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Aug. 5, 2013

Roosevelt's 90th Birthday Gala Points to Rising Life Expectancy Rates

MIDDLESEX COUNTY – As the medical world continues to chart climbing life expectancy rates, two 90th Birthday Galas held at Roosevelt Care Center at Edison last week, present a local barometer of those recent findings.

Roosevelt's staff at the County-owned long-term care facility hosted a party for approximately 100 residents, the oldest of which was 106-years-old, at the Parsonage Road building Tuesday and at the historic building on Roosevelt Drive, Wednesday.

Any resident, who met the minimum age requirement –approximately one-third of the facilities' combined population – was invited to attend one of the Roosevelt galas, an afternoon gathering filled with food, family, friends, entertainment and a well-earned slice of celebratory birthday cake.

“My secret is that I live according to my doctor,” said 92-year-old Leroy Levine, a Roosevelt resident and one of Tuesday's many honorees. “He tells me what I can and can't do, and I listen.”

Levine has long since joined the ranks of a steadily growing segment of the population, as the latest 2010 data published in the Journal of the American Medical Association indicates that the average American is living to the age of 77.8, a three-year increase from the prior 1990 statistics.

Roosevelt's own licensed administrator Dr. Frank Damiani said that while progressive medical treatments may have contributed to these rising life-expectancy rates, there may also be a simpler explanation to it all.

“I think that the level of activity also factors into it all too,” he said. “The more active they are, the longer they are living.”

One of the event's main planners, Roosevelt's Recreation Director Joanne Franklin, is dually charged with managing the facilities' daily activities, ensuring that residents have projects, pastimes and other undertakings to look forward to.

“We have to remember; when you reach 90, every day is a special day,” Franklin pointed out.

After seeing this past week's successful events through, Roosevelt administrators said they hope to make the gala an annually reoccurring affair.

“I feel so proud and honored to be here with this crowd today,” said Freeholder Carol Barrett Bellante, who attended both galas. “We are so lucky to still have all of these seniors here with us and should cherish them like the true gems of our community that they are.”

Roosevelt Care Center is an operation overseen by the Middlesex County Improvement Authority. For more information, log onto www.roosevelthealth.org or call 732-321-1700.

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