

NEWS *from the* **Amherst Center for Senior Services**

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“EZ RIDER” PROGRAM BRINGS MEMBERSHIP-BASED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO RESIDENTS OF AMHERST SENIOR HOUSING COMPLEXES

Amherst Senior Transportation Services will expand services to more residents of Amherst senior housing complexes in its new individual member “EZ Rider” program Oct. 15. Eligible residents of complexes which do not participate in the established ASTS program will pay a nominal annual membership fee of \$100 per individual or \$150 per couple for scheduled van transportation to medical appointments or the Amherst Senior Center. “EZ Rider” van service will operate Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The program grew out of concerns that many Amherst seniors needing transportation reside in complexes where the facility itself does not provide van service or participate in Amherst Senior Transportation Services as a member agency. As more senior residence complexes have been established in the Town since ASTS’s inception, both the agency and the Amherst Senior Center felt there was a greater need for affordable, accessible transportation services.

Both focus groups and a survey of all senior housing not participating in ASTS as members indicated significant interest and need for a transportation program for individual members. Any older adult who has given up their own vehicle will pay considerably less in “EZ Rider” membership than the cost of repairs, insurance, gas and other expenses. ASTS and Amherst Senior Center staff reviewed several best practice models across the country which could be easily adapted for service in Amherst.

All seniors age 55 and older, residing in Town of Amherst housing that does not have membership in ASTS, are eligible to apply for “EZ Rider”. Riders must be independently mobile; accepted mobility aids include walkers, canes and light collapsible wheelchairs.

To apply for “EZ Rider” membership, please call ASTS at 636-3075 and complete the “EZ Rider” application. You may also visit the Town of Amherst website at <http://www.amherst.ny.us/> and navigate to the Department of Senior Services web page to download the application.

Anyone who cannot afford the fee for service or has special needs may contact the Center Social Worker at 636-3050.

ASTS continues to provide regular van service to residents living in private homes and apartments, as well as eligible senior facilities. These services, offered on the same days and times, are provided for a requested minimum contribution of \$2 each way.

For more information on “EZ Rider” and ASTS transportation services, please call ASTS at 636-3075.