

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

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Senior Focus: ‘Thanks for the Memories’

By Lucia Sacco, Executive Director of Lifelong



Who are these masked leaders of Lifelong? On the left is the current Executive Director and on the right is in-coming Executive Director of the senior center. Lucia Sacco will be retiring in December and passing

It is with very mixed emotions that I write this note, my last as Executive Director of Lifelong. Retirement has been calling to me for quite some time and I’m now answering that call.

First, let me say working at Lifelong for the last 8 years has been one of the best working experiences of my life, and leading the organization these last 5 years as Executive Director has been a dream job. I’m incredibly proud of what I’ve been able to accomplish here with the support of my team, my board and this wonderful community. From paying off a substantial line of credit and balancing our budget to consolidating our operation to 119 West Court Street, Lifelong is on solid ground. Our programming has increased, our community partnerships have grown and, perhaps best of all, when people walk through our doors, they feel welcomed and supported.

Of course, there have been a few challenges, not the least of which has been seeing the agency through this current pandemic. Even during a pandemic, we managed to secure two separate grants to replace the computers in the computer lab (thank you, Community Foundation of Tompkins County) and replace staff computers with laptops (thank you County Office for the Aging), should they need to work remotely in the future. The roof has been replaced, our financial situation is strong (due in

part to staff furloughs), we’ve been able to continue to offer classes virtually and recently have welcomed a couple of in-person classes to the building. Staff has returned with limited hours but they will increase their presence as programming picks up. I tell you all this not to be boastful but to let you know Lifelong’s future in this community is very strong.

I’ve met some astonishing people here and leaving will be unbelievably difficult. I have such enormous gratitude to our members and participants for your continued support and encouragement, for renewing your memberships, registering for classes and being so generous with your donations to Lifelong.

My respect for our instructors knows no bounds. I know how much time and attention you put into the classes you teach and our community benefits from your expertise in so many ways.

I’m so appreciative to receive amazing support from local funding agencies; without which we wouldn’t be able to offer so many wonderful opportunities to older adults in our community.

We have a cadre of volunteers who serve tirelessly in our office as well as in two of our cornerstone programs; Tax Counseling for the Elderly and Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program. My admiration for them is endless.

My staff – everyone should be so lucky as to have a team like mine. To quote Dorothy Gale in *The Wizard of Oz*, “I think I’ll miss you most of all.” To say I’m grateful to them is a gross understatement. Of course they are great at, and take pride in, the work they do...and they do it very well. Every day, I see their warmth, their strength, their kindness and compassion. Professionally, I feel blessed to have worked with such a smart and committed team. Personally, they’ve seen me through thick and thin and I’ll never have the words to adequately thank them for that.

That brings me to another very exciting announcement. I’m thrilled to report that Liza Burger, current Associate Director will be Lifelong’s new Executive Director. Liza came to us from having worked for many years in long term care. As an MSW, she honed her skills in advocacy, problem solving, diplomacy and the betterment of older adults. I didn’t know her

(Continued on page 8)

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.

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 either on the phone or in person between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

In person: Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 214 W Martin Luther King Jr. Street. Ithaca, NY

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.

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 Dawn Sprague at the **Office for the Aging**, 274-5499. Additionally, if you are interested in volunteering, please call the **Office for the Aging**, 274-5499, for more information about Project CARE.

The Registry

The Finger Lakes Independence Center 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 FLIC at 272-2433 or email: registryatFLIC@yahoo.com. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Let it Snow

With winter weather coming upon us, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging is updating its listing of snow shovelers. Deep snow and icy sidewalks are dangerous for everyone but can be especially problematic for older adults and people with mobility problems. Many are not able to remove the snow from their sidewalks or driveways without assistance. If you need assistance with this task, please contact the Office for the Aging at 274-5482. Likewise, if you are interested in assisting older adults by shoveling or plowing, on either a paid or volunteer basis, please call our office at 274-5482.



Gadabout Tompkins County Office for the Aging Transportation Partnership

This program serves older adults age 60 and over with transportation needs by providing them with one way Gadabout tickets at no cost. Its intended purpose is to provide older adults who have no other form of transportation with rides to medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc. Both Zone 1 (within the City of Ithaca) and Zone 2 (within Tompkins County) tickets are available.

How does it work?

- ♦ The Office for the Aging has purchased both Zone 1 and Zone 2 tickets from Gadabout
- ♦ These tickets are kept at the Office for the Aging and are available for adults age 60 and over
- ♦ Contact the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482 to request tickets
- ♦ Contact Gadabout at 607-273-1878 to schedule your ride

Who can participate?

- ♦ Any older adult age 60 and over who has transportation needs
- ♦ There are NO income guidelines
- ♦ There is a 10 ticket cap for each individual within a 12 month period
- ♦ While there is no cost to this program, voluntary contributions are welcomed. You are not required to contribute and no one will be denied service if no contribution is made

Caregiver’s Corner:

Submitted by Rodney Maine, Aging Specialist, Tompkins County Office for the Aging

The United Hospital Fund (at www.nextstepincare) invites us to recognize whether or not we’ve taken on family caregiving responsibilities and offers the following food for thought:

You may not think of yourself as a family caregiver, or as doing anything special. But ask yourself, do you:

- Care for someone who has a chronic illness?
- Manage medications or talk to health care providers for someone?
- Bathe or dress someone who is frail or disabled?
- Handle chores, meals or bills for someone who needs help?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, you are indeed a caregiver. You are not alone. One in five American adults is a caregiver.

Why It’s Important to See Yourself as a Caregiver

Caregivers advocate for the person that they are caring for, and for themselves. Caregivers should ask for and expect to receive:

- Medicare information about your family member’s condition;
- Involvement in decision-making about your family member’s care; and

- Training to help provide care.

Hospitals and other health care providers should be asking patients whether they have a caregiver as an advocate and if you are identified as such, you have a right to be informed and included in care planning.

First Steps for Family Caregivers

- Learn all you can about your family member’s condition and needs.
- Find out what insurance does or does not pay for.
- Review or help your loved one create legal documents, like a health care proxy, advanced directives and a durable power of attorney for financial decisions. You may want to consult a lawyer.
- Discuss the situation with other family members. Try to find a way to include everyone.
- Make sure to take time for yourself and take breaks.
- Think about how you will balance your work and caregiving.

Pace Yourself for the Long Term

Caregiving over the long term requires patience, resilience, and flexibility. When something

You May Not Think of Yourself as a Family Caregiver

changes in your life or your family member’s condition, take a “time out,” consider what is needed now, and make changes if necessary.

Taking care of your own health is essential. Try to find a reasonable balance between caregiving and exercise, sleep, good nutrition and medical care. You need it. You deserve it.

Additional Caregiving Notes:

- **Powerful Tools Classes**

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging hosts Powerful Tools Classes at least twice each year. If you are struggling to balance self-care with caring for a spouse, parent or other adult needing help, call the Office for the Aging (274-5491) to inquire about this class or be placed on the notification list for future *Powerful Tools* as they are scheduled.

- **Caregiver Newsletter**

Additional workshops, support groups and other supports for family caregivers are announced in each issue of *In Support of Caregivers*, the quarterly caregiver newsletter produced by the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. View it on our website at <https://www2.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa/newsletters> or call the Office for the Aging (274-5491) and ask to be mailed free copies of the newsletter as each issue is published.

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 in May 2021.

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@tompkins-co.org or fax 274-5495) by Friday, January 29, 2021.

Contact the T.C. Office for the Aging at 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, 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, Jean Robinson, Ken Robinson, Theresa Robinson, Marie Romano, Frank Schaefer, Bill Sherwood, Ted Sobel, Robert Spaulding, Phyllis Stout, Richard Tabor, Eunice Tabor and Jack Warren



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FEEL BETTER.
LIVE BETTER.**

At **All Ears Audiology**, our friendly staff of professionals will not only change the way you hear, we will change the way you live... for the better. We have the technology and hearing aids that you need... and can afford.

- Audiological Evaluations
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- Hearing Aid Repair
- Latest Digital Technology
- Simple to Sophisticated Technology
- Multi-line Dispenser
- Tinnitus Treatment

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607-257-3903
200 Pleasant Grove Road, Community Corners Plaza, Ithaca NY 14850

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.

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

HOW HAS EVERYONE BEEN COPING?

By Amy Jackson, Outreach Worker

There has been a common theme to the past 9 months, and that is the word “adapt.” Every single person has been forced to adapt in one way or another. How has everyone been coping, when COVID-19 has caused social isolation and fear, amongst other things, in all ages, including our valuable aging population? First, we must look at what the word “adapt” means. According to Dictionary.com, the meaning of adapt is “to adjust oneself to different conditions, environment, etc.” Adjusting has not been easy, but it is evident that so many programs have adapted the ways in which they serve their population. In addition, the aging population has been able to adapt with help from others that they may not have been receiving pre-pandemic.

One example of this is FoodNet’s Meals on Wheels program. Pre-Covid, there was a large congregate meal program. Unfortunately, congregating in one location to eat meals is not an option with Covid present and making it risky for participants to gather. So FoodNet adapted their congregate meal program to deliver to the individuals’ apartments, for those who wanted to continue receiving meals. In addition, FoodNet now delivers meals every other day, due to staffing changes. But on days that participants are not receiving meals, they may receive a phone call from a student intern from Cornell, or a staff member at Tompkins County Office for the Aging, as part of the Telephone Reassurance Program. This provides another way to check on Meals on Wheels participants, to ensure they are doing well

and to connect them to services if need be. FoodNet continues to provide their valuable services, while being able to adapt to the every-changing community needs and conditions.

Another example of adapting is how the Tompkins County Office for the Aging has changed the way services are provided, to keep the aging population as safe and protected as possible. Although the front doors of the office are locked, the same services are still offered as before the pandemic began. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is accepting applications by mail. They also will accept documents that are dropped off. If you knock on the front doors of the office, someone will come out to answer and accept documents. The office’s two Aging Services Specialists are accepting appointments for Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance (HIICAP) and are conducting these appointments mostly by Zoom or phone. Please call the office at 607-274-5482 to set up an appointment. Another program that has been adapted is the Personal Emergency Response System (PERS). Instead of personally going into homes to install PERS, the Office for the Aging staff has created written instructions that can be used by the consumer, or a friend or family member, to install and/or troubleshoot any problems with the PERS. All these adaptation efforts by COFA have reduced exposure to our most vulnerable population.

The Ithaca and Tompkins County community has also adapted, as many people have volunteered

services and assistance to those that need it. It has been truly inspiring to see neighbors, friends, and family members come forward, without even being asked. Another way people have been reaching out is via the various local social media sites where people can ask for, and offer, help. Blue food pantry cabinets have popped up in the last several months and are located throughout Tompkins County. They are kept stocked with not only food, but often with personal care items and masks as well, all free to those in need. In addition, food giveaways have been happening frequently in the County, to ensure that people do not go hungry. One resource that has become vital to Tompkins County is 211. By dialing 211 from your phone (or 1-877-211-8667 if 211 doesn’t work from your phone), someone from the Human Services Coalition will be able to connect you with services, or even just answer a question you may have. All of these local resources have made surviving this stressful time a little milder.

The word “adapt” has become much more than just adjusting to this “new normal”. It has meant that all ages, including our aging population, can get help coping with the changes that seem to happen daily. The resources that have become available, and are continuously changing as necessary, are a reminder that we can all be resilient in a time when things can feel overwhelming. While the pandemic has definitely taken its toll, it is reassuring to see the sense of community that has come about as a result. Please, if you can, reach out to those around you, and offer a helping hand, because as you have likely heard, “we’re all in this together!”

Support through the Seasons Tools for Navigating Grief and the Holidays during COVID

All programs are ONLINE.

At this point it’s clear, the pandemic will change many of the ways in which we celebrate the upcoming holiday season. We usually associate the holidays with being “joyful” or “merry,” gathering with family and friends, giving gifts, and engaging in festivities and traditions. This year we will need to consider how our celebrations will need to change in order to keep ourselves and our friends, family, and community safe.

We will naturally feel some grief as we reassess what parts of the holiday we can still create and what aspects we will need to modify significantly or discard all together. Grief can manifest in many ways, and it’s important to acknowledge its impact on our physical and emotional health as the holidays progress.


Hospicare is providing support to the community at this unusual time. Programs are free and all are welcome! To RSVP for programs or for questions call 607-272-0212 or email events@hospicare.org. Held online via Zoom. Login details will be provided after registration. Register for programs at least 2 days before event.

McGraw House

Senior Apartment Complex



- 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
 - Welcomes Diversity & Encourages Individuality
- Roof Deck, Gardening, Laundry Facilities, Off-Street Parking



(607)-272-7054

221 S. Geneva Street, Ithaca

www.mcgrawhouse.org





Lifelong is proud to be a
United Way Agency





Join Lifelong for a Medicare Basics presentation via zoom on

Wednesday, February 3 from 4:30-5:45pm OR Thursday, April 29 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 Trish Coogan and Deb Schmidle, certified volunteers with Lifelong’s Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP). In addition to offering presentations, certified HIICAP counselors offer free, non-biased 1:1 health insurance counseling at Lifelong. Telephone, zoom, and limited in-person HIICAP appointments are being provided at this time.

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 phone: 273-1511.

Topic: Medicare Basics with Trish Coogan

Time: Feb 3, 2021 4:30-5:45pm

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93780345092?pwd=VmhDSUprSXo3L1J4SXpUeUxBcit5UT09>

Meeting ID: 937 8034 5092

Passcode: 145040

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Topic: Medicare Basics with Deb Schmidle

Time: Apr 29, 2021 4:30-5:45pm

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94423016741?pwd=OG1lczFzZm5QQXNsVmR4cHBPbGppQT09>

Meeting ID: 944 2301 6741

Passcode: 487069

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Help is available for navigating the world of Medicare!

Lifelong’s Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program (HIICAP) offers assistance to persons of all ages who are trying to understand their Medicare coverage.

HIICAP’s certified volunteer insurance counselors have zoom, phone, or limited in-person appointments at Lifelong with individuals who have questions about Medicare and their specific coverage needs. Appointments are free, confidential, and can empower Medicare recipients to make decisions about how to receive their health care benefits and keep costs at a minimum whenever possible.

A HIICAP counseling appointment might be useful if any of the following apply to you:

- You’re approaching eligibility for Medicare due to age or disability (can discuss up to 3 months prior to eligibility)
- You’re planning retirement in the next 3-4 months
- You’d like to review your current coverage to see if your plan best meets your health care needs
- You’re finding your medication or premium costs to be too expensive and want to determine if you qualify for assistance in paying these bills or looking for ways to lower these costs
- You’d like a cost-and-coverage comparison of Medicare Advantage, Part D, and Medigap plans in Tompkins County
- You have lost health care coverage and need to explore Medicare coverage options
- You want an overall understanding of cost and coverage options with Medicare products

HIICAP appointments start by looking at your individual situation, focusing on answering your questions and concerns. If you wish to meet with a certified counselor, please call Lifelong at 607-273-1511 and make an appointment. HIICAP counseling is also available through the County Office for the Aging at: 274-5482

General Enrollment Period

If you have not signed up for Medicare Part A and Part B during your initial enrollment period, and do not qualify for a special enrollment period, you may sign-up during the General Enrollment Period (January 1st-March 31), and your coverage would begin on July 1st. Please contact HIICAP at 273-1511 and we can help you determine whether you do qualify for a special enrollment period or would need to enroll during the General Enrollment Period, and we’ll help you take the necessary steps to get the coverage that you need.

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period-January through March

The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (MA OEP) runs January 1 - March 31 each year. The MA OEP allows individuals enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan as of January 1 to make a one-time election to another MA plan **or** return to Original Medicare and a stand-alone Medicare Part D plan. This enrollment period does not allow for Part D changes for individuals enrolled in Original Medicare.

Additionally, new Medicare beneficiaries who enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan during the first three months they have Medicare have an individualized three-month MA OEP to switch to another MA plan or return to Original Medicare and a stand-alone Medicare Part D plan. Please contact HIICAP at 273-1511 if you have any questions about this.

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 your healthcare or medications, please turn to HIICAP. Give us a call at 273-1511 and ask for an appointment.

Part Two of a Series:

Examining Patients Rights in Long-Term Care Facilities - *Rights to self-determination*

Transitioning to a nursing home or assisted living environment can be challenging for residents and their families. Old concerns are traded for new fears, the most prominent being loss of independence. In 1987, the Nursing Home Reform Act was enacted to officially establish and protect residents rights. These regulations encourage the independence and autonomy of long-term care residents and protect them from retaliation when exercising said rights.

In this series, we will list and break down the rights of resident’s in long-term care facilities. Questions or comments are encouraged and can be sent to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Nursing Home Resident Rights

Each person living in a nursing home has specific rights under the law.

Federal law mandates that each nursing facility must protect and promote the rights of each resident including:

- Rights to self-determination
- ***Personal and privacy rights***
- Rights regarding abuse and restraints
- Rights to information
- Rights to visits
- Transfer and discharge rights
- Protection of personal funds
- Protection against Medicaid discrimination

Federal law requires that nursing homes also provide all residents with the following:

- Quality of life
- Provision of services and activities
- Participation in facility administration
- Assuring access to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

(From:
<https://aging.ny.gov/ltcop/helpful-information-residents-and-families>)

Personal and Privacy Rights

As a resident of a long-term care facility, individuals are guaranteed privacy and personal rights but what does this actually mean? This right protects your personal and clinical records from being accessed without your permission. These records include who you visit with, your written and telephone communications, medical treatment, issues of personal care, your financial records and more.

These rights include you being able to contact people of your choosing. Long term care facilities are required to provide you with regular access to a telephone that is in a private place and accessible by individuals in wheelchairs and with hearing/visual impairments.

Written communications are also protected. Just like when you live in the community, you can expect your mail to be delivered unopened. Upon your request and at your expense, the facility must produce stationary, writing implements, and stamps for your use and assist you in reading or writing as needed.

Residents retain their basic rights to privacy and communication when they move into a long-term care facility. If you or a loved one currently reside in a long term care facility and have questions or concerns about your rights, please contact your local ombudsman at **(607) 274-5498**.

See you next issue when we break down rights regarding abuse and restraints.

Address Questions/Comments to:

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)

Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 214 W. State St. Ithaca, NY 14817
Email: klyon@tom-pkins-co.org or pchevallard@tom-pkins-co.org

Keep Tompkins County Healthy & Safe During COVID-19



Distance
Please do not form lines or groups. Keep 6 feet of distance at all times.



Density
Avoid entering crowded rooms or areas. Reduce occupancy to allow for proper distancing.



Face Covering
You must wear a face covering when in public buildings and outdoor spaces around others.



Hand Hygiene
Wash hands well and often. Clean & disinfect frequently touched surfaces often.



Symptoms
If you have a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or body aches, stay home & get tested.



Mental Health
COVID-19 has affected everyone's well-being. If you are struggling, it's OK to ask for support.

Please take steps to protect your own health and the health of others.

Get tested for COVID-19 at the Cayuga Health Sampling Site, 607-319-5708 or CayugaHealth.org





tom-pkins-county.ny.gov/health/movingforward



Home Energy Assistance Program:

By Andrea Davis, Outreach Worker

With this turbulent year ending, some of us may have lost a source of income or have had to withdraw more on our resources than in previous years. This year may have left some of us with significantly less income at a time when we need it the most. While there are many programs to assist with various needs, the program that I would like to highlight is the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). This program was established in 1981 to help low income households by supplementing their heating bills during the winter months. The Tompkins County Office for the Aging works with the Tompkins County Department of Social Services (DSS) to ensure that HEAP is widely available to residents in Tompkins County that need help with their heating bills during the winter. Our office assists clients that are over 60 and do not receive food stamps; or are under 60 and receive Social Security Disability. All other clients would call DSS at 607-274-5264 to apply.

Clients that meet the income requirements listed below can apply for HEAP if the heating bill is in their name, regardless of whether they are a renter/homeowner. And even during this pandemic, our office staff are working diligently to assist clients with applying for HEAP. While our office is closed to the public, we have transitioned to relying more on phone calls, emails, and snail mail to conduct business. We have installed a drop-box next to our office doors for HEAP applications as well as a doorbell in case clients have questions. We have been able to safely assist clients with applying for HEAP and are looking forward to helping many more. If you would like more information, or believe that you are eligible for this program, give our office a call at 607-274-5482. We are looking forward to assisting you.

The 2020-2021 HEAP Income Guidelines:

Household Size:		Monthly Income Maximum:
1	/	\$2,610
2	/	\$3,413
3	/	\$4,216



Save the Month

Foodnet

Meals on Wheels

2021 Mac 'n Cheese Crawl Month

March 1 - March 31, 2021

Foodnet Meals on Wheels has reimagined our fan favorite Mac 'n Cheese event and put together a new, fun and safe way to indulge in a variety of mac 'n cheese dishes while supporting Foodnet and many of our local restaurants, the 2021 Mac 'n Cheese Crawl!

During the entire month of March, we are partnering with 12+ local restaurants who will serve up an appetizer portion of their finest mac 'n cheese dishes. Attendees can purchase mac 'n cheese crawl passports to sample all, half, or three of the macs and vote on whose is the best in town by email, voicemail, or by using our event app. Mac and cheese tastings will be available through dine-in service and carry-out. Each passport will highlight our amazing family of sponsors.

Stayed tuned for more details and how to purchase your mac passport!

In honor of National Older Driver Safety Awareness

Way2Go is sharing a reminder about our tips & tools for Aging & Driving. Aging & Driving Resources



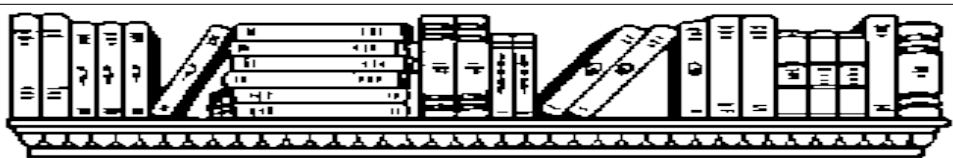
Older drivers are among the safest on the road in part due to experience, but because of age and changes in physical abilities, they are also most at risk of harm in an accident. Way2Go offers tips & tools on how to increase your safety behind the wheel, on alternatives to driving, and how to have family conversations when driver safety is a concern. While in-person events are canceled for the remainder of 2020, including AARP safe driving courses and CarFit, you can still watch our videos and explore the various online resources on driver safety. Go to Way2Go.org to learn more.

Transportation Updates



Gadabout recently reduced their age eligibility and is a great alternative to driving for residents 55 and over or for persons with disabilities. Go to Way2Go.org for more details on Gadabout and additional transportation service updates.

For immediate transportation questions call 2-1-1, or 1-877-211-8667 if calling from out of Tompkins and Cortland counties. Stay safe and warm!



The Book Nook *A feature from the Tompkins Public Library*

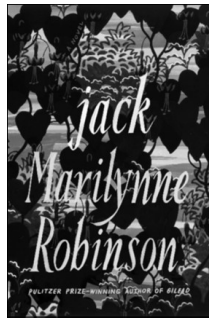
Joyce Ann Wheatley, Information & Learning Services

During the COVID-19 pandemic, please check Tompkins County Public Library's hours and services at www.tcpl.org or call 607-272-4556. You can browse and borrow eBooks and eaudiobooks in Overdrive, our digital collection, anytime!

Jack by Marilynne Robinson

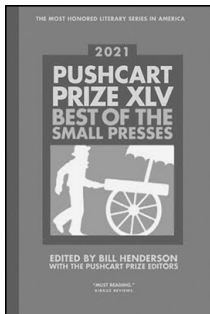
Marilynne Robinson, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Humanities Medal, presents *Jack*, 4th book in the *Gilead* series. (Don't worry—*Jack* is my first—you don't need to read them sequentially in order to enjoy it.)

"*Jack* tells the story of John Ames Boughton, prodigal son of a Presbyterian minister in Gilead, Iowa. In segregated St. Louis ... after World War II, Jack falls in love with Della Miles, an African American high school teacher, who is also the daughter of a preacher—discerning, generous, and independent. Their fraught, beautiful romance is one of Robinson's greatest achievements." (Goodreads)



Robinson's gorgeous prose explores Jack's character so vividly, so deeply, that I'm looking forward to reading the whole series (*Gilead*, *Home*, *Lila*), books "about the dilemmas and promise of American history—about the ongoing legacy of the Civil War and the enduring impact of both racial inequality and deep-rooted religious belief." (Goodreads)

Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses edited by Bill Henderson & Pushcart Prize Editors



The 45th Edition (2021) of the *Pushcart Prize Anthology*, the celebrated American literary series is here! I read 2020's edition cover-to-cover and can't wait to dive into 600 new pages of the best fiction, essays and poetry—70 authors, 50 small presses—from around the world. If

you've never sampled a *Pushcart Prize Anthology*, you may be happily surprised. You might not like everything you read (who does?) but you might like a lot. You'll meet new authors along the way, as well as beloved names like Elizabeth McCracken, Luis Alberto Urrea and Jane Hirschfield.

"*Pushcart Prize XLV* is continuing evidence that much of today's vibrant writing appears only in small journals and book presses." (Goodreads)

TCPL's 4 Seasons Fiction Book Club meets quarterly from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. We are currently gathering on Zoom. To reserve a copy of the season's selection prior to discussion, contact Joyce, jwheatley@tcpl.org. All Library programs are free and open to the public.

Ness-Sibley Funeral Home



Alison M. Weaver

Pre-arrangement eases the burden of those you leave behind.

We invite you to learn more and to begin your planning at www.ness-sibley.com

There is no cost for this valuable service.

23 South Street, Trumansburg
(607) 387-8151

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



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TTY# 800-421-1220
261 Main Street
Newfield, NY



www.betterhousingtc.org



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disabled, 18 years or older



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TTY# 800-421-1220
24 Elm Street
Trumansburg, NY



www.betterhousingtc.org





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 Tammy Dunn, Program Director, at tdunn@tclifelong.org to register for any of these events!

From the Executive Director's Desk of Lucia Sacco

Even during a pandemic, Lifelong finds ways to bring new and exciting opportunities to our members. Thanks to generous support from the County Office for the Aging, we're thrilled to announce our affiliation with Senior Planet. Senior Planet, powered by OATS (Older Adults Technology Services), harnesses technology to change the way we age. They offer programs, courses and activities to help seniors learn new skills. One great benefit to a Lifelong membership is a tech hotline number members can call to get help with issues with your smartphone, tablet or computer. We're so grateful to the County Office for the Aging for their commitment to older adults in our community



I'm honored to let you know about a fascinating book written by one of our long-time friends, Yohko Tsuji. If you have a chance to read *Through Japanese Eyes* (we'll have copies in our Library soon or you may prefer to order your own copy), you might recognize a certain Senior Center mentioned in the book. This has been a labor of love and we are so happy for Yohko.

Warmly.....Lucia

Neighbors Connecting

The Covid Virus has touched all of us in some way or another. Family and friends, both local and across the country have been impacted.

We've lost the "personal touch" that makes our lives more complete. As the impact of this VIRUS reaches more and more of us, let's rebuild our connections with our neighbors and friends at Lifelong and beyond, reaching out with encouragement and friendship.

Lifelong is planning to initiate a "Lifelong Lifeline", a telephone connection that will connect people with each other for encouragement and just plain talking fun.

If you are interested in participating in this program, by making calls or by receiving them, please contact Liza Burger at Lifelong, 273-1511 or lburger@tclifelong.org

Let's keep in touch.



Lifelong Learning Spring 2021

Spring Semester offers a hybrid of on-site and virtual learning!

It has been difficult to know the best course of action regarding offering in-person sessions at Lifelong, and a lot of thought was put into how and when. We are excited to share that Lifelong will be offering on-site classes in the Spring!

We are going to start small and build on that. We will require everyone wear a mask and have social distancing in place. There will be limited class sizes for on-site programs and we will continue to offer virtual opportunities. The health and safety of all concerned is the primary focus. Should we feel that the health and safety of all is at heightened risk, the decision may be made to postpone, and/or cancel on-site events.

This Spring you can look forward to a variety of offerings ranging from financial sessions like Demystifying Trusts, How to be an Executor and/or Trustee and Medicare Basics. We will be offering a beginner Spanish series virtually, and present the opportunity to explore the History of Ancient Greeks, London Churches, and Dealing with the Ego! There is going to be a writing program, Recreating Your Life on Paper: Writing through the Life Stages.

In the sciences we have a series called Viruses and Viral Diseases that is going to take a look at human diseases caused by viruses, using examples such as measles, shingles, the common cold, and influenza. It will also focus on details of respiratory diseases caused by corona viruses (e.g. MERS and SARS), including the latest information on transmission, infectivity, and control of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the cause of the current COVID-19 global pandemic!

There will be films, arts, and health and wellness programs like The Aging Mastery Program which includes ten core topics focusing on nutrition, exercise, healthy relationships, fall prevention, community engagement, sleep and more!

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

We'll be printing a limited number of Spring 2021 catalogs for those of you who prefer to have a hard copy. Let us know and we'll be happy to mail one to you. Otherwise, the catalog will be available on our website. Do check back often because we hope to invite more in-person classes back to the building as will be dictated by the drop in COVID cases in our community and our comfort level to do so safely.

Virtual Health & Wellness Activities

One of the things that helps to bolster the immune system, raise spirits and prevent all kinds of physical conditions associated with aging is exercise. Although we've had to cancel the in-person classes, we are offering group activities virtually to help keep you healthy.

- LIFELONG CHAIR YOGA
- LIFELONG STRENGTH TRAINING
- ENHANCE YOUR FITNESS
- LIFELONG TRUMANSBURG FITNESS

Visit our website to learn more about the virtual health and wellness classes:

<http://www.tclifelong.org/virtual-health-wellness-classes-on-the-way/>

Lucia Sacco (Continued from page 1)

well personally, but I knew of her reputation as a person of integrity so I was happy to have the opportunity to meet with her about a position with Lifelong's Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs. Lucky for Lifelong, she accepted the position.

Under her leadership, these two key programs have flourished. She's established strong connections with community partners, increased the number of volunteers for both programs, continually meets or exceeds goals set for her and has become very important to Lifelong, to the seniors we serve and to the volunteers in her programs.

She's a super smart, organized problem solver. She is kind and helpful and funny and warm and loving. Liza is a team player and comes up with ideas to make us better. She's willing to step outside her comfort zone and try new things.

She makes the clients we serve, the volunteers she works with and her coworkers all feel respected, listened to and valued.

I'll be around in 2021 to assist with a smooth transition and I know you'll make her feel as welcomed and supported and you've made me feel during my tenure here.

Be well and I sincerely hope I'll see you soon!

Lifelong encourages all Seniors to

- Be Creative!
- Be Active!
- Be Social!
- BE SAFE!

Lifelong’s Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program Returns!

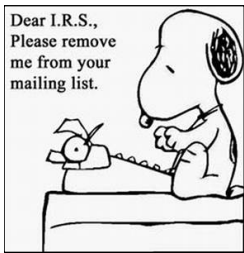
A committed group of certified volunteers prepare taxes, free of charge, for those 60 and over, and persons with disabilities, as well as for **all** individuals with adjusted gross incomes under \$35,000 and families with incomes under \$57,000.

**Tax preparation at Lifelong,
119 West Court St, Ithaca**

Tax returns will be prepared virtually this year (without taxpayers present) from the end of January until mid-April.

Telephone lines will be open starting January 4th to schedule brief appointments to collect your information and drop off tax documents and to pick up completed returns.

**Call 607-279-6617
Monday thru Friday between 10 and 4.**



Tax Counseling for the Elderly Welcomes a new Site Coordinator at Lifelong!

While the pandemic has certainly forced us to be creative in how we stay connected and offer the services that so many in our community rely on, Lifelong is pleased that we will be able to run our TCE (Tax Counseling for the Elderly) program this year, albeit virtually. We’re so pleased to welcome Khaki Wunderlich as our TCE Coordinator for the upcoming tax season!

Khaki joined our group of certified volunteer preparers last tax season, so she comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge. Khaki is already thinking of ways to improve our already amazing program and set us up to handle the TCE program in the safest way possible. As we begin planning for the upcoming Tax season, we’re anticipating that clients will complete forms offsite, then drop off and pick up their documents by appointment.

Looking to set up an appointment to have your taxes done at Lifelong this year?

**Beginning January 4th,
call 607-279-6617, Monday thru Friday
between 10 and 4.**

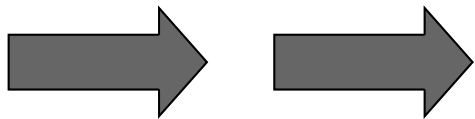
Tax Tips for 2020 Income Tax

From Khaki Wunderlich, TCE Coordinator

**COVID stimulus payment
(Economic Impact Payment)**

The amount you received will need to be included in your tax return. Don’t worry, it isn’t taxable. The amount you received was based on your 2019 tax return (or Social Security payments); but the payment is actually a credit against your 2020 taxes. Your preparer will need to know how much you got so they can make sure you got the right amount, especially if your income changed from 2019 to 2020 (and one or the other is above \$75,000 for a single taxpayer (\$150,000 for married joint return) or to get you the refundable credit if you didn’t get a stimulus check. Again it is not taxable and you won’t have to pay back any excess. You should have gotten a Notice 1444 about your payment; bring that notice or at least know how much you received.

Charitable contributions - You can deduct up to \$300 in cash contributions made in 2020 to qualified charitable organizations even if you don’t itemize your deductions. Bring your receipts or other documentation. Remember that you need a formal receipt if a single donation is \$250 or more. Reminder that Lifelong is a tax exempt organization as well!



**NEW!
SENIOR PLANET**

Lifelong is excited to announce this collaboration.

Become a member of Lifelong and get connected with Senior Planet!

Access to the hotline number is available to Lifelong members.

Lifelong members should call Lifelong 607-273-1511 for the number for tech support.



Have a question about your smartphone? Need assistance with buying a new tablet or computer? Look no further than the Tompkins County Senior Planet Hotline, where a technology trainer will answer all your questions.

Tompkins County Office for the Aging in partnership with Senior Planet & Older Adults Technology Services is providing this free service for Tompkins County older adults and Lifelong patrons.

Hotline hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm



Senior Planet helps people 60+ age with attitude.
Learn more at www.seniorplanet.org/north-country



Volunteers, Connected!

Lifelong’s Volunteer Program connects seniors with volunteer opportunities with non-profits throughout Tompkins County.



Free Science Workshop

Free Science Inc. is a nonprofit organization based in Ithaca, NY that provides a supportive, community-based space for low-income and under-represented youth to explore their world, and expand their capabilities through science and creativity.

Our program depends on the enthusiasm, expertise, and commitment of community members. The time and energy of our volunteers is what makes all of the joy and discovery happen! There are many ways to get involved, as a facilitator working one-on-one after school with youth who are exploring science and developing personal projects or perhaps as a special guest to informally share something interesting related to science or making that you are passionate about, e.g. engineering, beekeeping, jewelry making, chemistry, bird watching, metalsmithing.

In addition, we are always in need of interesting materials to fuel our tinkering, such as:

- Bottle caps and lids
- Wine corks
- 1 and 2 liter bottles
- Office supplies
- Craft and school supplies
- Small quantities of paint
- Wood scraps
- Hardware
- Hand and power tools
- Scientific equipment
- Interesting antique machines
- Animal and plant specimens
- Natural history items (rocks, fossils, bones)
- Small Electronics for Take Apart, eg: radios, laptops



For more information contact:
Lori Tenenbaum, Executive Director Free Science Workshop
210 Hancock St. Ithaca, NY
(315)-558-0257

Fall Yard Work and Snow Shovelers Needed to Assist Older Adults



The Tompkins County Office for the Aging maintains a list of individuals who would be willing to do fall yard work and snow shoveling for older adults. The leaves are falling, and snow will soon follow, and many seniors are not able to remove the leaves and snow from their yards and sidewalks without assistance. Wet slippery leaves, deep snow and icy sidewalks are dangerous for everyone but especially for people with mobility difficulties. The office is currently updating its list and is in need of more workers. We are especially in need of people who are willing to work in places outside of the City of Ithaca and in rural areas. If you are interested in assisting older adults with yard work or by shoveling or plowing, on either a paid or volunteer basis, please call the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 274-5482. If your name was listed last year, and you would like to be listed again, please notify us.



Urgent Need for Volunteers at the Salvation Army

The OBST (weekend meal program) needs volunteers to help with the preparation for meal pick ups. No cooking involved!

Volunteers are needed to help with the Kitchen Cupboard to help with contactless registration of clients and answering related phone calls. Monday-Friday opportunities.



Interested please call 273-2400



American Red Cross

Pick your time, day and location to help with Blood Drives throughout Tompkins County.

Volunteers are needed for a 2-3 hour shift to greet, pass out refreshments and other duties helpful to blood donors.

Call Sis Johnson at 272-6806.

Are you interested in making a real difference? You can make a real difference, not just in your life, but in the lives of others in your community. If you are an open-minded, compassionate individual, you can be trained to be

Volunteer Crisisline Counselor at Suicide Prevention and Crisis Service.

The Crisisline offers free and confidential phone counseling, to callers who may be dealing with any personal problem, such as anxiety, addiction, family, school, sexuality, loneliness, depression and suicidal thoughts.

The next training begins on January 11, 2021.

For more information about how you could join this compassionate and skilled group of volunteer counselors, please send an email to info@ithacacrisis.org and we will send you information and an application.

Project CARE



Would you or someone you know benefit by being matched with a community volunteer who can visit you weekly in your home, virtually, or by phone?

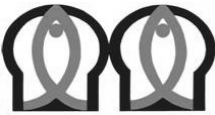
Seniors aged 60 or over & living in Tompkins County, can request to have a friendly visitor through our Project CARE program at no cost.

Weekly visiting option:

Project CARE’s **friendly visitor program** provides companionship by matching you with a volunteer who will make weekly contact in a way you are comfortable with. Home visits are available with safety precautions in place, or if you have internet access visits can be done virtually, or a volunteer could provide a weekly phone call.

Many Seniors in our community greatly benefit and find comfort from a weekly visit. Volunteers can provide conversation and so much more. This service can provide in-home support to Seniors who are socially isolated, experiencing loneliness or those that are homebound, especially during the pandemic.

If you are interested in any of the Project CARE options listed, would like more information, or **would like to volunteer contact:**
Dawn Sprague, Project CARE Coordinator, T. C. Office for the Aging
Phone (607) 274-5499



Loaves & Fishes

Volunteer help is needed to prepare free meals to-go.

When: Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings or Tuesday & Thursday late afternoons

Where: Loaves & Fishes, St. John’s Church ,210 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca

To sign up or for more information, email: info@loaves.org

Our staff and volunteers work safely together to provide free meals to all Tompkins County residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Not finding what you want?
Give Joyce a call at Lifelong 273-1511
Or email: jbilling@tclifelong.org

Friends of
STEWART PARK

Friends of Stewart Park has launched the new Cayuga Waterfront Trail website! Found at www.cayugawaterfronttrail.net and on the FSP site at www.friendsofstewartpark.org, the new Trail site is full of beautiful pictures, updated maps, and useful information.

You can find details about the Trail, Trail features and destinations, do's and don'ts of Trail use, opportunities for volunteering and more! We will continue to develop the new site over the next few months, and welcome your feedback.

Our friends at IthacaTrails.org recently resurveyed the Cayuga Waterfront Trail updating its length to 8 miles! More than ever, this ADA compliant multi-use trail provides a safe place for our community to safely enjoy our waterfront.

Friends of Stewart Park is pleased to work with the City of Ithaca to help support and enhance the Cayuga Waterfront Trail, which was initially developed through an initiative of the Chamber of Commerce. If you have come across places on the Trail that could use a little TLC, or if you'd like to volunteer to help keep our Trail clean and beautiful, email Rick!

FSP anticipates that Stewart Park and the Cayuga Waterfront Trail will continue to receive heavy use this fall and winter, as many wish to stay active, healthy and safe even as days grow shorter and colder.

Watch the Senior Troupe of Lifelong perform their stories from their lives about movies. This video was made during the pandemic. You can see it two ways-you tube https://youtu.be/gh3_Rl6lZgQ or vimeo <https://vimeo.com/closetohome/seniortroupemovies>

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



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Beautiful, Peaceful & Affordable Apartments Just Minutes to Ithaca

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- * Convenient location

Call Better Housing @ 607-387-5922
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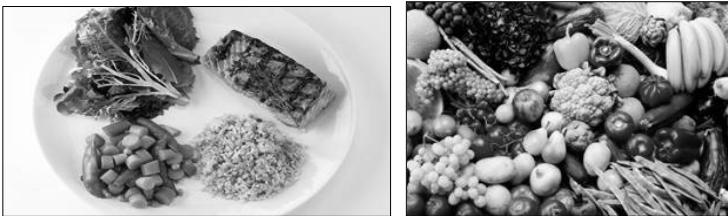

www.betterhousingtc.org




Foodnet Meals on Wheels Expands Services!

As the pandemic wears on and Winter approaches, Foodnet Meals on Wheels is expanding its services to reach more of our older adult neighbors. Senior neighbors (age 60 and over) in Tompkins County who would benefit from meal delivery because they are practicing social distancing during the pandemic qualify for our services.

If you or a loved one needs our services, please contact us at 607 266-9553 or info@foodnet.org



What is available to you:

- We can deliver a meal right to your home. All deliveries are contactless.
- Meals are delivered on an every-other day delivery schedule.
- We offer Choice Menus – You can select your main entrée ahead of the delivery.
- Sandwich meals and weekend meals are also available in addition to the hot meal.
- Our meals are healthy and prepared fresh each day.
- Nutrition education handouts are provided monthly by a Registered Dietitian.

*Voluntary contributions towards the cost of your meal of any amount are encouraged, but **not** required.*
(Hot Meals cost \$8.00, sandwich meals are an additional \$1.50, add on two frozen weekend meals for \$13.00).

Meal deliveries and meal pick up require a reservation.

If you are interested in signing up for meals, please call our Main Office **(607) 266-9553**.

We look Forward to Serving You!

* Please note, due to the pandemic the expanded Congregate Delivery Services are subject to change.

Clip and Save

TAKE A MONTHLY MUSICAL TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH

RUDY PAOLANGELI



Thanks to
ELMIRA SAVINGS BANK
CAYUGA MEDICAL CENTER
 &
BANGS FUNERAL HOME



Date	Event	WHCU	WNYY
Wednesday, December 25	Christmas	7 AM - 9AM	10 AM - 12 Noon
Friday, January 1, 2021	Salute to January	7am—9am	7am—9am
Saturday, February 6	Salute to February	7am—9am	
Saturday, March 6	Salute to March	7am—9am	
Saturday, April 3	Salute to April	7am—9am	
Saturday, May 1	Salute to May	7am—9am	
Monday, May 31	Memorial Day	7am—9am	7am—9am
Saturday, June 5	Salute to June	7am—9am	
Sunday, July 4	Independence Day	7am—9am	7am—9am
Sunday, August 1	Salute to August	7am—9am	
Monday, September 6	Labor Day	7am—9am	7am—9am
Saturday, October 2	Salute to October	7am—9am	
Saturday, November 6	Salute to November	7am—9am	
Thursday, November 25	Thanksgiving	7am—9am	7am—9am
Saturday, December 25	Christmas	7am—9am	7am—9am

Also available 24/7 coast to coast & around the world by logging on rudyonduity.com

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