



- *Sue and Victor D. of Seaford, Ellen W. of Merrick prove it's never "too late" to stop smoking*
- *All are smoke-free since 2018; the NYS Smokers' Quitline provided coaching and medication*
- *Quit Coaches are available for any NYS resident looking to quit nicotine-use for the New Year*

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LONG ISLANDERS BECOME SMOKE-FREE WITH SUPPORT FROM QUITLINE**

*Success-stories illustrate "it's never too late" to stop smoking*

**SEAFORD and MERRICK, N.Y. – Dec. 23, 2019** – Sue D. of Seaford, N.Y. and Ellen W. of Merrick, N.Y. do not know each other but have much in common. They live only a few miles apart in Nassau County, experienced their youth during the 1960s and smoked heavily most of their lives. Fortunately, they now share another thing in common: both are smoke-free for more than a year with assistance from the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline).

Like many former smokers, Sue, now 72, tried cigarettes as a teenager due to peer pressure and smoked for nearly 55 years. For her, it seemed as if life revolved around smoking. Recent health concerns, however, led Sue to believe smoking had "taken over."

"I was diagnosed with COPD and pulmonary hypertension, and started having trouble breathing," Sue recalled. "I finally reached the point where I wanted to quit on my own terms. My husband Victor and I both smoked two packs of cigarettes a day. Luckily, he decided to quit with me, and we now share the same quit-date: November 15, 2018."



Sue and Victor each called the Quitline and received coaching support and free medication. The nicotine patch worked for Sue, while nicotine lozenges worked for Victor. More than a year later, both are experiencing greatly improved health, including clearer lungs and no more wheezing. As a reward for their accomplishment and as a way to make family gatherings more pleasant for holidays, they recently had all of their walls inside their house professionally repainted and resealed.

Ellen, now 62, also tried cigarettes as a teenager and smoked for more than 40 years. Despite using cigarettes, she had always felt athletic. On October 3, 2018, that feeling changed.

“I woke up that morning and all of a sudden had trouble breathing,” Ellen recalled. “I ended up in the hospital and learned I had COPD and suffered from malnutrition. This was a wake-up call for me. I decided right then to never pick up a cigarette again and called the Quitline soon after I returned home.”

The Quitline’s Quit Coaches assisted Ellen in creating and sticking to a quit-plan, and they also shipped her a starter kit of nicotine replacement therapy. Nicotine gum ultimately worked best to treat her nicotine dependence. In addition to receiving support from the Quitline, Ellen gains encouragement during weekly sessions with a therapist, who happens to be a former smoker. She now enjoys traveling to faraway places – long distances were previously a deterrent due to smoke-free policies aboard airplanes. Ellen also recently added a papillon puppy to her family and enjoys walks together.



“I am thankful and grateful for the Quitline,” she said. “I recommend all smokers give their services a try. Being smoke-free is a freeing feeling, and the benefits will overcome any type of anxiety. It’s never too late to quit.”

Sue echoed Ellen's thoughts. "I look back and think about all the things I didn't do in life because I smoked," Sue said. "I regret I didn't quit sooner; however, I don't regret giving up smoking. I'm proud to say, 'I don't do that anymore.'" For all those trying to quit: never give up and don't count yourself out. Call the Quitline – especially when times get tough. They'll provide the encouragement to keep working at it."

This New Year and any year, in addition to support from a healthcare professional, tobacco users can call the New York State Smokers' Quitline at **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) anytime the journey gets tough for achieving or maintaining a tobacco-free life. In addition, as [recently announced](#) by the New York State Department of Health, the Quitline now offers expanded services to help e-cigarette users quit vaping. Coaching support at the Quitline is available for New Yorkers of all ages, including adolescents, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Additional resources are available online at [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com).

### **About the New York State Smokers' Quitline**

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages nicotine users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for stop-smoking medications. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com) for more information.

### **About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at [www.roswellpark.org](http://www.roswellpark.org), or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or [ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org](mailto:ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org).

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