

# Film features area women's pioneer



FILE PHOTO

Sue Perlmutt takes members of the Senior Citizen Troupe of Lifelong through a play rehearsal at the seniors' center in downtown Ithaca.

## Preview March 18 at Cinemapolis

**MATTHEW HAYES**

MHAYES@ITHACAJOURNAL.COM

**ITHACA** — A documentary chronicling the work of a Republican politician from Ithaca who helped decriminalize abortion in New York state in 1970 can be seen in Ithaca this March and April.

Constance Cook, a Republican assemblywoman representing the 128th district of Tompkins, Yates and Seneca counties, was a pioneer for women in politics during her 10-year career in the male-dominated New York Assembly. One of her most lasting impacts was her work in 1970 that opened up legal access to abortion a full three years before the Roe v. Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Created through archival footage and interviews with family, friends and colleagues, the film

documents the life of a pilot, corporate lawyer, politician and gender-barrier-shattering university administrator. Cook was the first woman to serve as a vice president at Cornell University, leading land grant affairs from 1974 to 1980.

Known to many as Connie, she was at the forefront of many of the changes that have taken place in American life over the past decades, according to film creator Sue Perlmutt, of Ithaca.

Cook died in 2009.

A sneak preview of the film created by Perlmutt and Nils Hoover will be held March 18 as part of a benefit to aid the documentary and Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes. Tickets for the 7 p.m. showing at Cinemapolis cost \$10 and can be purchased at the door or online at [cinemapolis.org](http://cinemapolis.org).

In April, the film will be shown as part of the annual Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival. The documentary will be shown at 7 p.m. April 12 at Cinemapolis during the festival.

