



60 PLUS

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Nov. 4: Election Day— VOTE!!!

Nov. 7 @ 12:30 pm Senior Services Public Hearing at Amherst Senior Center - Join us please.

Nov. 11: Veteran’s Day— Thank you for your service!

Feb. 17, 2009: If your television no longer works, you need a converter box! See pg. 3 for more details.

We’re Listening! Public Hearing on Nov. 7 at Amherst Senior Center

The Erie County Department of Senior Services will hold its annual Public Hearing on Friday, November 7th at the Amherst Senior Center, 370 John James Audubon Pkwy. at 12:30 pm (immediately following the Stay Fit lunch—call 636-3050 for lunch reservations). This is your opportunity to share feedback on existing services or your thoughts about needed programs. A summary of the Department’s plans for delivery of service will be available after Oct. 15 for your review at www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices or by calling Jennifer Wood at 858-7532. Some topics discussed in the past include: ways to address transportation needs, the Stay Fit Dining program and home-delivered meals, home care, benefits and entitlements, creating senior-friendly communities, and more. Come and be heard regarding what’s important to you.

Message From the Commissioner...

A 17th century English poet once wisely stated “No man is an island.” As my learning curve at the Department of Senior Services continues, I am beginning to understand that in our desire to care for Western New York’s seniors – we are not alone. An ever increasing number of governmental offices, not for profit agencies, educational institutions, service providers, and even private businesses now join us in acknowledging the indisputable place of seniors in our society.

The heart of the Department is a desire to assure the optimum well-being of older adults by doing everything within our capabilities to enhance their lives. We promote positive aging by providing information, support, and services to older adults and their families. Every day – all day – our staff work to identify those who may require some type of assistance, those who can provide that assistance, and they then proceed to bring the two together. Food, shelter, security, transportation, utility assistance and homeware are just a few of the many services provided. On an administrative level - whether it involves applying for a grant, finalizing a contract with a service provider, putting together a yearly budget, or reporting to the state on the services provided – the work of each of our units somehow involves responding to the needs of seniors in Erie County. While not every individual aspect of our mission may be shared by our many partner agencies, I am encouraged to know that the overarching commitment of service to older adults - along with the desire to promote a lifetime of dignity - appears to be their mission as well as ours.



Commissioner
Brenda W. Ward

(Continued on page 2)

Page 2 *Commissioner's Message*

(continued from page 1)

Our partners in this effort are numerous and varied. First on the list are what we at the Department refer to as our cluster agencies. These are nine sites located in the heart of our community which help us fulfill our mission by providing hands-on services to our clients. Other partners include: the 65 Senior Centers sprinkled generously throughout the towns and villages of Erie County, the 47 congregate dining sites where hot meals are served Monday through Friday, and the numerous service agencies with whom we contract. A sampling of these would include the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities, Jewish Family Services, the Center for Transportation Excellence, Meals on Wheels, Legal Services for the Elderly, Hearts and Hands Faith in Action, Hispanics United of Buffalo and the Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired. In addition we regularly interact with nursing homes, adult homes, home care agencies, adult day care programs and hospital systems as well as with community organizations such as the Community Health Foundation and the Network in Aging. I would be remiss if I didn't note that our federal, state, and county legislators constantly strive to actively provide for the needs of their more mature constituents as well. All of these groups have clearly exhibited interest in and concern for the unique circumstances of older adults in our community.

We are anxious to work with these organizations who want the same excellent quality of life for seniors that we seek. As with all things in life, our ambition is unfortunately limited by the resources available to us. However, we continue to seek to expand our assets and to adopt systems and procedures which will streamline our processes and thereby maximize the funds that are available to us. Six Sigma is actively underway in Erie County and

is committed to increasing efficiency in all aspects of our governmental operations. The cornerstone of this philosophy is the promotion of a system designed to improve processes and eliminate wasteful activities. It creates a culture in which everyone in the organization is continually striving to improve.

In recent years all aspects of the media have become much more aware of aging as an emerging issue and appear to devote more "copy" and "air time" to discussions and presentations of issues dealing with the elderly. It is a rare edition of the

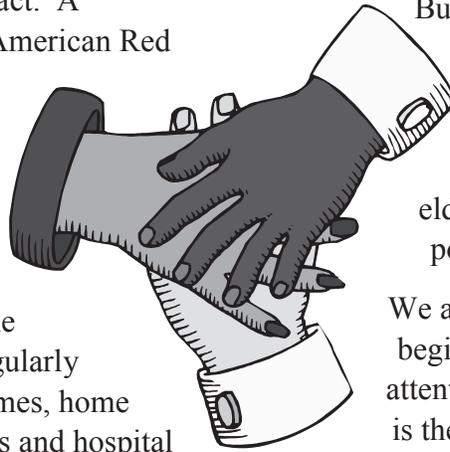
Buffalo News that does not contain one or more feature stories or news items which address issues that relate to seniors in our community.

Additionally, topics dealing with the elderly are frequently the subject of popular radio call in shows.

We are extremely pleased that seniors are beginning to garner the recognition and attention they deserve. Whether the cause is the "sudden" appearance of the Baby

Boomers in the 60+ age group; the fact that life expectancies are constantly growing; an increasing awareness and sensitivity on the part of society in general; or even a business interest in a large segment of our population, the fact remains that our older adults will be with us for increasingly longer periods of time. We want that period of their lives to be as pleasant and satisfying as possible. The Department therefore recognizes its obligation to care for those older adults who have given so much to our community and deserve much in return.

In numbers there is strength, and with all of these many groups and organizations joining us in the quest for a better life for our seniors, we feel that we increasingly speak as one in our efforts to achieve the highest possible quality of life for Erie County's older adults.



The more one worries, the older one gets; the more one laughs, the younger one feels.

— Chinese proverb

22,000 Erie County residents eligible for economic stimulus payments have not yet filed - a value of \$6.3 Million!

Most taxpayers didn't need to take any extra steps to receive stimulus payments that started in May, but some who might not normally file a federal tax return **need to file a 2007 return by October 15 this year** to receive a check. If you question whether you are eligible, or require help, please call Senior Services at 858-8526. An example of how the 1040A form is to be completed is at www.irs.gov/pub/newsroom/1040a.pdf and the forms are downloadable. Of course, assistance is available through the IRS, or go to www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/finance/2008rebates.asp for more information.

Do You NEED a TV Converter Box? If So, Act by February 17 !!!

After February 17, 2009, you may receive and view over-the-air digital programming with an analog TV only by purchasing a digital-to-analog set-top converter box. **If you subscribe to cable or satellite, your access to broadcast channels should not change.** However, if you currently rely on over-the-air signals via an analog television and an antenna or "rabbit ears", to continue to receive a television signal you will need to **do one of the following options:**



1. Buy a low-cost converter box, to use with your existing analog television
2. Buy a digital television that can receive DTV signals
3. Subscribe to cable or satellite

Before March 31, 2009, all U.S. households may request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, to be used toward purchasing eligible digital-to-analog converter boxes (expected to cost between \$50 and \$70) for the conversion of over-the-air digital tv signals. **Coupons are free, but supply is limited.** Coupons expire after 90 days and cannot be reissued, so do not request one until you are ready to purchase a converter box. Apply for converter box coupons by:

Phone: 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009) **TTY:** 1-877-530-2634

Online Form: www.DTV2009.gov **Fax:** 1-877-388-4632

For more information about the DTV transition, go to www.dtv.gov, which provides links to several other informative websites, or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322).

Sometimes an older adult can no longer live alone and chooses to move into an adult-care facility. **Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteers** work cooperatively with nursing homes and care facilities to improve the quality of life for residents. They serve as patients' rights advocates, investigating and negotiating resolutions to concerns voiced by residents in matters of resident services and care. Ombudsmen are trained to work with family and facility staff to assist with resolving residents' issues. They visit a facility on a weekly basis to discuss problems, concerns, or simply to lend an open ear. They monitor the quality of care, help protect residents' rights, provide information to the residents and their families to ensure proper treatment, and encourage residents to express opinions. The Greater Buffalo Chapter of the American Red Cross seeks volunteers for the Ombudsman Program—you must be at least 21 years old with an interest and capacity to fulfill an advocate's role, and have strong verbal and written communication skills. Call the Red Cross at 878-2385.

Extra Help

Medicare again will be starting their big push to enroll people in new prescription drug plans, but for seniors who need extra help affording their prescriptions, efforts continue throughout the year at Erie County Senior Services. Extra Help, often called the Low-Income Subsidy, is a government subsidy for Medicare Prescription Drug Plans to cover all or some of the costs associated with the program such as premiums, deductibles, and prescription co-payments. Eligibility is based on individual income levels and assets up to \$23,970.

“Medicare Extra Help subsidy is available year round... It’s a benefit without a set open-enrollment period. If you have any questions about whether you are eligible, definitely call us at 858-7883.” says Bill Daniels, Outreach and Education Coordinator of the Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP).

If you are interested in the Medicare Extra Help subsidy, just **call 858-7883** to find out more. Experts are available to present to groups so they can learn about the benefit, or speak with individuals one-on-one, walking people through the application and follow-up process.

Even if you’re not eligible for the Extra Help, there may be other programs to help with the costs of medical and prescription insurance. Call 858-7883 for more information about these programs, or to discuss options that “fill the gaps” in your health insurance.

Medicare Savings Programs:

If your net monthly income is less than \$1,190 (single) or \$1,595 (couple), New York State could pay your Medicare Part B premium. There is no limit to how much money you have in the bank. To determine net income, add what you pay for Medicare (usually \$96.40) to the amount you receive from Social Security, add other sources of income such as pensions, annuities, etc. From this figure subtract all health insurance premiums you pay—this resulting figure is your net income. For more information, or to see if you qualify for this help, call Senior Services at 858-7883.

Is Long-Term Care Insurance Right for You?

Only you can answer that question, but Senior Services can help you figure it out. This insurance covers long-term care services provided in a nursing home, at home, in an assisted living facility, or in other community-based settings. Medicare, Medicare supplemental insurance (Medigap), and traditional

health and disability insurance plans typically do not cover long-term care services. Because Senior Services DOES NOT SELL policies, we are able to offer objective information. If this is something you’re considering, or have purchased, and want to understand better, call us at 858-7883.

Did you know that Medicare covers many health screenings?

Included are the initial Preventative Physical Exam, and for many people, also cardiovascular screenings such as lipid, cholesterol, triglycerides, diabetes screenings, mammograms, and perhaps even smoking cessation counseling...Speak with your doctor(s) to maximize your health benefits. More information about the screenings is at www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/health/insurance.asp or by calling 858-7883.

Although common, **osteoporosis does not have to be a normal part of aging**. While it is typical to lose some bone mass as you age, it is not normal to develop osteoporosis, to experience painful fractures, or to lose more than 1-1/2 inches of height. **Osteoporosis may be prevented, is easily diagnosed, and can be treated.** Call the WNY Osteoporosis Resource Center at **(716) 862-BONE** to find out more or visit www.nysopep.org. If you are at risk of osteoporosis, Medicare may cover screening tests - Speak with your doctor.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Classes

Classes for People Helping Older Relatives or Friends

A six-week educational program designed to provide caregivers the tools needed for taking care of themselves is now being offered. Through six 2 1/2 hour sessions held on a weekly basis, caregivers learn to reduce stress, improve self-confidence, better communicate feelings, and locate helpful resources. Attendees also learn how to increase their ability to make tough decisions and balance their lives. **Pre-Registration is required** - Call 858-2177 or e-mail caregiver@erie.gov for more information about Powerful Tools for Caregivers Classes and to register. There is a \$25 cost for the course, which includes a copy of *The Caregiver Helpbook*

University at Buffalo – North Campus Crofts Hall – Room 142	Mon.	Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm
Erie County Home—Inservice Room 11580 Walden Ave., Alden 14004	Wed.	Oct 15 – Nov.19 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Elderwood at Rosewood 76 Buffalo St., Hamburg 14075	Mon.	Oct. 20 – Nov. 24 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Dale Association 33 Ontario St., Lockport	Tues.	Oct. 28, Nov. 4 – 25, Dec. 2 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm
St. John’s Lutheran Church 3512 Clinton St., West Seneca	TBA	Spring ‘09



**Complete course cost is covered for all Independent Health and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of WNY health insurance members.*

Additional classes are being scheduled. For more information or to register, contact: Erie County Department of Senior Services at 858-2177 or e-mail: caregiver@erie.gov
Class listing is also on our website at: erie.gov/depts/seniorservices

Supported by a grant from the Community Health Foundation of Western and Central New York and co-sponsored by The University at Buffalo, School of Public Health and Health Professions and the Erie County Caregiver Coalition.

Caregiver Resource Center

Caregivers: This Day Is For You!



November 1, 2008
8:30 AM — 3:00 PM

Millennium Airport Hotel
2040 Walden Avenue
Cheektowaga

Workshop topics include:

- Stressed? Frustrated? Overwhelmed? Let's Talk!
- "Elder" Proofing Your Home
- Classic Caregiver Concerns & What To Do
- Dealing With Challenging Behaviors
- An Attorney Talks with Caregivers
- Sexuality & Intimacy in Dementia Care
- Coping with Personal Care Issues
- Home Activities for Loved Ones With Dementia
- Laughter: The New Stress Buster!
- Depression: What Caregivers Need to Know
- Keynote Speaker: Dr. Kenneth Garbarino
- Resource Tables with Local Vendors

Although there is no charge for this Workshop & Resource Day, **registration is required.**

To register please call:

(716) 858-2177

or e-mail

caregiver@erie.gov

Lunch and adult respite care will be provided at no charge.

Hosted by: Erie County Caregiver Coalition and
Kaleida Health Geriatric Ambulatory Program

If asked what long term care means, most people would say that it means the elderly and nursing homes. Although this is correct, you would be only partially right. Long term care encompasses a wide variety of services that assist individuals who may be having difficulty with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, feeding, etc. These services are not only for the elderly, but **for anyone of any age** requiring assistance.

If you have ever tried to get information on what types of long term care services are available, you know that it is a complicated and confusing system to navigate. Historically, long term care services have been administered by numerous agencies and funding sources, resulting in a fragmented system.

To make it easier for the public to access information about long term care, Erie County government has taken the lead in developing **Erie County NY Connects: Choices for Long Term Care**. This local initiative is part of the statewide NY Connects network of points of entry in each county. Erie County NY Connects provides individuals with a trusted resource offering **free information and assistance** on long term care services for persons of all ages provided in an unbiased manner without regard to income.

When an individual or caregiver contacts Erie County NY Connects, knowledgeable staff will assess the caller's situation. They then provide information and direct linkages to agencies that deliver services appropriate to the caller's needs and eligibility. Providers of services for disabled children and adults, as well as for senior citizens, work collaboratively to offer effective care to address an individual's specific needs.



By contacting Erie County NY Connects - **858-8526** for local calls (1-800-396-2705 for long distance calls) and e-mail inquiries at nyconnects@erie.gov - an individual or caregiver can obtain information on the multitude of services available to address long term care needs. Information can also be obtained through the website www.erie.gov/nyconnects.

Erie County NY Connects strives to improve the lives of those needing assistance through early intervention while allowing individuals to remain in the least restrictive setting. By providing information and assistance on long term care, Erie County NY Connects will make it easier for individuals to lead lives of independence, while promoting optimal health and dignity.

If you are an individual with a severe disability and require a **Handicapped Parking Permit**, contact the Erie County Office for the Disabled for an application at (716) 858-6215.

RSVP volunteer Lee Brunelli (pictured here with Commissioner Ward) was honored in Albany this past May as part of Older Americans Month for his 18+ years of Rural Transit work to keep our seniors independent in the community.

Rural Transit is a non-profit transportation service operated by volunteers to provide rides to seniors, low to moderate income individuals and disabled clients. Eligible residents are transported to dialysis, medical offices, pharmacies, work places, nutrition sites, adult day care, grocery stores, salons, etc. with medical trips taking priority. Trips are free, but donations are accepted. Rural Transit Service serves the following towns: Boston, Brant, Colden, Collins, Eden, Evans & North Collins at 549-5098; Orchard Park at 662-8378; Concord, Holland & Sardinia at 592-0088; Clarence & Newstead at 741-9709; Aurora, Elma, Marilla & Wales at 652-2527.



NUTRITION PROGRAM

ERIE COUNTY SENIOR FITNESS PROGRAM RECEIVES STRONG LOCAL SUPPORT AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Erie County Senior Fitness program is presented in conjunction with the STAY FIT Congregate Dining Program. The success of Erie County's Senior Fitness Program is exceeding the most optimistic projections... There are more than 3,000 senior citizens registered, and in any given week more than 1,000 actively participate in the group classes being held at selected dining sites located throughout Erie County. The lifeblood of the program is provided by Fitness Trainer Volunteers recruited through partnership between the Nutrition/Fitness Program and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). The good news for taxpayers is that the group fitness classes are being conducted by volunteers; therefore nationally this program is one of the most cost-efficient, cost-effective programs of its kind and has been honored with the ACHIEVEMENT IN AGING AWARD from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging "for notable contribution to the quality of life for older adults." The design and rationale for this successful, cost-effective program are being replicated in other states and recommended nationally:

2006 - Lenior Rhyne College / State of North Carolina Department of Senior Services
Lenoir Rhyne has replicated the Erie County Senior Fitness Program at senior centers throughout the state via a partnership between the State of North Carolina and Lenior Rhyne College. Exercise Science Students are being utilized as group fitness trainers, providing the added dimension of intergenerational interaction.

2007 - National Association of Area Agencies on Aging- Inclusion in National Directory of Best Practices

2008 - State of New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. Inclusion of the description of the Erie County Senior Fitness Program in the Senior Nutrition Programs: Directory of Promising Practices for Diverse Populations.

The feedback from program participants and response from the community are outstanding. In addition to grant and County funding, sponsorships including monetary donations have been forthcoming, and valuable partnerships have been formed. Contributions to the program have been given by Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the NYS Arthritis Foundation, and most recently, from Wegman's Supermarkets and the Amherst Rotary Club.



Don Lawrence, President of the Amherst Rotary Club presents a check for \$500 to Stay Fit Director Susan Radke and Senior Fitness Coordinator Richard Derwald



Ann McCarthy, Consumer Affairs Manager, Wegmans Supermarkets presents a check for \$4,000 to Commissioner Brenda Ward and Richard Derwald

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CLUB 99: PROMOTING LONG TERM HEALTH ASSURANCE

Healthier lifestyles coupled with advancements in medical and pharmaceutical sciences are constantly extending projected life expectancy. One of the faster growing demographic groups in the U.S. are those over the age of 100. Every passing day finds more and more people reaching this milestone birthday. Adding regular exercise classes for participants in STAY FIT DINING PROGRAM provides participants a balanced diet and regular exercise—two critical keys to good health and longevity. This combination of a healthy diet and exercise served as the basis for the formation of CLUB 99. The mission of CLUB 99 is to help all members attain optimal well-being by providing a wide array of no-cost services designed to enhance quality of life and help maintain physical independence. These **FREE services** include Fitness Training, Nutrition Education, Wellness Education, and Nutrition Counseling.

CLUB 99 - Do you qualify?

The only qualifications for membership in CLUB 99 are that you be 60 years of age or older and a registered participant in the Stay Fit Dining Program. Membership has two categories: pledge memberships ages 60 through 98 and full membership for those age 99 and above. The goal of Club 99 is to help ensure that members achieve full and active membership status.



CLUB 99 WANTS YOU

In Photo: Fitness Trainer Volunteers at the Clarence Senior Center
(front) Larry and Janet Vito (back) Gary and Mary Lou Lesser

For more information on
CLUB 99 call Richard at 858-6975.

For information on the Stay Fit Nutrition Program
and location sites call 858-7639.

Erie County Department of Senior Services
call 858- 8526.

University Express is an exciting partnership between Niagara University Continuing Education and RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) to bring stimulating academic classes to older adults. Open to anyone 60 or older. No Homework. No Tests. Stimulating Discussion !!

For a detailed listing of what each course is about, call RSVP at 858-7548
or go to www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices to download it.

RSVP
Getting Things Done.

Smile Power! Tuesday, Sept. 30 10 - 11:30 am at SA. FREE

Buffalo's Wild Winter Weather

- Tuesday, Sept. 30 10:30 am at CH. FREE
- Thursday, Nov. 6 8:00 pm at CW. FREE



Great Decisions Series: Iraq End Game; European Union at 50; Border and Homeland Security; China-US Trade Policy Series of four starts Oct. 2 3 - 4:30 pm at OP \$15 series of four / \$5 each

1 Friday, 4 Futures: A Discussion about Healthcare

- Friday, Oct. 3 1 - 2:30 pm at OP. FREE
- Saturday, Oct. 18 10:30 am - noon at NU. FREE
- Thursday, Oct. 23 10:30 am - noon at CH. FREE
- Tuesday, Oct. 28 10 - 11:30 am at SA. FREE

Senior Financial Management for Boomers and Beyond

- Friday, Oct. 17 1:00 pm at OP. FREE
- Monday, Oct. 20 1:00 pm at EA. FREE
- Thursday, Nov. 6 10:00 am at SA. FREE
- Monday, Nov. 10 10:30 am at CH. FREE

Shea's Performing Arts Center

Wednesday, Oct. 22 10:30 am at Shea's FREE

Grover Cleveland—Saint or Sinner

Monday, Oct. 27 1:00 pm at EA. FREE

Renewal: Spirituality & Environmental Action

Wednesday, Nov. 5, 12 and 26 at WC at 1:30. FREE

How to Be A Good Friend Friday, Nov. 14 1 pm at OP FREE

Wind Potential of the Great Lakes

- Saturday, Nov. 15 10:30 am at NU. FREE
- Monday, Nov. 17 8:00 pm at CW. FREE

Hull House & Hull Family

- Monday, Nov. 17 1:00 pm at EA. FREE
- Wednesday, Nov. 19 1:30 at WC. FREE

Registration should be made directly to each site hosting the class:

CW = Canterbury Woods,
705 Renaissance Dr., Williamsville
929-5823

CH = Cheektowaga Sr. Ctr.
3349 Broadway, 686-3930

EA = Town of Aurora Sr. Ctr.,
101 King St., East Aurora 652-7934

NU = Niagara University,
Dunleavy Hall 716-286-8181

OP = Orchard Park Sr. Ctr.,
70 Linwood Ave., 662-6452

SA = Salvation Army Golden Age
Center, 960 Main St. in Buffalo
883-9800 x 261

Sheas = Shea's Theater, Main St.
829-1155

WC = Weinberg Campus,
2700 N. Forest, 639-3311 ext 2473

As the number of seniors grows, so does the need for our vast array of services. The Department of Senior Services encourages and appreciates donations. If you are in a position to do so, please fill out the form below. 100% of your contribution will be used to provide direct service to an older adult in need. **Thank you!!!!**

I designate my donation of \$ _____ for:

_____ Newsletter

_____ Caregiver Education and Services

_____ Transportation

_____ In-home Services

_____ **Use where most needed**

_____ Home-delivered meals

_____ Adult day services

_____ Health Promotion

Mail to:

Erie County Department of Senior Services
95 Franklin St., Rm. 1329
Buffalo, NY 14202

Please make check payable to:
Erie County Department of Senior Services.
Your check is your receipt.

Findings of 2007 Needs Assessment

Every 4 years, the Department of Senior Services seeks to identify the needs of older adults. 2007 included a general needs assessment survey administered to senior citizens, focus groups comprised of members of senior centers representing diverse communities, and a survey of employees/staff from businesses and organizations that provide services to older adults. A brief summary of the findings is as follows:

General Needs Assessment Survey: Completed by 2,106 Seniors (34% from City of Buffalo, 26% from Cheektowaga, Tonawanda, and Hamburg). 57% of respondents were age 75+, and 20% were age 85+. 72% of respondents indicated they were not a caregiver, while 8% indicated they were a caregiver for someone 60+. Another 7% responded that they were a caregiver of their spouse.

Performing household chores (snow shoveling, lawn mowing, minor repairs) and finding reliable help to perform these tasks were the two greatest problems reported by these survey respondents. Knowing where to turn for information regarding benefits and services ranked third highest.

Focus Groups:

Transportation, safety, and healthcare were the top three issues that seniors face in their community.

Participants stated they wanted a higher police presence in their neighborhoods in combating crime.

Elder abuse was an issue that was either unreported, under-reported, or did not occur. Participants stated that this subject was often not discussed openly in their communities.

Service Provider Survey: response rate was 43% of the 429 people who received the survey. Service providers stated that transportation for those seniors who do not use public transportation, personal care for those with limitations in their activities of daily living, and quality affordable health care are the greatest challenges that seniors face in the community.

Next issue of *60 Plus* is expected late March/early April 2009

Go to www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices to read the newsletter on-line
or to find a vendor location listed by zip code, or call 858-2117.

Our sincere thanks to all those who make this newsletter available.



ERIE COUNTY 60 PLUS

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of Senior Services

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Brenda W. Ward
Commissioner

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From the County Executive...



County Executive
Chris Collins

Last year, Senior HEAP helped over 23,000 seniors! So with the season's expected higher utility charges, I am happy to share the news that early HEAP application mail out for Senior Citizens who received HEAP in 07-08 commences August 25, 2008 and runs throughout the month of September. If you received HEAP assistance during the 07-08 season and you do not receive an application for 08-09 HEAP in the mail by mid-October, please call the HEAP hotline at 858-7870 to request an application.

The early mail out does NOT include senior citizens in receipt of Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance, as those clients will generally receive the regular HEAP benefit automatically without the need for a mail-in

application. Eligibility letters for these clients are usually issued in November or December, and benefits are generally

credited to heating bills in December or January.

Eligibility for this federal program is based on household income, not the amount of your utility bill. Please apply as soon as possible, and detailed information is at www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices. Income guidelines for the 2008-2009 season are at the right. The 2008-09 HEAP season opens for Emergency Assistance interviews on November 3, 2008.

Household Size	Maximum Monthly Income
1	\$1,963
2	\$2,567
3	\$3,172
4	\$3,776
5	\$4,380
6	\$4,984