

Also Inside this Issue....

Erie County NY Connects	3
Long Term Care & Aging in Place	4
Caregiver News	5-6
Nutrition News	7-8
Elder Abuse	9
Lifelong Learning for Seniors This Fall	10

60 PLUS



Be Heard at the Public Hearing— Nov. 9 at Schiller Park Senior Center

Erie County Dept. of Senior Services will hold a Public Hearing on Friday, November 9th at 1:00 pm (following Stay Fit Dining lunch - call 895-2727 to make lunch reservation) at the Schiller Park Senior Center, 2057 Genesee St., Buffalo, NY 14211. The Department will have a draft version of the 2008 service delivery plan, as well as a four-year plan, available mid-October at www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices. With one out of five residents in Erie County being over the age of 60, the public hearing is an opportunity to express your opinions about priorities and concerns as Senior Services seeks to promote the most efficient use of existing resources and to promote benefits to the elderly. We are particularly interested in hearing from people who have used County-provided services such as Stay Fit Dining, Going Places Transportation, the Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program, case management or caregiver assistance, or any other programs. To register to speak, or if you'd like to review the draft abstract without internet access prior to the Hearing, call Senior Services at 858-8544.

Mark Your Calendar ...

Oct. 10 Aging in Place
9 am - Noon FREE at
Town of Tonawanda Sr.
Ctr., 291 Ensminger Rd.,
Tonawanda 14150 pg. 4

Oct. 13 Caregiver: This
Day Is For You—see pg. 5

Oct. 15-16 After 50 Lovin'
Life Expo at Hearthstone
Manor 10am-3pm

Oct. 25 Forever Young
Expo at Classics V Banquet
Center 9am-2pm

Nov. 6 Exercise your right
to vote for the candidate of
your choice!

Nov. 9 1:00 pm - Public
Hearing, Schiller Senior
Center, 2057 Genesee St.,
Buffalo

Message From the Commissioner...

As I put pen to paper, or in this case fingers to keyboard, a wonderful summer season is drawing to a close. All the “Back to School” sales make me think about the initial homework assignment given to most students as they return to their classes – Write an essay on “How I spent my summer vacation.”

This year, for me there were no travels to exotic foreign lands; instead I chose to discover local hidden treasures. Being a home-grown, lifetime resident of Buffalo and Erie County, I found many fascinating places to visit right in our backyard! A simple walk in a local park or nature trail; a visit to Niagara Falls and the Power Vista; listening to the soothing sounds of the Philharmonic on a warm summer evening at Artpark; actually the list is endless. Although I have visited some sites in the past, I began to take them for granted. Too often we fail to appreciate the wealth of history, beauty and inexpensive fun activities for which other tourists often flock to Western New York.

I found myself looking to the skies more than ever....breath-taking blue skies, or the graceful flight of an osprey or a blue heron seeking its dinner by a stream.



Commissioner
Pamela M. Krawczyk

(Continued on page 2)

Creative juices don't dry up with age, as these elder achievers reveal:

MICHELANGELO:

Completed his final frescoes in the Vatican's Pauline Chapel at 75.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN:

Invented bifocal glasses at 78 to help correct his own poor vision.

GIUSEPPE VERDI:

Finished 'Falstaff,' his final opera, just eight months shy of his 80th birthday.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE:

Continued painting well into her 90s, despite failing eyesight.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT:

Worked on the Guggenheim Museum until his death at the age of 91.

MARTHA GRAHAM:

Danced until 76, then kept choreographing 20 years longer.

One evening, away from the lights of the city, I was fascinated by the brilliance of the stars and planets.. a humbling experience to realize how small I was in comparison to the vast universe. Carl Sagan, American astronomer and astrobiologist, once said *"For most of human history we have searched for our place in the cosmos. Who are we? What are we? We find that we inhabit an insignificant planet of a hum-drum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people."*

Hearing this quote alone would be not only humbling, but somewhat disheartening to think of ourselves as being less than significant. But Carl also went on to say that we have a choice: We can view our planet as a *"fragile blue crescent fading to become an inconspicuous point of light against the bastion and citadel of the stars"* or we can continue to survive, grow and prosper because *"we've also acquired compassion for others, love for our children and desire to learn from history and experience, and a great soaring passionate intelligence."*

Throughout Erie County there are many great treasures we take for granted, especially our older adults whom I refer to as our greatest natural resource. While some individuals may choose to "fade away" in their golden years, I have found that most individuals shine brighter than any star in the galaxy when they advance in age, gain wisdom and become more creative!

Some choose to continue to work, pursue a new career, or volunteer their time to help others in the community. Having extra time in their retirement years may spark many to continue their education, explore a passion or discover a hidden talent. Never assume your best work is behind you.

According to Dr. Gene Cohen, author of "The Creative Age" and director of the Center on Aging, Health and Humanities at George Washington University, creativity often peaks in our later years. For the last three years he has been conducting a study of 300 senior citizens. Half are participating in community-based arts programs, while the others serve as a control group. The members of the arts group make fewer visits to

the doctor, fall less often, use less medication and are less likely to be depressed than the control group. Why? "You have a personal sense of mastery," says Cohen. Other studies have shown similar results. "If you look at something called practical creativity—solving everyday problems you have in life—that peaks later." Sometimes much later, as in the case of Ben Franklin, who at 78 invented the world's first bifocals for himself.

What hidden treasures do you possess? Have you buried them? Maybe it is time to find your niche in the Cosmos. **You are never too old to learn, grow, create, love and live!**



What is Erie County NY Connects?

A trusted resource that provides free information on long term care for persons of all ages in Erie County.

Who should call Erie County NY Connects?

Anyone who needs long term care information and services:

- A child or adult with a disability, or an older adult;
- Family members
- Helping professionals

What kind of help can I get from Erie County NY Connects?

Objective and unbiased information about many kinds of services, including:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| - Home delivered meals | - Care management |
| - Respite care | - Home health care |
| - Assisted living | - <i>Plus many more</i> |

We can also let you know who provides those services and how to get in touch with the service providers. For more information or to discuss your particular situation, contact us.

Erie County NY Connects:

**Telephone: 716-858-8582 (local calls)
1-800-396-2705 (toll-free long distance)**

Email: nyconnects@erie.gov

Website: www.erie.gov/nyconnects

The anniversary of the “October Storm” is here—Have you followed through on your intentions to be better prepared for emergencies? Do you have a personal emergency plan? Have you gathered supplies, made lists, determined a course of action? Go to www.buffaloredcross.org/files/images/communitypack.pdf to download information, or call Senior Services at 858-8526 to request your Emergency Planning Document.

IMPORTANT!! Flu season is approaching... secure your flu vaccine now, but it isn't too late to vaccinate into February. Make sure you are up-to-date with ALL your immunizations. **YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD FOR VACCINES!!** For more information, visit www.immunizewny.org or call 447-6205.

With the cost of nursing homes and in-home care nearly bankrupting seniors, planning for long-term care is essential for New Yorkers who are age 40 and over. Erie County Senior Services' offers individuals and groups **FREE** and impartial information on how to meet these costs. Many people are surprised to find that traditional health and disability insurances and Medicare do not typically cover long-term care services. Senior Services' Insurance Resource Center does not sell insurance policies. We focus strictly on education and planning. We explain the costs of long-term care, how Medicare and Medicaid fit into the picture, and the value of considering long term care insurance which may protect your assets, with a special emphasis on New York State Partnership policies.

For adults who are retired, thinking about retiring, or simply looking to plan ahead, **group education sessions** or **one-on-one personal counseling** can be scheduled. They help individuals who are not sure where to begin or need assistance evaluating proposals. For more information, call (716) 858-7883.

It's never too early to start learning about Long-Term Care insurance and options available. More information about long term care planning is available at www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/health/long_term_care.asp

Did You Know ...

Nursing homes often cost well over \$90,000 a year??

About 44% of Americans 65 and older will enter a nursing home at least once in their lifetime, and more than 1/2 of them stay for at least a year?*

Average length of a nursing home stay is 2½ years??

* "New Estimates of Lifetime Nursing Home Use" Medical Care 2002, Urban Institute, October 2002;40(10) 965-967

FREE Aging in Place Event on Oct. 10 9 am to noon

“Aging in Place” refers to the fact that people often can stay in their existing homes safely as they age, especially with the help of local professionals to help plan and implement any lifestyle changes to overcome environmental challenges. On Wednesday, Oct. 10, Senior Services joins with other partners in inviting you to a FREE information and resource fair from at the Town of Tonawanda Senior Center, 291 Ensminger Rd. This event brings together varied partners able to help you “age in place”: healthcare and respite providers, transportation services, insurance and financial planning advisors, design and remodeling experts, housing and supportive service providers, financial institutions who can offer many options including reverse mortgages, and many other service providers. Free refreshments will be available, as well as raffle chances - Please call Karen Johnson at 204-1508 to pre-register.

Are you a senior living alone? Do you have a family member that could use someone to socialize with? Do you have neighbors that you worry about because they are homebound?

The American Red Cross, Greater Buffalo Chapter is excited to announce the expansion of their Services to Seniors Department to include the **Telephone Assurance Program (TAP)**, which provides friendly check-in calls to frail, homebound seniors in our community. Members receive calls from volunteers on an agreed upon schedule ranging from once a week to daily. The service is free and available to any Erie County senior over the age of 60. The TAP Program works to eliminate some of the concerns faced by seniors who live alone, allowing them to remain independent. The TAP Program also provides a unique opportunity for seniors to make an impact on others by sharing their time and wisdom with a new friend. Want to get involved? TAP is looking for additional members and volunteers—for more information, please call the TAP office at 716-878-2234.

Seeking Nominations for 6th Annual Caregiver of the Year Award

This award, from the Office of the Erie County Executive, recognizes the dedication of caregivers in general, and each year honors the personal efforts of one caregiver or caregiving family in Erie County.

We are looking for a caregiver who:

- Resides in Erie County
- Cares for a family member or friend over age 60
- Uses community-based services to help with caregiving responsibilities
- Understands the importance of “caring for the caregiver” and finds ways to have his/her own needs met while caring for a loved one
- Is a role model for other family caregivers

The award will be presented in November, National Family Caregiver Month.

To Nominate a Caregiver:

1. Ask the caregiver’s permission to submit their name
2. Write a one page summary of the caregiving situation, including:
 - A. Caregiver name, address, phone, e-mail address
 - B. Who the care receiver is and the tasks with which the caregiver helps
 - C. How caregiving impacts on the life of the caregiver
 - D. How the caregiver balances responsibilities and meets his/her own needs
 - E. What community-based services are used
 - F. Any other related information you think we should know

Deadline for Nominations: October 31, 2007.

Send nominations to Miriam Callahan, Erie County Senior Services Caregiver Resource Center, 95 Franklin St., Rm. 1301, Buffalo, NY 14202 or e-mail to: caregiver@erie.gov

Caregivers: This Day is for You!

October 13, 2007, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Millennium Airport Hotel, 2040 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga

Register for this annual **FREE DAY** of workshops and caregiver information, sponsored by the Erie County Caregiver Coalition and Kaleida Health Geriatric Ambulatory Program. Topics include: home safety tips, activities for those with dementia, dealing with difficult behaviors, classic caregiver concerns, ways to improve caregiver coping skills, end of life issues, personal care issues, handling difficult emotions and important legal documents. **Reservations are required:** Call 858-2177 or e-mail: caregiver@erie.gov. Lunch and materials are provided.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Classes

Classes for People Helping Older Relatives or Friends

A six-week educational program designed to provide caregivers with 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 email 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**



Elderwood at Rosewood 76 Buffalo St., Hamburg	Tues.	Oct. 9 – 30, Nov. 13, 20 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
St. John's Lutheran Church 3512 Clinton St., West Seneca	Tues.	Oct. 9 – Nov. 13, 2007 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Kenmore United Methodist Church 32 Landers Rd., Kenmore	Tues.	Oct. 16 – Nov. 20 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
VA of WNY – Room 412B 3495 Bailey Ave., Buffalo	Mon.	Oct. 29, Nov. 5, 19, 26, Dec. 3, 10 12 pm – 2:30 pm
American Red Cross – Room 4 Blood Services Bldg. 786 Delaware Ave., Buffalo	Fri.	Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30 & Dec. 7, 14, 2007 10 am – 12:30 pm
Elderwood At Glenwood 5271 Main S., Williamsville	Mon.	Nov. 5—Dec. 10, 2007 6:00 pm—8:30 pm



Additional classes are being scheduled.
For more information or to register, contact:
Erie County Department of Senior Services at
(716) 858-2177
or e-mail: caregiver@erie.gov
Class listing is also on our website at
www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices

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

NUTRITION PROGRAM

STAY FIT DINING

By Susan J. Radke RD, CDN, Nutrition Program Director & Richard Derwald, Fitness Trainer

Changing With the Times – Nutrition Program

Nutritious meals, portion sizes, the Food Pyramid, and exercise all play an important role in the “Stay Fit Dining Program.”

Since its inception more than 33 years ago, the Nutrition Program for Seniors has evolved through improving menus and food quality, expanded nutrition education and presentations, and by incorporating a regular exercise component.

Stay Fit menus are calculated to provide 1/3rd of the Recommended Daily Allowance for Seniors. Included daily is a good food source of Vitamin C, and the inclusion of Vitamin A three times a week. The total caloric needs for seniors are taken into consideration as well as the way meals are prepared. Foods are never deep fried or heavily breaded or heavily spiced. Meals for seniors on special diets are also provided. The nutrient content of every recipe and every food item is checked using a state-of-the-art computer analysis of all ingredients including: weight of a food item, calories, protein, carbohydrates, fiber, cholesterol, fat, and sodium. Menus are adjusted according to the results of the analysis to provide the most nutrient dense and flavorful meals available.

Portion sizes play an important role in the caloric levels. Many times seniors ask for a larger serving or a smaller serving of a particular food item, not realizing that Stay Fit portion sizes are regulated to provide the precise number of calories in the correct amounts that a senior needs. (No super-size Big Macs on our menus!)

In addition to our planned menus, our professional nutrition staff provides Nutrition Education on an on-going basis with topics such as: Food Safety, Zinc, Calcium Rich Foods, Healthy Eating for the Holidays, Diet Foods, Shelf-Life of Foods, as well as cooking demonstrations on healthy baking.

All information on menus, dining sites and nutrition education can be found on our web site: www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/health/nutrition_dining.asp

The New Food Pyramid, available at www.MyPyramid.gov “Steps to a Healthier You”, shows exercise as an integral component of health, wellness and nutrition and a way to improve your physical well being.

**Call 858-7639
for more information
on the Stay Fit Dining site
near you!**



NUTRITION PROGRAM

STAY FIT DINING

A BALANCED DIET + EXERCISE = PERFECT RECIPE FOR GOOD HEALTH

As the name implies, Erie County STAY FIT DINING was designed and developed for all county residents over the age of 60, offering them a program that ensures access to the major components of health: balanced nutrition and physical activity. Group exercises improve your strength and flexibility, with special emphasis on improving your balance, thereby reducing the risk of falling.

FREE OF CHARGE

Every participant in group fitness classes receives a FREE latex resistance exercise band and an illustrated instruction booklet. Find a participating dining site near you & call regarding the days and times of the senior fitness classes. Invest your time in a better life – no down payment.

Site Name	Address	Phone
Akron-Newstead Senior Citizen (Silver Sneakers)	5691 Cummings Rd., Akron 14001	542-6645
Autumnwood Senior Center	1800 Clinton St., Buffalo 14206	826-7895
Baptist Manor	276 Linwood Ave., Buffalo 14209	819-1820
Bell Tower (Senior Apartments)	42 Haley Lane, Cheektowaga 14227	656-7186
Blasdell (Lilly Housing Dev.)	36 Arthur Ave., Blasdell 14219	827-0245
Boston Senior Citizen Center	8500 Boston State Rd., Boston 14025	941-5773
Buffalo Urban League	86 Pine Street St., Buffalo 14204	847-8951
Clarence Senior Citizen Center	4600 Thompson Rd., Clarence 14031	633-5138
Infant of Prague	921 Cleveland Dr., Buffalo 14225	632-9632 / 9574
Kenmore Senior Nutrition Program	135 Wilbur Ave., Kenmore 14217	873-7500
Lackawanna Senior Center	230 Martin Rd., Lackawanna 14218	827-6669
Maryvale East Senior Complex (Moorman)	100 Moorman Dr., Cheektowaga 14225	593-1190
Moot Senior Center	292 High St., Buffalo 14204	882-4637
North Buffalo Community Center	203 Sanders Rd., Buffalo 14216	874-6133 x14
Northwest Buffalo Community Center	155 Lawn Ave., Buffalo 14207	876-8108 x17
Orchard Park Senior Center	70 Linwood Ave., Orchard Park 14127	662-8378
Second Baptist Church	18 Church St. Lackawanna 14218	826-4940
Sloan Senior Center	140 Halstead St., Sloan 14212	897-1389
Southwind Landing	5074 Transit Rd., Depew 14043	206-0281
Town of Evans Senior Center	999 Sturgeon Rd. , Derby 14047	947-0974
West Seneca Senior Center (Health Club fee)	4620 Seneca St., West Seneca 14224	675-9288



Jacky Goodwin (front), Registered Dietetic Technician and Fitness Trainer with the enthusiastic Senior Fitness Class at the Northwest Community Center located on 155 Lawn Avenue in the Riverside section of Buffalo. Give the fitness group near you a try—it's free, easy, and most of all, enjoyable!

On June 15, 100+ people learned more about ageism, elder abuse, and prevention. As part of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day activities, keynote speaker Deborah Waldrop, PhD, University at Buffalo School of Social Work, examined the prevalence of discriminatory behaviors and language in American culture...from how people so easily feel free to call an older person “sweetie” or “dear” without having any personal relationship with them, to assuming that anyone with gray hair is eligible for a “senior discount.” While not inherently evil, these behaviors are indicative of ageism, a form of discrimination, attitude, stereotyping, or prejudice as blatant and repugnant as any other. Whether battling "old geezer" stereotypes or trying to obtain equal standing in the workplace, people 60 or older all too often find themselves the victims of ageism. Ageism is not always obvious. You may not even be aware it's happening, but it may result in you receiving different treatment.



Dr. Deborah Waldrop speaks about ageism and age discrimination

A panel discussion brought together numerous disciplines (elder law attorneys, domestic violence and protective services agencies, geriatric nurse practitioners, victim advocates, social workers, and law enforcement officers) to discuss varied aspects of elder abuse, answering audience questions. Several agencies shared real case stories about abuse and how different situations are resolved. The sister of one gentleman spoke about her brother’s case of self neglect, and shared her point of view as someone who didn’t know where to turn, but now is an advocate about the services and programs that can help.

Elder abuse takes many forms:

Physical Abuse - non-accidental use of force that results in bodily injury, pain or impairment.

Sexual Abuse - Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind, including touching inappropriately, molestation, or forced sexual relations.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse - willful infliction of mental or emotional anguish by threat, humiliation, intimidation, threatening or other abusive conduct, including isolating the adult.

Financial Exploitation - a broad spectrum of conduct, including taking money or property, forging a signature, as well as cons and scams. It also includes getting an older person to sign a deed, will, or power of attorney through deception, coercion, or undue influence; using the older person's property or possessions without permission; or promising lifelong care in exchange for money or property and not following through on the promise.

Neglect - Failure of a responsible relative or caregiver to meet a dependent older person's basic need for food, shelter or medical care. Neglect can also include self-neglect (inability due to physical and/or mental impairments to perform tasks essential to caring for oneself).

If you or someone you know has questions about elder abuse or needs help, please call **Senior Services Protective Services for Older Adults at 858-6877**. Speakers are also available for group presentations.

**800 - 1,500 cases
of elder abuse are
reported in
Erie County
every year.**

Lifelong Learning Offers Fall Classes for Older Adults

Lifelong Learning courses are open to ALL Erie County residents age 60 or older, with no tests, just stimulating discussion!! **Classes start as early as mid-September, with low tuition, or even FREE!** Courses are specially designed for the older adult learner, held at locations with adequate and free parking. Instructors are retired faculty, professors, or experts in their field. A variety of topics are covered this semester, and locations include: Town of Aurora Senior Center, Jewish Community Center in Amherst, Cheektowaga Senior Center, Clarence Senior Center, Salvation Army Center in Buffalo, and Orchard Park Senior Center.

Film Studies: Dracula on the Big Screen Course fee \$5

Wisdom from Our Elders Course fee \$15

A Modern Masterpiece of Calligraphy – The St. John's Bible Project FREE

Children of our Own War: A Boy's Journey FREE

Germany Today Course fee \$15

Elbert Hubbard and his Roycroft Enterprise Two locations FREE

Frank Lloyd Wright FREE

WNY Historic Sites FREE

The Canal ExpERIENCE FREE

Prepared and Ready Multiple locations. FREE

Toxins and the Great Lakes Basin

Several locations FREE

Wind Energy: What the World Needs Now
FREE

Wild Plants You Can Eat FREE

Preserve Planet Earth FREE

DNA: The Secret of Life FREE

Terror and Terrorists Course fee \$15

International War Crimes FREE

GREAT DECISIONS SERIES—\$15 for the series: This semester, topics include: Mexico; Refugees and Migration; Middle East; and War Crimes.

A complete and detailed multi-page listing of schedule information is available.

Call RSVP at 858-7548 to have it mailed, or download from www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/pdfs/lifelong_learning.pdf Registration is made directly to the respective location.



Lifelong Learning Classes offer older adults stimulating and interesting, educational conversation in a friendly environment. These students were learning about topography in an earlier semester.

If You Can Drive, You Can Help—The WNY Transportation Collaborative seeks volunteer drivers to assist varied organizations - delivering food supplies, delivering blood supplies, transporting people to and from appointments. Call Central Referral at 851-5555 for more information.

Thank You For Your Support and Generosity

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.

(Erie County Executive Advises Residents of HEAP continued from Pg. 12)

tion. Please visit the Senior Services website www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices for detailed information. This season, Emergency HEAP benefits for those with a shut off notice or low fuel supply cannot be accessed until Regular HEAP is exhausted. Emergency benefits applications require a face to face interview. The HEAP office will open for interviews on November 1st.

2007-2008 HEAP eligibility guidelines are:

Household Size	Monthly Maximum Income
1	\$1,876
2	\$2,454
3	\$3,031
4	\$3,609
5	\$4,186
6	\$4,763

For HEAP questions or information, please call the Senior HEAP hotline at 858-7870. For more information about the wide range of programs and services the Department of Senior Services offers to meet the present and future needs of seniors and their families, please call 858-8526.

“Passport to Wellness” Program

is an on-going series of guided walks to provide fun and safe walking opportunities for adults 50+. Come for one, two, or all...

9/28 Isle View Park, Tonawanda

10/5 Dr. Victor Reinstein Woods and Nature Preserve, Depew

10/12 Kleinhans Music Hall, architectural tour down Richmond Ave. and Coffee Concert Special

10/19 Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo

10/26 Delaware Park Rose Garden, Buffalo

For information and to register, call **851-4052. Starting times vary with this series.**

www.beactiveNYS.org

Next issue of *60 Plus* is expected late March/early April 2008

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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From the County Executive...



County Executive
Joel A. Giambra

Erie County senior residents are invited to apply as early as possible for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefit. HEAP is a federally funded program designed to help eligible households with the cost of home heating. In August, New York State directly mailed applications for the upcoming 2007-08 HEAP season to Seniors

who received HEAP last season. However, Seniors in receipt of Temporary Assistance and/or Food Stamps need not file an application. As always, HEAP benefits for recipients of TA and/or FS are calculated automatically and will appear on their heating bill in December or January.

HEAP benefits are based on household

monthly income, not on the amount of the utility bill. Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible and not wait until heating bills climb as winter sets in. Applicants are also encouraged not to wait for updated income information (such as a yearly Social Security award letter or yearly tax statements reflecting bank account interest income) and may apply using the same income information they provided last season if it is the most current they possess. Benefits range from \$40 (for those with heat included in rent), to \$540 (for those who pay heating bills directly). September and October are dedicated to processing Senior mail in applications, but utility companies will not be notified of HEAP benefits amounts until HEAP formally opens in November.

Seniors age 60 or older who did not receive an application in late August, or who are first time applicants, may call the **Senior HEAP Hotline at 858-7870 after October 1st** to request an applica-

(Continued on page 11)