



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Getting the Most Out of Your Senior Years

PATTY RITCHIE August 31, 2012

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From picnics to parades, this summer I have had the privilege of meeting a number of our region's senior citizens at events throughout Central and Northern New York.

At these events, one thing stood out. Many of our area's senior citizens are in their prime—still living very active lifestyles.

During the months of September and October, I'll be doing my part to ensure that senior citizens not only stay active, but that they stay healthy and happy too.

I'll be hosting Senior Health and Wellness Fairs to offer senior citizens access to a variety of organizations and tools that help promote healthy living.

From getting your blood pressure checked, to learning about how to incorporate exercise into your daily routine, the fairs will be one-stop shops for anyone looking to improve their well-being and get the most out of life.

In Jefferson County, the Senior Health and Wellness Fair will be held at Watertown's Alex T. Duffy Fairgrounds Arena on Wednesday September 12<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

In St. Lawrence County, the event will be at Ogdensburg's Odd Fellows Hall, located at 1111 Linden St. on Wednesday October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

My Oswego County Senior Health and Wellness Fair will be held at Fulton's War Memorial, located at 609 West Broadway on Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Last year hundreds of people attended fairs in Jefferson and Oswego Counties, visiting more than 50 exhibitors in each location who offered flu shots, free health screenings and more.

If you're interested in attending, please click [here](#) to preregister.

But, these events aren't the only way I'm working to help make life better for New York's senior citizens.

If you're a senior citizen, cuts to EPIC benefits may have left you struggling to pay for the medicines you need to stay healthy. I'm pleased to say that I worked to reverse those cuts, and beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, EPIC will once again cover the cost of Medicare Part B co-payments.

Another one of my priorities over the past two years has been helping seniors qualify for Enhanced STAR rebates, which provide extra annual school tax savings for senior homeowners.

I am continuing to fight to restore STAR Rebates. Before it was cancelled in 2009, the program delivered rebate checks averaging up to \$529 to homeowners in Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties.

In June, the Senate unanimously passed a bipartisan bill to restore STAR rebates to homeowners in two phases—first to senior homeowners, and then for all homeowners in 2014. Unfortunately, the measure did not come to a vote in the Assembly.

I look forward to continuing to support New York's seniors by working towards changes that will make living in our state easier, and hope to meet more of our area's seniors at my health and wellness fairs scheduled throughout Central and Northern New York.