facilities on behalf of residents and their families. Volunteers include former teachers, businessmen, healthcare workers, and others. They are also homemakers, attorneys and others who care about the well being of people living in nursing and adult care homes.

The new region of Tompkins, Schuyler and Chemung Counties includes 23 long term care facilities serving approximately 1840 residents.

**Do you have good communications skills?  
 Are you compassionate?  
 Does the idea of advocating for vulnerable and needy individuals appeal to you?**

If so, you may want to find out more about becoming a New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman. **Call Suzanne Motheral, Ombudsman Coordinator at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 274-5498 to volunteer or to find out more about the Long Term Care Program.**

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## Five Popular Scams To Avoid

Karen Davis, Senior Consumer Fraud Representative.  
NYS Attorney General'

**1. "IRS" Scam Calls** An automated message is left on consumer's machines, or if answered, an automated recording tells the caller they owe taxes to the IRS and gives another number to call. The caller ID# displayed may be the real IRS phone number, but the caller is instructed to call back to a different number. This ploy is an attempt to coerce consumers into giving up money using a pre-paid debit card, or a MoneyGram or wire transfer payment that is untraceable, for a fictitious debt. The real IRS would never make such calls or threaten arrest. If consumers want to report this they can contact the Treasury Inspector General at 800-366-4484. A recent victim from Amherst, NY lost \$32,000 to this.

**2. "New York State" Tax Debt Scam Calls** These types of calls will try to convince the consumer they owe NYS back taxes, and if not paid immediately, they face legal action. They often will act as a "Deputy Commissioner" at Tax and Finance and say they will help you settle your debt for a mere fraction of what's due. They will insist, like most scammers that payment be made via an untraceable method of payment such as a MoneyGram, pre-paid debit card or money order made out to cash. They may even have personal information on the consumer, which was obtained illegally, in order to convince the consumer they are legitimate. The Tax Department in NYS does not make calls of this nature. Consumers should report this to the NYS Attorney General by calling 1-800-771-7755, and be advised NOT to engage the caller or give out or confirm ANY information during the call.

**3. Fake "Payday Loan" Collectors** While payday loans are illegal to collect upon in NYS, this does not prevent unscrupulous collectors from still placing calls to consumers and using harsh, threatening tactics to convince them of an imminent arrest or lawsuit if a debt is not paid. Frequently a consumer may be told a son/daughter/family member faces jail time if a debt is not paid. Many times there is no debt, or the debt may have been paid back years ago. As with all debt calls, consumers are highly advised to never pay under threat of a lawsuit or arrest, but rather to ask the company for verification of the original debt be mailed to them, and to thoroughly research the company before agreeing to pay. Any questionable calls should be reported to the Attorney General by calling 1-800-771-7755

**4. Immigration Scams** A recent uptick has been reported in which non-English speaking residents are being targeted in an "Immigration Scam." A recent victim just lost over \$25,000. She was called by a man saying he was a US Immigration Agent. The victim spoke Hindi, but the scammer used an interpreter. She was told she had not renewed her immigration status and needed to pay immediate fines or be arrested or deported. She was further instructed that her phone was tapped and she was not to call anyone else regarding this issue until she paid him. Through pre-paid cards and bank wires, she sent the scammer the money. Immigration would never call on the phone and threaten someone with arrest. Report these kinds of scams to the Attorney General by calling 1-800-771-7755.

**5. "You Won a Prize" Scam** These scams are always persistent, regardless of the time of year. A caller tells the consumer that they have won a lottery, contest, or a gift card to a local store. The caller is told they must send some kind of money to cover insurance, shipping, or fees to claim the prize. Many local consumers fall for this scam and send in hundreds of dollars and get nothing in return...consumers need to know that foreign lotteries are ILLEGAL, and that consumers shouldn't pay any money to claim any prize. Report these types of scams to the Attorney General by calling 1-800-771-7755.



## Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The regular HEAP season opened November 16, 2015 and is anticipated to close March 15, 2016.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides assistance with fuel and utility expenses for income-eligible homeowners and renters. The HEAP program may also be able to help with furnace repair or replacement. The Tompkins County Office for the Aging processes HEAP applications for persons over age 60 and for those who receive SSI or SSD and do not receive Food Stamps.

The current income eligibility levels for HEAP in 2015-2016 are as follows:

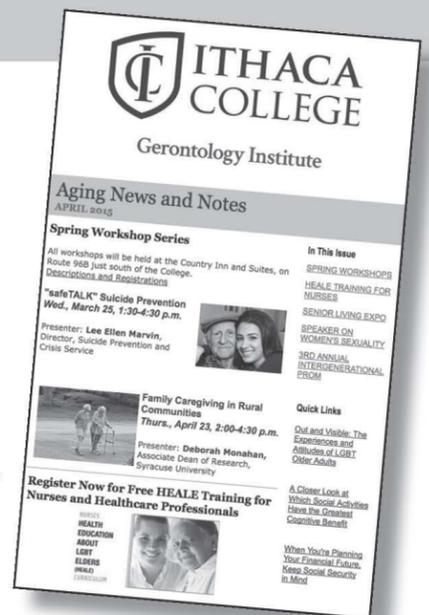
Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$2240
2	\$2935
3	\$3525

If you think you may be eligible for HEAP, contact the Tompkins County Office for the Aging (607) 274-5482 for more information.

- ▶ Interested in aging issues?
- ▶ Want to find out about upcoming trainings?
- ▶ Sign up for the Ithaca College Gerontology Institute e-newsletter!

Send your name and e-mail address to [aging@ithaca.edu](mailto:aging@ithaca.edu)

or visit our website at [www.ithaca.edu/gerontology/newsletter](http://www.ithaca.edu/gerontology/newsletter)



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AARP Driver Safety offers the nation's first 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 at Lifelong over a 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.)

**2016 AARP Safe Driving Courses at Lifelong:**

March 5(Sat.) 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
 March 12(Sat.) 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



April 2 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
 April 9 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m.-12:30 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.

**Tompkins County's Improved Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)**

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is now working with Doyle Medical Monitoring of Rochester NY to offer Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) to County residents. The PERS program provides medical alert equipment to individuals who are at risk of falling or other medical emergency, allowing them to live with greater confidence and safety. Some of the benefits of the improved PERS system include:

- Average response time at the push of a button to less than 45 seconds
- Cutting edge, UL rated technology, compatible with most home phone systems
- Transmitter range of 300-400 feet
- Standard price of \$25/month (may vary based on equipment and qualifying factors)
- No installation fee
- Automatic monthly payment option
- Installation and service visits by Office for the Aging staff

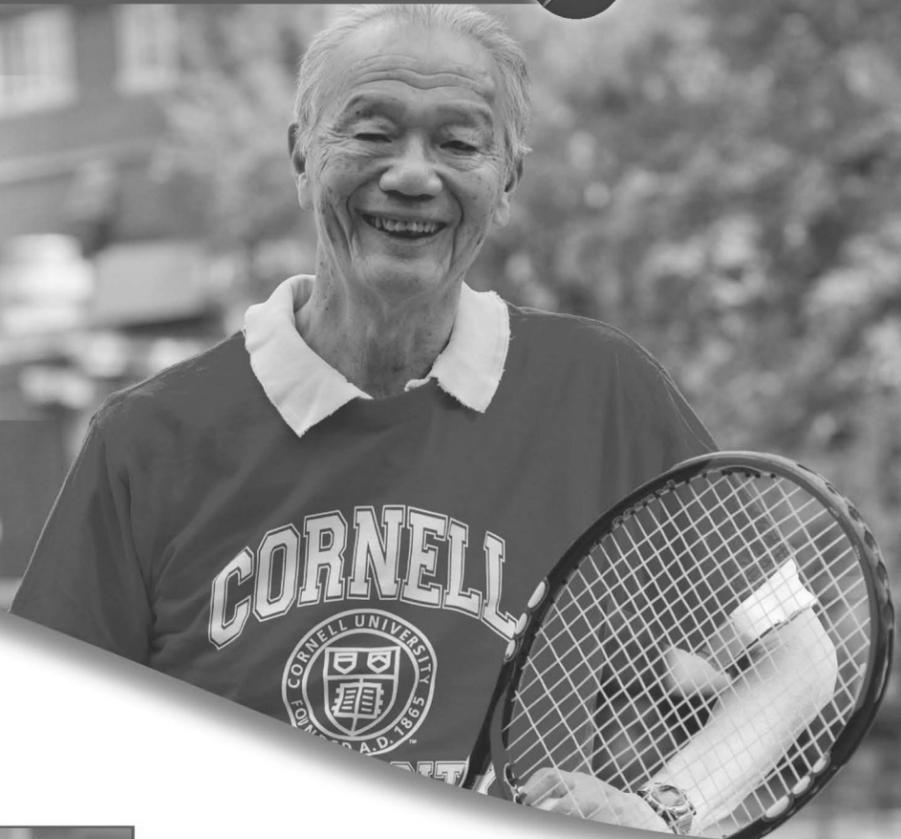
For more information, contact Eileen Savino at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 274-5486.

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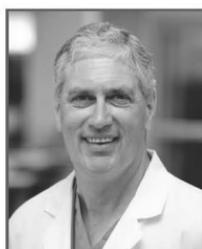
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Tompkins County NY Connects is your "one-stop" for information about long-term care for people who live in Tompkins County. Finding your way around the Long-term Care system can be challenging. **NY Connects** is a trusted place that gives you information about available options whether you are paying for services yourself, through insurance, or are eligible for a government program.

**Who Does NY Connects Serve?**

Anyone who needs information on long term services and supports:

- A child or an adult with a disability
- An older adult
- Family members and caregivers
- Friends or neighbors
- Helping professionals

**What are long term services and supports?**

Long term services and supports (also known as long term care) include a range of services and supports that can help people of all ages remain independent in their daily lives. Long term services and supports are both medical and non-medical services that help to maintain or improve daily functioning and health. Services can be provided at home, in community-based settings such as a senior center, community center or day care, or residential settings such as Assisted Living Residences, or in nursing homes.

**What kind of help can I get from NY Connects?**

Information about

- Home Care
- Caregiver Supports
- Care Coordination
- Respite Care
- Transportation
- Home Delivered Meals
- Health Insurance Information
- And more

Please complete the Senior Circle Survey on the back page or go online: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQJMLB3](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQJMLB3)



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**Alice Michton**

(Continued from page 1)

Ithaca, caring for her impacted Alice's ultimate decision to retire about five years ago.

Today, as we sit in Alice's living room, I can't help but comment on the beauty of this space. Here is a room filled with books – literally floor to ceiling bookcases. There are music CD's in ordered fashion on one wall and photos in various spots throughout the room which has a lovely view of a porch and green lawn through glass doors. I think I told her that the room had a life that seemed to embrace me as I sat and visited with her. "This is a space that I too love," she said. "I have not read all these books, but know that I have easy access to them when the need arises."

This past year, Alice has been dealing with a serious health issue and we spent some time talking about that and how it impacts her life today. "You know, I think I've always been an old soul. I've thought about death even as a young child. I think when you believe death is part of life and not that different, you can look at things more

realistically. I don't have a "bucket list." I have a sense of peace. I've been a good friend and have good relationships with people. I've been lucky with my family and friends." Since her diagnosis, Alice had had seven months of non-stop visitors from as far away as Los Angeles. "There are not words to describe how blessed I have been!"

I shared with Alice my experience upon meeting her and the wonderful sense of joy she has. I asked her how she accounts for that sense of joy in the face of a serious illness. "Look, I have plenty of time to be dead when I'm dead and plenty of time to be miserable when I feel miserable, but right now I am neither miserable nor dead!"

The roots of Alice's life are embedded deep in her family and friends. The branches of that life have impacted friends and patients in different parts of the world and the fruits of a life well lived are reflected in the joy you meet when you cross paths with this woman of light, Alice Michton.

**New Service for Social Security Account Holders**

There is now another convenient online service that you can use with your *my Social Security* account. If you are a Medicare beneficiary and you have lost, damaged, or need to replace your Medicare card, you can now easily order a replacement card using your online *my Social Security* account. Even if you are not currently a Medicare beneficiary, please share this news with family and friends who might benefit from this new service. If you are still working, don't forget to use your *my Social Security* account to view your yearly *Social Security Statement* and verify the accuracy of your earnings record and obtain updated estimates of your future Social Security benefits.

Getting a Medicare replacement card is another convenient service that is only a few minutes away with you're *my Social Security* account. Please spread the word about the many benefits available with a *my Social Security* account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

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**All Ears Audiology**

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**Carol Bass, Audiologist**

- ~ Audiological Evaluations
- ~ Hearing Aid Fittings
- ~ Hearing Aid Repairs
- ~ Tinnitus Therapy
- ~ Digital Technology



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, 2016.
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 Mary Pat Dolan at Lifelong 273-1511**

### Consider becoming one of Lifelong's TAX PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS.

We would love to add to our group of fabulous volunteers, who last year helped hundreds of seniors and low income families, complete their taxes at no cost and whose work brought many thousands of dollars in refunds and income support to our community and families who need it.



There is a cadre of experienced and talented volunteers who manage the program and will guide new volunteers. Lifelong provides space, IT and staff support. Certification from the I.R.S. is required, however, the level of certification is the volunteer's choice: Basic, Advanced, or beyond. The required commitment to training is mornings the week of January 11 - January 15.

The program operates Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from mid-January until the end of tax season in April. Tax Counselors set their own availability schedule for tax season, volunteer as little or as much as you like.

If you enjoy helping others, and a program that challenges and rewards you, please e-mail Mary Pat Dolan, Lifelong Administrative Assistant at [mpdolan@tclifelong.org](mailto:mpdolan@tclifelong.org) or call 273-1511 x 237.



## INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE TELEPHONE SCAM

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has received reports related to a telephone scam in which the caller purports to be an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) representative. Using intimidation tactics, the caller tries to take control of the situation from the beginning. The caller advises the recipient of the call that the IRS has charges against them and threatens legal action and arrest. If the recipient questions the caller in any way, the caller becomes more aggressive.

The caller continues to intimidate by threatening to confiscate the recipient's property, freeze bank accounts, and have the recipient arrested and placed in jail. The reported alleged charges include defrauding the government, money owed for back taxes, law suits pending against the recipient, and nonpayment of taxes. The recipients are advised that it will cost thousands of dollars in fees/court costs to resolve this matter. The caller creates a sense of urgency by saying that being arrested can be avoided and fees reduced if the recipient purchases moneypak cards to cover the fees within an hour.

Sometimes the caller provides specific instructions on where to purchase the moneypak cards and the amount to put on each card. The caller tells the recipient not to tell anyone about the issue and to remain on the telephone until the moneypak cards are purchased and the moneypak codes are provided to the caller. The caller states that if the call is disconnected for any reason, the recipient would be arrested. Some recipients reported once the caller obtained the moneypak codes, they were advised that the transaction took too long and additional fees were required.

Call recipients, who are primarily immigrants, reported that the caller spoke with broken English or stated the caller had an Indian accent. If you receive a call similar to this follow these tips:

- Resist the pressure to act quickly
- Report the contact to TIGTA at <http://www.treasury.gov/tigta> by clicking on the red button, "IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting."
- Use caution when asked to use a specific payment method. The IRS would not require a specific payment method such as a moneypak card or wire transfer
- If you feel threatened, contact your local police department at 607-272-3245.
- File a complaint at [www.IC3.gov](http://www.IC3.gov)

### FREE TAX PREPARTION at LIFELONG

119 West Court Street, Ithaca

January—April 2016

Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturday mornings,  
by appointment only (not available until January)

Look for more information beginning in January 2016

IRS trained and certified volunteers prepare free federal and state tax returns for:

- Adults age 60+ (with spouses of any age)
- Individuals with disabilities regardless of age
- Individuals and families under 60 with limited incomes

Home visits are available for taxpayers who are medically unable to travel.



Lifelong

**Volunteers Needed** for the tax season to serve as greeters as taxpayers arrive at Lifelong for their appointments. Beginning in January through April, volunteer for one session weekly either mornings, afternoons Thursdays, Fridays or Saturday mornings. Lifelong is looking for volunteers who like to meet the public and provide a friendly welcome and some basic information.



Contact Mary Pat Dolan, Administrative Assistant at [mpdolan@tclifelong.org](mailto:mpdolan@tclifelong.org) or call 273-1511 x 237.

## Five Reasons Volunteerism is Great for Seniors

By Joyce Billing, Lifelong Program Assistant

As a volunteer, retirement can afford you the chance to work on a project or issue that is important to you – simply for the passion of it, rather than for a paycheck. Seniors have a unique set of skills and knowledge to offer as volunteers: a lifetime of experience can help you help others in a myriad of ways, from mentoring and tutoring younger generations, to providing career guidance, to offering companionship and care.

Here are just five reasons volunteer activity is beneficial:

**1. It helps bridge the generation gap.** The cultural differences between seniors and young people are huge and include topics like technology, workplace behavior, and political differences. Young people rarely have the opportunity to work with seniors, but when seniors collaborate with young people, there is reciprocal learning for everyone involved and therefore a better understanding of each other. You just might learn new uses for that smart phone!

**2. Volunteering is rewarding.** Whatever you have to give is needed. Everyone of us knows something that can benefit another. Can you read a book or add numbers in a checkbook? Then you can tutor a youngster in reading or math, help another senior balance their checkbook. Can you patch a drywall or fix a plumbing leak? Habitat for Humanity needs you today. Feed or play with dogs at the SPCA. Visit the elderly at a nursing care center. The needs in your community are endless. You can contribute something.

**3. It is good for mental health and well being.** The National Institute on Aging has reported that participating in social leisure activities and meaningful, productive activities such as volunteering may lower the risk of health problems in seniors, including dementia, as well as improving longevity. Being a volunteer can help keep the brain and the body active, which contributes to continuing cognitive health, according to numerous studies.

**4. Volunteering helps seniors stay involved in their communities.** In addition to getting seniors out of the house, away from the television or the computer and into the community, volunteering has a positive effect on psychological wellness: according to the Corporation for National and Community Service, those who volunteer experience greater life satisfaction, a sense of purpose and accomplishment, more stress resilience, and lower rates of depression.

**5. It promotes healthy physical activity.** Volunteering can be good for keeping the body active, whether you're maintaining a community garden or walking around your favorite museum as a volunteer docent. Maintaining a healthy level of physical fitness as we age helps ward off disease, injury and even dementia.

## Volunteer Opportunities for Seniors

If you're looking for volunteer opportunities for yourself or a senior loved one, you don't have to look far. Here are community agencies looking for volunteer help.

### WONDERFUL WHEELCHAIRS NEEDS YOU!



Are you looking for a meaningful way to volunteer your time?

Wonderful Wheelchairs is a terrific, all-volunteer organization that cleans, repairs and sells used wheelchairs at a very reasonable price to those in need. They are looking for volunteers to pick up or deliver wheelchairs, or to donate time to repair and clean wheelchairs. So, if you know your way around a wrench or screwdriver and would like to do some meaningful work to enhance the quality of life for someone else. Please call Carol John at 351-1655 or Monte May at 592-4490.



Lifelong's **HIICAP** counselors (**H**ealth **I**nsurance **I**nformation, **C**ounseling, and **A**ssistance **P**rogram) are trained, certified volunteers who receive updated training to keep abreast of changes. They assist in understanding insurance benefits. **HIICAP's** counselors provide *free, unbiased and confidential help* with questions and concerns. **HIICAP** exists to educate and empower people to be informed consumers.



Interested in learning more about being a HIICAP Volunteer?  
Contact Elizabeth Schneider, HIICAP Coordinator at Lifelong, 273-1511

### Loves and Fishes are experiencing a shortage of volunteers especially on Monday & Friday, 9:00am to 2:30pm

During each meal 3-4 individuals are needed with a warm and happy disposition for serving the meal. Many times, a cheerful hello and a smile to the guests are as important as the meal itself. After the meal 6-8 people are needed to aid in cleaning up the kitchen and hall. Tasks include storing foods, dishwashing, table clean-up, sweeping & moping, vacuuming and setting up for the following day. **Call 272-545 for more information.** Loaves and Fishes is located in downtown Ithaca at St. John's Episcopal Church, 210 North Cayuga St.



### TOMPKINS LEARNING PARTNERS SEEKS VOLUNTEER MATH TUTORS FOR ADULTS AND INCARCERATED YOUTH

We have an increased need for volunteer tutors to support adults who live or work in Tompkins County, as well as Incarcerated Youth at nearby facilities, with learning basic math skills and high school level math skills.

Students seek to improve their math skills in order to:

- keep track of expenses
- obtain or improve their employment
- go grocery shopping
- obtain their High School Equivalency

Tutors are needed to support students in our Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Incarcerated Youth Services programs. If you have good communication skills, patience, and a desire to help others, please contact us to learn about our next volunteer orientations coming soon in 2016.

Phone: 607-277-6442  
Web: [tlpartners.org](http://tlpartners.org)  
Email: [tlpshannona@gmail.com](mailto:tlpshannona@gmail.com)



The Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes seeks warm, compassionate people to provide support to patients and their families/caregivers in the cancer treatment areas at Cayuga Medical Center in Ithaca. Volunteers are needed on a weekly basis during the following times: Monday 10:30am-2pm, Wednesday 8:30am-12pm, or Friday 10am-1:30pm (time is somewhat flexible). We are a small agency with a positive vibe, a big heart, and a sense of humor. The Cancer Resource Center is a locally-supported not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing support to anyone affected by cancer "because no one should face cancer alone".

Please contact Sharon Kaplan, Director of Volunteer Services for more information: 607-277-0960 or [sharon@crcl.net](mailto:sharon@crcl.net).

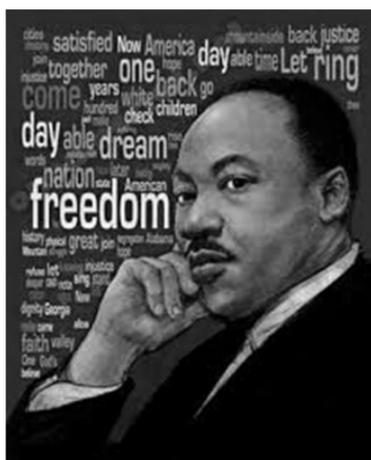
## SAVE THE DATE

Lifelong's  
Northside/Southside  
Program

**30th Annual  
Martin Luther King Jr.  
Luncheon**

**Thursday, January 14,  
2016**

Doors open at 11:30 am



This annual tradition is a wonderful way to bring the community together to honor Dr. King's legacy, enjoy the company of your friends and neighbors, and have a delicious catered lunch.

The program and luncheon will be held at  
Southside Community Center, 305 S. Plain Street.

## 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](http://www.tclifelong.org)

Please call Lifelong at 273-1511 or email Tammy Dunn, Program Director at [tdunn@tclifelong.org](mailto:tdunn@tclifelong.org) to register for any of these events!

### 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.

Offerings range from "Audubon and Birds; Independent Films, Knitting & Crocheting, Origami, Pete Seeger – His Life, Times, and Music to Qigong, Words, Words, Words, and Recreating Your Life on Paper!" We truly believe there is something for everyone. We will be offering more evening classes this semester for those who are unable to attend during the day. Topics range from historical and political discussion to life planning, oil painting and even astrology.

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.

A complete list of offerings will be available at Lifelong, 119 West Court Street, or online at [www.tclifelong.org](http://www.tclifelong.org). We rely on, and very much appreciate the time and energy so generously donated by our volunteer instructors. Program ideas and volunteer instructors are always welcome. Contact Tammy Dunn at [tdunn@tclifelong.org](mailto:tdunn@tclifelong.org).

### Lifelong will be closed:

- Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24
- Christmas, Friday, December 25
- New Year's Day, Friday January 1
- Martin Luther King, Jr., Monday, January 18
- President's Day, Monday, February 15
- Good Friday, Friday, March 24



*Mark your calendar today!*

### 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 your prescription drugs, or if you have any related problems or issues, please turn to HIICAP. You can meet one-on-one with a trained, certified Health Insurance Counselor who can answer your questions. Give us a call at 273-1511 and ask for an appointment.

Mark your calendars for Lifelong's Cabaret  
April 9<sup>th</sup> and May 14<sup>th</sup>  
Doors open at 6 PM



Marci Lynn-Solomon will be celebrating her 65<sup>th</sup> year in show business in 2016 with two performances at Lifelong. Being the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation in the entertainment field, Marci is considered to be a master at her craft; known as a singers' singer, and one of the most prominent singing and stage performance coaches in the country. Her grandparents owned and operated Vaudeville Theatres in the East and her parents operated the Vineland School of Music. She spent many years working in night clubs, Danny Seigal's, Sammy Davis Night club, The Living Room, The Rat Fink Room, Waldorf Astoria, and Rodney Dangerfield's all in NYC. Marci continues to perform her one woman show labeled Faces of a Lady.

## Northside-Southside News

Northside-Southside of Lifelong is a multicultural program of Lifelong open to all seniors providing them the opportunity to participate in daily activities with peers such as meals, games and special events that promote cultural education and awareness. All programs are free unless otherwise noted. This program is funded in part by the New York State Office for the Aging and through Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

To register for any of these events please call Lifelong at 273-1511 or email Tammy Dunn, Program Director at [tdunn@tclifelong.org](mailto:tdunn@tclifelong.org)

### Northside-Southside Program (NSSS)

Northside-Southside and Lifelong are excited to announce just a few of the FREE community events scheduled for Spring of 2016!

#### Coffeehouse Social:

- Chihuly Gardens & Glass  
January 28, 2016 from 3:30pm-4:30pm
- Betty Ford Alpine Garden in Vail,  
February 25, 2016: 3:30pm-4:30pm
- Eastern Europe: A Tour of the Balkans  
April 28, 2016 from 3:30pm-4:30pm
- Mother's Day Celebration with Poetry - Jack Hopper  
Tuesday, May 3, 2016 from 3pm-4pm  
To mark Mother's Day 2016, Jack Hopper, our current poet laureate, will read poems written to celebrate the memory of his own mother and wife. Following this, he will invite audience members to read poems of their own about these important women in our lives.



Stay tuned for other Coffeehouses to be scheduled!

Lifelong Learning Class:

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. Speech The Three Evils of Society – Eric Acree Tuesday evening, January 19, 2016; (5:30pm-7:00pm)

Description: "King delivered this speech on August 31, 1967, at the first and only National Conference on New Politics in Chicago. In part this speech King talks about what he sees as the three evils in society, and why it is important for people to unite to overcome oppression."

#### Africana Film Series (films TBD)

Films are facilitated by Eric Kofi Acree.

- 5:30pm-7:30pm
- February 2, 2016
- March 15, 2016
- May 10, 2016

Eric Kofi Acree graduated from Cornell and then returned 15 years later to become the Director of the John Henrik Clarke Africana Library at Cornell. He is also the Africa/African American subject specialist. In addition to his responsibilities as the director, Eric co-teaches a course in Research Strategies in Africana and Latino Studies. He also serves on the Board of The History Center in Tompkins County and is the Chair of the Finger Lakes Residential Center Advisory Board.

#### Negro Leagues and Statistics

April 4, 2016 from 11:00am-12:00pm

Course Description: Have you ever thought statistics was hard, boring and something you could never learn? Well here is a way to conquer your fear and learn fun facts. Using Microsoft Excel we will look at and compare the statistics of Negro League Players and Baseball Players of today. You will need to bring your curiosity and willingness to learn as well as explore. This is a fun interactive, participatory learning experience.

A complete list of offerings will be available at Lifelong, 119 West Court Street, or online at [www.tclifelong.org](http://www.tclifelong.org).

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[www.healthyyouth.org](http://www.healthyyouth.org) or call 2-1-1.

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Ithaca

Cornell Univ. Police Dept.  
Ithaca

T.C.3 Police Dept.  
Dryden

Tompkins County Probation  
Ithaca

Cayuga Heights Police Dept.  
Cayuga Heights

Groton Police Dept.  
Groton

Ithaca Police Dept.  
Ithaca

Dryden Police Dept.  
Dryden

Trumansburg Police Dept.  
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To Determine Need For Amplification Only - Not A Medical Exam

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For schedules and details visit:

[www.healthyyouth.org](http://www.healthyyouth.org) or call 2-1-1.

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Tompkins County Sheriff  
Ithaca

Cornell Univ. Police Dept.  
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T.C.3 Police Dept.  
Dryden

Tompkins County Probation  
Ithaca

Cayuga Heights Police Dept.  
Cayuga Heights

Groton Police Dept.  
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Ithaca Police Dept.  
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Dryden Police Dept.  
Dryden

Trumansburg Police Dept.  
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TTY# 800-421-1220  
16 Pease Street  
Trumansburg, NY



[www.betterhousingtc.org](http://www.betterhousingtc.org)



**SENIOR CIRCLE SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to solicit input from our readership to measure the usefulness of the Senior Circle, a quarterly newsletter that is published jointly through Lifelong and the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. Thank you in advance for completing the survey, as it will help us better serve the older adults of Tompkins County.

Please indicate your responses and return to Lifelong, 119 West Court St, Ithaca, NY 14850

OR go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQJMLB3> to do the survey online.

**1. Currently we are in the process of updating the Senior Circle to make it more appealing and interesting. With this in mind do you think you would like to receive it more often than it is currently offered? (4 times a year)**

Stay the same    6 times a year    12 times a year

**2. The following are main components of the Senior Circle. Please rate how important they are to you.**

1. Not Important
2. Somewhat Important
3. Very Important

T. C. Office for the Aging Information \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiver information \_\_\_\_\_

Lifelong's Program Information \_\_\_\_\_

Health and Wellness Information \_\_\_\_\_

Benefits and Services Information \_\_\_\_\_

Advertising and Vendor Information \_\_\_\_\_

Profiles of Older Adults \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How interested would you be in adding the following topic areas?**

1. Would like to see this added
2. Do not care one way or another
3. Not interested in this type of information

Consumer Information (i.e. frauds & scams) \_\_\_\_\_

Nutrition Information \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Information \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Opportunities \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Approximately how much of each issue of the Senior Circle do you read?**

None    Some    Most    All

**5. If the publication was offered electronically would you access it?**

Yes    No

**6. What format do you prefer?**

Electronic mail    Paper    Both

**7. What changes would you suggest to make the Senior Circle more appealing?**

Color    More photos    Less photos

More graphics    More pages    Less pages

Other:

**8. We are considering a name change, please choose your favorite from the following.**

New Life Times

AGEnda

Aging is Gorges

No, Keep it the same, Senior Circle

Other:

**9. What is your age?**

Less than 40    40-49    50-59    60-69

70-79    80-89    90 and above

**10. What is your gender?**    Male    Female    Other

**11. Please tell us anything else that will help us understand how to make the Senior Circle more interesting and important to you.**