



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Nearly 300 Seniors Attend Ritchie Senior Health and Wellness Fair

PATTY RITCHIE | October 11, 2012

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### **Special Guest Aging Committee Chair Senator David Valesky on Hand for EPIC Q&A Forum**

Nearly 300 Central New York seniors packed Fulton's War Memorial on Thursday, taking part in State Senator Patty Ritchie's Senior Health and Wellness Fair, which was co-hosted by Assemblyman Will Barclay.

Special guest Senator David Valesky, Chair of the Senate's Aging Committee, was on hand at the event for a Q&A session on EPIC, the newly restored program which helps low-income seniors—including more than 10,000 in Senator Ritchie's district—with the cost of their prescription drugs.

"For seniors, a huge part of staying healthy is making sure you have the prescription drugs you need," said Senator Ritchie.

"EPIC is a great program that helps make vital medications more affordable for seniors, but it's a program that can also be confusing for many. I'd like to thank Senator Valesky for lending his time and knowledge today to answer some of the questions Central New York seniors have on this very important program."

Senator Ritchie worked with Senator Valesky and Governor Cuomo to restore funds to EPIC in the past two State Budgets and the program will once again cover co-pays for prescription medications beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>.

In addition to the EPIC Q&A, the Senior Health and Wellness Fair also featured more than 60 exhibitors, a free lunch and entertainment by the area band “Anybody’s Guess.”

“Many seniors don’t realize there are so many resources right in their backyard that can help them continue to lead healthy and active lifestyles,” said Senator Ritchie.

“This event was not only a chance for seniors to access information on how to improve their well-being, but also an opportunity for people to get out, see their friends and share their thoughts with me about how to improve life in New York State.”

“This event was a great opportunity for seniors to learn about the region’s health care services, how to prevent diseases, and how to assist loved ones who are struggling with an illness or addiction,” said Assemblyman Will Barclay.

“Studies have shown that the world’s population of people 60 years of age and older has doubled since 1980 and will reach 2 billion by 2050. These types of outreach events help put people in touch with the services they need.”

Senator Ritchie also recently hosted Senior Health and Wellness Fairs in Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, where more than 1,000 seniors had the opportunity to access information and services promoting good health.

*(Pictured from left to right in the above photo are Aging Committee Chair Senator David Valesky, Senator Patty Ritchie, Senior Volunteer of the Year Linda Buckley and Assemblyman Will Barclay)*