

For Immediate Release

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October 18, 2025

Live Well Erie’s “Retreat, Refresh & Restore” Brings Older Adults Together for a Day of Learning, Wellness & Community

Erie County, NY — October 18, 2025 — Live Well Erie successfully hosted its annual “Retreat, Refresh & Restore” event for older adults on Saturday, October 18, 2025, welcoming 200 participants from across Erie County for a full day of connection, education, and wellness.

The retreat, held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., offered an engaging program of workshops, resources, and interactive sessions tailored to support older adults in living healthier, more empowered lives.

“Bringing older adults together for connection, socialization and education is a great way to keep them engaged in their own lives and with others,” said Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz. “This annual event is a Live Well Erie success story and one that is always well-attended. My thanks to the Erie County team and our partners who collaborated on such a productive day for our older adults.”

To ensure accessibility, door-to-door transportation was provided for nearly 50 attendees, making it possible for many older adults to participate who otherwise may not have been able to attend.

“Live Well Erie’s Older Adults Working Group is committed to making life healthier and more accessible for aging residents across Erie County,” said Deputy County Executive Lisa Chimera. “Events like today’s are a great opportunity for the older adults in our community to engage with community partners, while receiving valuable information and resources.”

Highlights of the day included:

- FeedMore WNY on practical nutrition tips and healthy eating
- Parachute Credit Counseling on scam prevention and financial safety
- Gardening for Wellness session encouraging hands-on engagement with nature

- Prevention Council of Erie County on mindfulness practices to reduce stress
- Center for Elder Law & Justice (CELJ) presenting financial wellness strategies
- Michael Weidrich (Tosh Collins Senior Center) and Donna Bodekor (Aurora Senior Center) leading *Senior Center 101*
- Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) on safe sex and dating in later life
- A Storied Life on healthy relationships with death and grief
- Supportive Services Corporation on employment opportunities for older adults
- RSVP on the benefits of volunteering
- Univera Healthcare providing updates on 2026 Medicare changes
- Erie County Consumer Protection on protecting against identity theft
- Plus additional sessions covering a wide range of wellness, safety, and enrichment topics.

In addition, attendees enjoyed access to 10 community vendor tables, each offering resources and services to support older adults and their families.

Lunch was generously provided by FeedMore WNY and sponsored by West Herr, underscoring the community's commitment to supporting older adults.

The event also featured two keynote speakers:

- **Rhonda Frederick, West Herr** – who spoke on the importance of corporate-community partnerships in supporting healthy aging.
- **Pat LaMonte, Orchard Park Senior Center volunteer and active community member** – who shared her personal story of engagement, service, and the positive impact of staying active later in life.

“Events like Retreat, Refresh & Restore remind us that older adults in Erie County are not only vital members of our community but also lifelong learners, volunteers, and leaders,” said Erie County Department for the Aging Commissioner, Randy Hoak. “By coming together, we’re creating opportunities for older adults to strengthen their health, protect their independence, and continue contributing in meaningful ways.”

About Live Well Erie

Launched by Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz through the Department of Social Services, Live Well Erie is a countywide initiative dedicated to improving the health, well-being, and quality of life of all Erie County residents — children, working families, and older adults alike. The initiative brings together county departments, community organizations,

and private-sector partners to address health and social determinants that impact residents' ability to thrive.

Live Well Erie is guided by Deputy County Executive Lisa Chimera and Trina Burruss, CEO of United Way of Buffalo & Erie County, who co-lead the initiative. Together, they work to align resources, foster collaboration, and strengthen community supports to ensure that every resident of Erie County has the opportunity to live well.