



Carol Ripley

Scott Seymour

Marisa Geraghty

Sharon Herald

Caroline Barrett

Don Anderson

Jim Kavanaugh

Alone, Not Apart. CSSC Comes Together.

Some people make their mark not through grandiose boldness, but tireless work. That being said, amidst the chaos of the COVID-19 pandemic, it takes special selfless individuals who are in it for the long haul, working behind the scenes, with effective communication and coordination, doing whatever needs to be done to provide the support needed by the seniors throughout our community.

There are a handful of CSSC employees; most of whom have been working every week, seven days a week, making sure our seniors are cared for. They are performing both their normal job as well as added responsibilities. These super heroes were asked how the last two months has changed their perception of what Colonie Senior Service Centers does and how they have contributed to that purpose.

Their responses below are both eye opening and humbling.

"These crazy times honestly have a purpose. So many seniors do not have a support mechanism and it feels good to know we are helping them out during this difficult time."

Scott (AP Clerk **Now** also Meal Delivery Coordinator and Serving on "Grab and Go" Meal Delivery Team One)

"These last few months have profoundly deepened my appreciation for the work our RSVP volunteers have done long before the COVID-19 pandemic. As my job temporarily changed to help with meal delivery, I often think of the work volunteers have been doing to help others long before this pandemic. They have become a support system for me as they respond with such encouragement and kind words every time I send them an email updating them on our work."

Marisa (RSVP and Volunteer Coordinator **Now** also Meal Reminder Phone Coordinator and Serving on "Grab and Go" Meal Delivery Team One)

"My wonderful relationship with my grandparents inspired me to make helping seniors my personal mission. I love our senior community, so doing what I can to ensure their health and wellbeing is instinctive. During this crazy time in our

lives, I feel fortunate to have been able to help solve problems, deliver a hot meal, or brighten someone's quarantine routine. We are all in this together!"

Carol (Administrative Operations and HR Director **Now** also Doing Anything and Everything Necessary)

"I feel fortunate to be able to help others during unprecedented times. I am very thankful to be part of this team and to be working for an amazing organization. Team CSSC!"

Sharon (Office Manager/Executive Assistant **Now** also Reservations and Meal Coordination, as well as Telephone Reassurance Coordinator)

"Though the circumstances might be terrible, and it might sound somewhat weird to say it, the last eight weeks have brought joy, laughter and connecting with people in many new ways. I am very much looking forward to the days of being with our CSSC family, when we can dine and hug and see everyone's smiles. Until then, we pack meals and have faith!"

Caroline (Lifelong Wellness Director **Now** also "Grab and Go" Menu and Meal Coordinator)

It is a very rewarding experience working with the Colonie Senior Service Centers crew helping serve lunches to those who may not otherwise have a good meal.

Don (CSSC Transportation Dispatcher **Now** also Serving on "Grab and Go" Meal Delivery Team Two)

"Mazzone Hospitality is proud to be part of the community meal program that CSSC is offering."

We are preparing over 300 hot meals each day for lunch and dinner. It has been a challenge for our staff and production, but the positive feedback has been tremendous and makes the long hours more than worthwhile."

—Jim Kavanaugh, Mazzone Hospitality General Manager

As you can see, there is no limit to the amount of good a person can do if they do not care who gets credit.

Stay well from the CSSC Pride Team!

Message from the Executive Director



Time is an Abstract Notion

Can you believe its June?

Up until mid-March, I was literally married to my calendar. My schedule was so busy, crazy busy. My

husband and I would literally have a "briefing" every morning when we took the dog on a walk before work. We would coordinate our day making sure we had covered all our bases and obligations (meetings, events, activities, volunteer obligations, family commitments, grocery shopping...). How we looked forward to the spring.

Our son Louis would be finishing his senior year at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. His last year of eligibility to play his beloved collegiate baseball was within his sights. In fact, we were to be traveling to Florida the third week of March where the SLU Baseball Team would start their season playing against other Liberty League Teams in beautiful Cape Coral. Being a pitcher, who had worked tirelessly at his craft, this was Louis' year to shine, to be top dog, to enjoy the fruits of his labor both academically as well as physically. And then nothing... he was sent home. His campus closed and that was that. No baseball season, no graduation, no celebrations...nothing.

He finished his last semester virtually sitting on our couch. He kept commenting that he could not wait for "Virtual College" to end. It was a heart-wrenching end to what seemed to be the perfect chapter in his life.



When Louis was little, he would say he wanted to grow up to be a Super Hero. In fact, he had interchangeable Batman and Superman outfits (with matching black and red capes of course) so, often he could pretend to be both in a given day. How time flew and the dreams changed. What to be when he grew up...

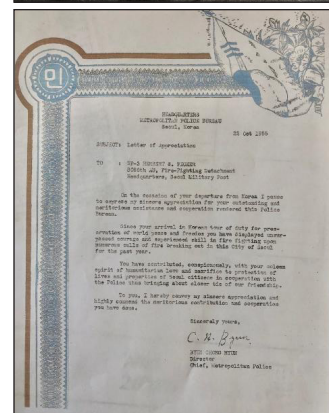
Here is the silver lining: At the end of May, Louis found out that he had been accepted to the University at Albany's MSSE Program (Masters of Science in Secondary Education) starting this coming September. See, he wants to become a teacher, a Social Studies, the "cool teacher" as he puts it...the one the kids will look up to and remember well after they have graduated.

Being a certified teacher myself, I consider him a Super Hero choosing such a noble profession.

With all the uncertainties and bleakness of this pandemic, there are glimmers of hope. From heartache comes faith and a greater appreciation for what you might always have had and did not realize. For me and my husband, a Super Hero.

— Diane Conroy-LaCivita

A Proud Story



Board News

In May, Colonie Senior Service Centers held its Annual Business Meeting via Zoom. At that time, a new slate of officers were voted on. Join us in congratulating CSSC's 2020-2021 officers and directors.

Officers

Christina Meier, Esq. President
Willis Reed, Vice President
James Cole, CPA, Treasurer
Victoria Harkins, Secretary
Russell Ward, Ph.D.,
Past President

Directors

Michael Bianchino
Peter Campito
Dr. Kevin Costello
Mary Beth Hofmeister
Alicia Kelley
Kevin McCoy, CPA
Jim Morrell
Mark O'Callaghan
Nancy O'Connor
I-Hsin Wu

Emeritus

Dr. John Bennett
Mary E. Brizzell
Michael Hoblock, Jr.
J. Eric King
Anthony Mantello
Steven R. Muth
Cynthia Pettit
Richard E. Rowlands, Esq. —
Legal Council

of Military Service

Herb Picker has been a resident of The Beltrone Living Center since July 2017. Born in Albany on Mother's Day, May 10, 1932, Herb grew up in a business-minded, entrepreneurial, retail family.

Originally drafted in 1950, the U.S. Government gave Herb an extension since he would be starting at Utica College with the major of Civil Engineering the following year. He stayed in college up until 1953 but then decided to call the local draft board to put him on the ready list for induction into the Armed Forces. You see, many of his friends were already in Korea and he "did not want to miss out on the action."

After sixteen weeks of advanced infantry training at Fort Dix, N.J., he found himself debarking at the Port of Incheon, Korea. Initially, he was sent to a few outposts until one day twenty-five soldiers were picked for special duty, which consisted of five weeks of intensive training in Fire Fighters School. Most of the fire fighters had finished their tour of duty with no one to take their place so; Herb went from combat infantry soldier to fire fighter. He worked his way up to Station Chief and head of the Fire Control Center. "There were several million people in Seoul, Korea and our responsibility was to save lives and property to the best of our ability."

Herb shared that he is alive today because of Richard Pauley, a fellow soldier, who rescued him from a burning village. His indebtedness to his friend who has subsequently passed a few years ago is very apparent. "I screamed thinking I was taking my last breath and he pulled me out."

Before leaving Korea in November 1955, Herb was honored before all the Section Chiefs in Seoul for his outstanding and meritorious assistance and cooperation; a memory he thinks about every day and still treasures. "I had a colorful life in Korea."

Upon coming stateside, Herb married Louise Austin in 1957. (A mutual friend had introduced them.) Herb's career included working at his father-in-law's store in Syracuse and then subsequently owning three stores of his own; Frankfort Five & Dime in Frankfort, NY, Dolgeville Five & Dime in Dolgeville, NY, and Sally and Naan Fashions. He was also active in the Korean War Veterans, Central NJ Chapter 145 serving as Senior Vice Commander, as well as, in the Color Guard.

Herb is the proud father of four children (two girls and two boys) and ten grandchildren.

Herb, thank you for your service to defend our nation and our freedom.

Volunteering in the Era of a Pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic first forced us to close down our programming, almost all of the organizations we partner with through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) also shut down programming and/or ceased their volunteer programs. That meant a whole of volunteering seniors were left without the roles they have come to know and love. But as always, volunteers continued to impress me with stories of how they have repurposed themselves as volunteers and found new ways to help their community. Here are some of the things our wonderful RSVP volunteers have been doing in the community to help:

- Helping sort food for packing and distribution at the local food banks.
- Packaging and distributing bagels, donuts, sandwiches, cookies, snacks, coffee and water to medical staff at three different Albany County hospitals.
- Helping distribute food to families at local drive thru food banks.
- Doing grocery shopping and banking for other homebound seniors.
- Helping school districts deliver balloons to students who will miss celebrating birthdays with school friends.
- Remotely tutoring students (young and old) in literacy programs.
- Helping with blood delivery runs for the Red Cross.
- Calling and signing Happy Birthday to homebound seniors.
- Making meals for fellow seniors or other neighbors in need.
- Doing telephone reassurance calls for nursing homes, senior living centers, and anyone living alone.

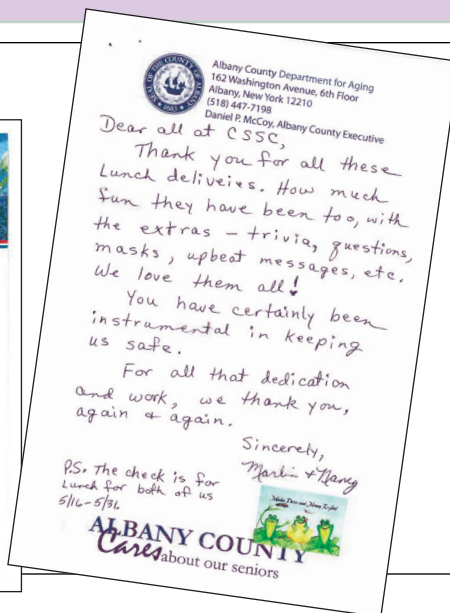
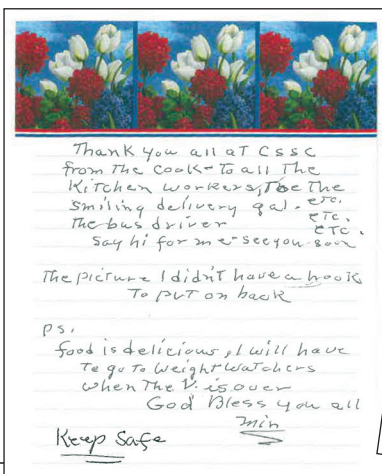
There are also those who live in one of our three independent living facilities, King Thiel, Sheehy Manor and Beltrone Living Center, and have stepped up to help us with our take out meal delivery program as well as volunteering in other capacities that provide a sense of normalcy and comfort to fellow residents in a safe manner.

Where there is a will, there is a way, and these volunteers have demonstrated the will to continue to serve, and done so with the grace and care so many need right now!



Diane Conroy-LaCivita was awarded the 2020 Ann Marie Sheehy award at the May 5, 2020 board meeting.

Love Letters



CSSC Mission Statement

The mission of Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc. (CSSC) is to provide comprehensive services to those in our community who are in or approaching their mature years, and to provide support and services to their families and caregivers.

Through these services, CSSC strives to ensure the physical, mental, emotional and financial well-being of our participants, improve the quality of life, and to enhance the structure and stability of our community as a whole.

Directory

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Art Appreciation

The Arts affect us all. Art can be and do many things; it can be an expression of emotions, it can represent an idea or feeling. It can serve a purpose and be functional. Art can make statements or simply be aesthetically pleasing to the eye. Regardless of the type of art, artwork has context with a meaning behind it.

Colonie Senior Service Centers cannot begin to express how appreciative we are to all the artists (young and old) who have donated beautiful masterpieces, both functional and decorative, as well as inspirational notes and cards that we have then been able to share with the thousands of seniors we are currently serving. Many, many days our "Grab and Go" mid-day meals have included some form of donated art.

Thank you to:

518masks

Joanne and David Alix

Ayco (Liz LaSalle)

Kristina and Shawna Barkley

Sara Bonder and the Kindness Project

Cap Com FCU (Willis Reed)

Paige Conover

Brielle and Rachel Hoyka

Sara and Kathy Mahoney

Christina Meier, Esq.

Diane Murphy

The Mostransky Family

Vivian Niedzwiedek

Paige Warlik

Marleigh Stannard

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you and keep the artwork coming!

An extra shoot-out of appreciation!

Since mid-March, a group entitled 518Masks has donated 350 beautifully sown masks using all sorts of patterned material to CSSC. The 518Masks Program is an organized all-volunteer mask fulfillment program, made up of a community of Sewers, drivers and other volunteers to help our community meet the great demand for masks amidst the Coronavirus pandemic. CSSC has distributed these beautiful creations to staff, volunteers and to the seniors we serve. Their generosity does not go unnoticed. THANK YOU 518Masks!

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you and keep the artwork coming!