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Letter to the Editor:

May is Older Americans Month

Dear Editor:

May is Older Americans Month—a tradition dating back to 1963 to honor the legacies and ongoing contributions of older Americans and support them as they enter the next stage in life. SAGE Eldercare is joining communities nationwide in celebrating this month with special activities and events.

This year's Older Americans Month theme—Age Strong! Live Long!—recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans who span three generations. They have lived through wars and hard times, as well as periods of unprecedented prosperity. They pioneered new technologies in medicine, communications, and industry while spearheading a cultural revolution that won equal rights for minorities, women, and disabled Americans.

These remarkable achievements demonstrate the strength and character of older Americans, and underscore the debt of gratitude we owe to the generations that have given our society so much. But the contributions of older Americans are not only in the past.

Older Americans are living longer and are more active than ever before. And with the aging of the baby boomer generation—the largest in our nation's history—America's senior population is expected to number 71.5 million by 2030.

While keeping the growing population of older Americans healthy and active will increase the demand for senior services, what is remarkable is the extent to which older

Americans themselves are supporting each other. As the new generations of seniors become better educated and more financially secure than their predecessors, they are spending more time making significant contributions in their communities through civic and volunteer opportunities.

In fact, older Americans are a core component of service delivery to seniors—embodying and modeling the drive to Age Strong! Live Long! SAGE Eldercare has older Americans volunteering to deliver meals to homebound seniors; acting as escorts and providing transportation for older adults who cannot drive; helping seniors with home repair, shopping and errands; providing vital counseling, information and referral services. Their energy and commitment reminds all Americans—not just senior citizens and their caregivers—to do their part to enhance the quality of life for older generations.

The annual commemoration of Older Americans Month is our opportunity to recognize the contributions of older citizens and join them in providing services and support that empower the elderly. Americans of all ages and backgrounds can volunteer with programs that improve health literacy, increase access to quality health services, offer food and nutrition services, provide financial and housing counseling, sponsor social activities and community engagement, and more.

In addition, in honor of Older Americans Month 2010, SAGE Eldercare is launching an Arthritis series. We encourage those with arthritis, Lupus, and fibromyalgia to join us for an informative Self-Help Program, coordinated by Overlook Hospital's Community Health Department, from 1 to 3 on Tuesday, May 4 and Tuesday May 11. Then to follow on Tuesdays from May 18 to July 6, we invite you to join us for the Arthritis Foundation's Exercise Program, from 11:30 – 12:30. To register for this series, please call (908) 598-5548.

Age Strong! Live Long!
Jessica L. Rosenzweig, MPH
Executive Director
SAGE Eldercare

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SAGE Eldercare supports the independence, well being and quality of life of older adults, their families and caregivers, through the provision of client-centered health, social and support services. Founded in 1954, SAGE is both the oldest and one of the few nonprofit eldercare agencies in the United States that offers a broad and comprehensive array of services under one roof that assist elderly, often frail, adults to remain independent in their own homes. SAGE Eldercare programs include: HomeCare; Meals on Wheels; Spend-A-Day Adult Day Health Center; InfoCare free information and referral service; Fall Prevention Initiative; Home Repair Service; Grocery

Shopping and Errand Service; Bill Paying Service; PREP caregiver support group; and SHIP (State Health Insurance Assistance Program). SAGE Eldercare serves over 5,000 older people and their families annually in Union, Essex, Morris and Somerset counties. For more information, call 908.273.5550 or visit www.sageeldercare.org.

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