

THE FLIC

NEWS FLASH

News from the Finger Lakes Independence Center

April 2026

SHORT NOTES

- The Parkinson's Caregiver Support Group meets in person, 12-1pm, on the first and third Tuesday each month, in the FLIC conference room. Newcomers are welcome! For more information, email Carol Grove at carolgrove6115@gmail.com.
- **Proper language for people with disabilities** emphasizes dignity, neutrality, and individuality. While person-first language (ie "person with a disability") is often preferred, identity-first language (ie "disabled person") is preferred by some. **Ask the individual for their preference.**
- Save the Dates: **Friends of the TCPL 2026 Spring Book Sale** May 2-4, 9-11, and 16-19 **NOTE: Wednesday, May 13 is Seniors (60+) and People with Disabilities Day, 10am-4pm.**
- You can **contact FLIC** by calling 607-272-2433 or by emailing the general mailbox at info@fliconline.org.

Welcome to Brenda Pepe!

Brenda recently joined the FLIC team as Program Manager, where she leads a New York State Department of Health funded program supporting individuals who use consumer-directed home care services and supporting independent living and self-direction for people with disabilities.



With more than a decade of experience in program management, strategic planning, and cross-sector collaboration across nonprofit, government, and academic settings, Brenda has supported CDC Falls Prevention programs, the Healthy Brain Initiative, and Elder Justice efforts connected to provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

Brenda has served on the boards of the Tompkins Cortland Child Development Council and the Downtown Ithaca Children's Center. She is also the founder of Orenda Wise Coaching & Consulting, helping family caregivers and older adults. She lives in the Ithaca area with her family and, in her spare time, enjoys researching family genealogy and relaxing with a good book.

Read What Jeff Has to Say About Developmental Disabilities Month!



Click here:

<https://www.tompkinsweekly.com/news/developmental-disabilities-awareness-month-highlights-ongoing-barriers-for-services-in-tompkins-county-6ad720da>

Living with a Disability
at the Tompkins County SPCA

Learn more about Slurms by scanning this code!





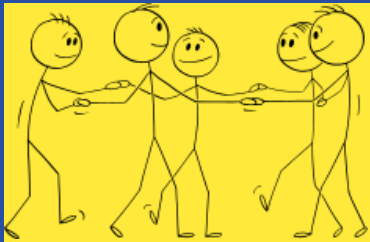
Slurms MacKenzie

ADOPTABLE

Living with FIV+

Slurms' immune system is more susceptible than those of other cats.

He will require biannual wellness checkups.



SUPPORTING YOUR INDEPENDENCE

Wrap-Around Services for CDPAP Members

Managing your own home care is a big job, but you don't have to do it alone. Thanks to a grant from the New York State Department of Health, FLIC offers "wrap-around" support to help CDPAP participants live safely and independently right at home.

Our knowledgeable team works side-by-side with you to answer questions and tackle the issues you identify as need areas. Whether you need a hand navigating Medicaid recertification, planning for the future, or learning new independent living skills, we're here to help.

We can also assist with:

- **Home & Safety: Finding accessible housing, preventing falls, and making home access improvements.**
- **Tools for Success: Getting transportation help, medical equipment, medical advocacy, or assistive technology.**
- **Community: Connecting you with peer support, advocacy, and local resources.**

Our goal is to make sure you stay in control of your care and enjoy the best quality of life possible.

Want to learn more? Call Program Manager Brenda Pepe at **607-272-2433** — she can help you get started!

Does Your Group Need An Accessibility Audit?



FLIC conducts free-of-charge accessibility audits for businesses and organizations in Tompkins County. Accessibility audits are designed to help businesses and organizations better understand the accessibility requirements that make these physical spaces ADA compliant and universally accessible.

Our audits focus on key areas that should be evaluated so that all people, including people with disabilities, can navigate your building and environment effectively, comfortably, and safely. Improvements to accessibility will show your clients or customers that you truly care about their well-being.

Key areas include:

- Entrances
- Workstations
- Restrooms
- Common areas like the kitchen, breakroom, conference/meeting rooms

To schedule your free accessibility audit call 607-272-2433 or email Tracy at Tracy@fliconline.org .

**"Disability is a matter of perception.
If you can do just one thing well,**

you're needed by someone."

-- Stephen Hawking, theoretical physicist, cosmologist,
and author who lived with ALS



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JOIN US

Invisible Disability
Support Group

meets twice a month via Zoom,
on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays.

For this month's meeting times,
email Ben at ben@fliconline.org.

FLiC



**NYS
Budget Update**

Budget season in NYS continues! Both the NYS Assembly and Senate released their one-house budget proposals in March. The state budget is

due by 4/1 (though it is often late). Here is a breakdown of the Governor's proposed budgets and the one-house budgets. Interested in getting more involved in budget and legislative advocacy? Contact Andrea at andrea@FLICOnline.org

Issue	Budget Disability Priority Agenda Ask	Governor	Senate	Assembly
ILC Funding	\$20 million, include Targeted Inflationary Increase	\$16 million	\$16.75 Million AND Targeted Inflationary Increase at 4%	\$17.5 million
Adult Home Advocacy and Adult Home Resident Council Program	Opposed elimination of program	Removed funding, proposed elimination of program	Opposed elimination of funding; restored funding	Opposed elimination of funding; restored all but \$4,000 of funding
Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)	Opposed to cuts	Cut \$33 million to Family Support Services (FSS)	Cut \$33 million to Family Support Services (FSS)	Cut \$33 million to Family Support Services (FSS)
Medicaid Global Cap	Support extension	Extension until 2027	Permanent extension	Extension until 2027
Access to Home	Restore prior funding, increase overall funding to \$20 million	Cut previous funding for a total of \$1 million	\$5 million	\$5 million
Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities (MBI-WPD)	Opposed implementing premiums	Proposed implementing premium fees for participants	Proposed implementing premium fees for participants	Opposed implementing premiums
Allowing certified medication aides in residential health care facilities to administer routine medications to residents	Opposed including this proposal in budgets	Governor proposed in Executive Budget	Did not include in budget	Did not include in budget

Do You Need

Help at Home?

FLiC

Individuals in Tompkins County can call FLIC and ask about The Registry. The Registry is a list of candidates for in-home caregiving and household helpers. We can send you a list to help match the need for help to potential caregivers. It's up to you, the client, or a family member to call, interview, hire and pay the caregiver.



Some of the things with which caregivers can help are: housekeeping, help with walking, bathing and dressing, wheelchair transfer, laundry, cooking, running errands, driving to appointments, and dementia care.

For caregivers to get put on The Registry, FLIC requires them to complete an application and supply three references. We also have lists for: nurses, hairdressers, and seamstresses.

The Registry service is made possible through the Tompkins County Office for the Aging (TCOFA).

For more information, call Cheryl at FLIC at 607-272-2433.



Sew Givers graciously donated almost 20 walker bags to FLIC! These beautiful bags can be borrowed or gifted to anyone who needs one. The Sew Givers are volunteers who work on various community projects. They work out of Quilters Corner in Ithaca. Thank you, Sew Givers!

Fire Safety Checklist for People with Disabilities

Approximately 3,500 Americans die and 18,300 are injured in fires each year. People with mobility, sight and hearing disabilities can significantly increase their chances of surviving a fire by practicing proven fire safety precautions.



Why Are People with Disabilities at Risk?

- Decreased mobility, health, sight and hearing may limit a person's ability to take the quick action necessary to escape during a fire emergency.
- Depending on physical limitations, many of the actions individuals can take to protect themselves from the dangers of fire may require help from a caretaker, neighbor or outside source.

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) encourages people with disabilities to use this fire safety checklist to help protect themselves and their home from fire. Personal responsibility is the key to fire safety.

Have a Sound Fire Safety and Escape Plan

- It is vitally important to make and practice escape plans. In the event of a fire, time is the biggest enemy and every second counts!
- Involve the assistance of a building manager, family member or a trusted friend when practicing your fire escape plan.
- Know at least two exits from every room.
- If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to make sure your equipment can get through the doorways.
- Practice opening locked or barred doors and windows.
- When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Leave home immediately. Once out, stay out.

Develop a Home Fire Safety Plan

- People with mobility disabilities should be encouraged to have their bedroom on the ground floor and as close as possible to an exit.
- If necessary, have a ramp available for emergency exits.
- Unless instructed by the fire department, you should never use an elevator during a fire.
- Be sure your street address is clearly marked and visible from the street.
- Know which local emergency services are available and have those numbers posted or memorized.

Inform Others of Your Needs

- Contact your local fire department and explain your needs.
- Your local fire department will be able to help you with your escape plan and may also perform a home fire safety inspection and offer suggestions about smoke alarm placement and maintenance.
- Ask emergency providers to keep your needs information on file.

Install and Maintain Smoke Alarms

- Working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home dramatically increase your chances of survival.
- Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for people with hearing disabilities. Smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the house can catch the attention of neighbors or passersby.
- Smoke alarm batteries need to be tested every month and changed at least once a year. If you can't reach the test button on your smoke alarm, ask someone to assist you.

Source: https://d1zvpf48x4glh6.cloudfront.net/body/fire-safety-checklist_190426_183625.pdf



Awareness Spotlight

April is Stress Awareness Month

April is National Stress Awareness Month, a time dedicated to increasing awareness of the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. Held annually since 1992, this awareness month highlights the importance of managing mental health to prevent negative physical and emotional consequences like anxiety, depression, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

What is one step can you take to celebrate Stress Awareness Month? Check in on friends, family, or coworkers who might be going through a tough time. **Such actions help combat social isolation, which** -- according to the U.S. Surgeon General's 2023 Advisory -- **poses a health risk equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.**

Increased Awareness is a Powerful Tool.



Share This Email



Share This Email



Share This Email



Share This Email

We'd Love to Hear From You!

Voice (607) 272-2433

Video (607) 216-9683

Fax (607) 272-0902

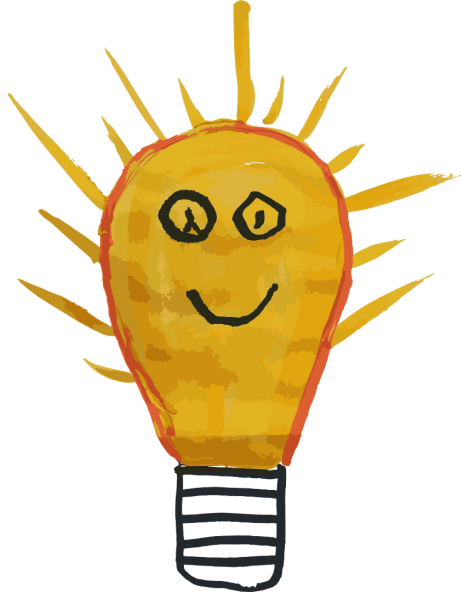
info@fliconline.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

9:00am-5:00pm

215 Fifth Street,
Ithaca NY 14850



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