



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Seniors: Mark Your Calendars!

PATTY RITCHIE September 8, 2014

| ISSUE: **AGING, SENIOR CENTERS, EPIC (ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE PROGRAM), SENIORS**

Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

As fall approaches, there's one thing I always look forward to—my annual round of Senior Fairs in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties. Offering food, fun and tips for living a healthy and active lifestyle in your “golden years,” these events attract thousands of local residents and dozens of local businesses and organizations annually.

If you're a senior looking to join in on the fun, mark your calendar for the following dates:

September 24th

What: Oswego County Senior Health and Wellness Fair

Where: Fulton Ice Arena (605 W. Broadway Street, Fulton)

When: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

October 1st

What: Jefferson County Senior Health and Wellness Fair

Where: Bruce M. Wright Memorial Conference Center (1291 Faichney Drive, Watertown)

When: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

October 15th

What: St. Lawrence County Senior Health and Wellness Fair

Where: Ogdensburg Oddfellows Hall (1111 Linden Street Ogdensburg)

When: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

My health and wellness fairs are just part of the work I'm doing to support our region's seniors. Here's a look at some of the initiatives aimed at creating improving the well-being of people as they age:

Expanding EPIC: For the first time since 2001, in the new State Budget, income eligibility for EPIC was expanded from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for singles and from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for married seniors—a very important change for the nearly 10,000 seniors in our region who take advantage of this program.

Support for STAR: Also included in the new State Budget was a record \$3.4 billion for the STAR property tax relief program. By fully funding STAR and Enhanced STAR, which helps seniors, we delivered major tax relief to millions of New Yorkers.

A safe way to dispose of unwanted meds: Most people—especially seniors—have unused, expired or unwanted prescription drugs in their medicine cabinets. That's why I've hosted several "Shed the Meds" events throughout Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, providing residents with a safe, responsible way to get rid of prescription drugs. So far, more than 300 pounds of medications have been disposed of. Later this month, I'll be hosting one additional "Shed the Meds" event, taking place from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on September 16th at Gouverneur Hospital.

In the days to come, be sure to keep an eye on your mailbox for more information on my upcoming Senior Health and Wellness Fairs. In the meantime, don't forget to mark your calendar to join me for free health checks, information on healthier living and so much more. Hope to see you there!