

2020 Has Been Quite the Year for Us All

We started January of 2020 with such high hopes looking forward to another successful year. We gleefully went along with our very successful annual Warmth of Winter event, RSVP Volunteer Opportunity Fair, cooking demonstrations and monthly sacred space visits. We interviewed veterans and pet owners for our monthly newsletter.

International Women's Day was organized in early March in recognition of the hundredth anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave women the right to vote.

Then in mid-March, everything came to an abrupt halt realizing we were in the midst of a pandemic. We re-engineered ourselves overnight to meet the needs of seniors throughout the community.

We listened more. We cleaned more. We attempted to keep everyone safe and remembered.

We collaborated with government, other non-profits, businesses and corporations. Over 37,000 hot meals and over 70,000 pounds of groceries were delivered to seniors' homes.

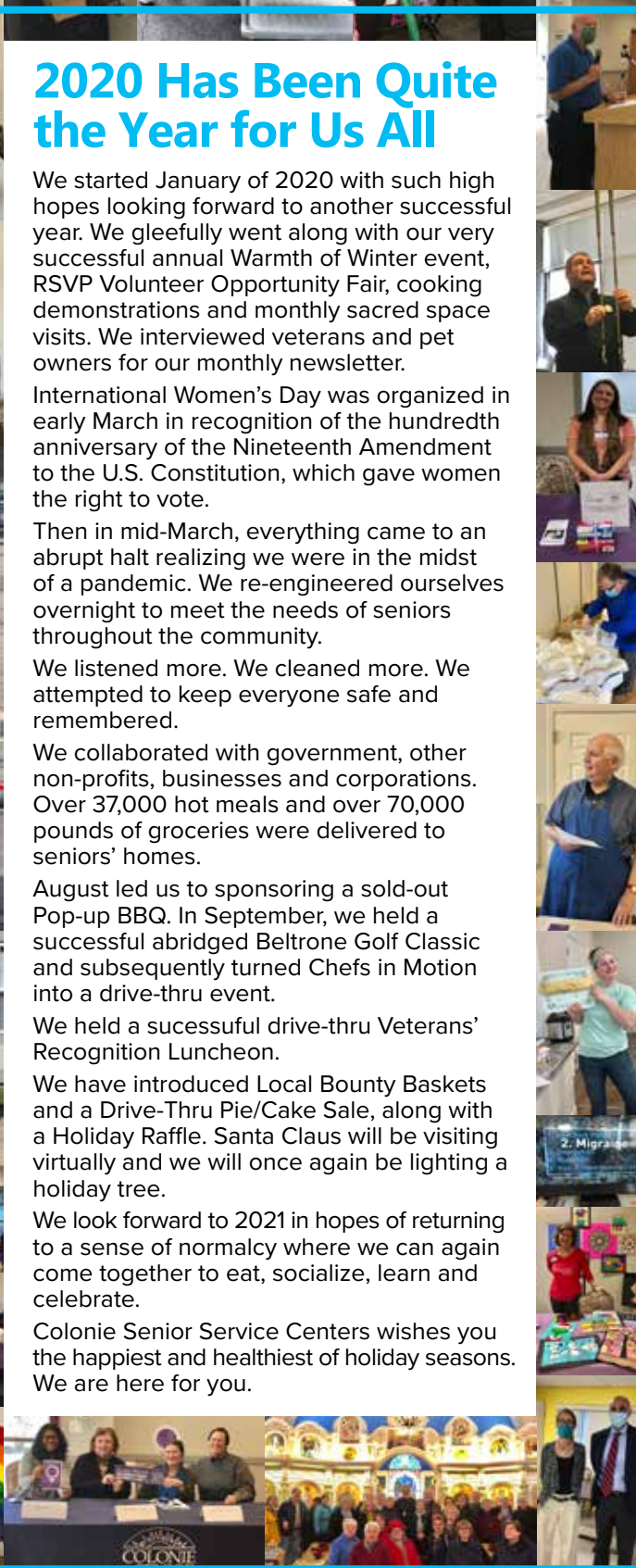
August led us to sponsoring a sold-out Pop-up BBQ. In September, we held a successful abridged Beltrone Golf Classic and subsequently turned Chefs in Motion into a drive-thru event.

We held a successful drive-thru Veterans' Recognition Luncheon.

We have introduced Local Bounty Baskets and a Drive-Thru Pie/Cake Sale, along with a Holiday Raffle. Santa Claus will be visiting virtually and we will once again be lighting a holiday tree.

We look forward to 2021 in hopes of returning to a sense of normalcy where we can again come together to eat, socialize, learn and celebrate.

Colonie Senior Service Centers wishes you the happiest and healthiest of holiday seasons. We are here for you.



Message from the Executive Director

Happy December!



Sunday, December 6,
St. Nicholas Day

Monday, December 7, National
Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance

Thursday, December 10, Chanukah

Monday, December 21,
Winter Solstice

Friday, December 25, Christmas

Saturday, December 26, Kwanzaa

Thursday, December 31,
New Year's Eve

The month of December has so many observances and holidays. Many we know. Many we may not realize, such as National Cookie Day (December 4), National Horse Day (December 13), National Crossword Puzzle Day (December 21) and National Call a Friend Day (December 28).

As a kid growing up in the 1970s, I can vividly remember the excitement that came over me when it was my turn to leaf through the newly arrived Sears Roebuck Catalog. There were always pages and pages of toys. I would take

my time reviewing each and every page very carefully, dog-eared the pages that I found something that interested me. I wanted to make sure Santa was aware of what I was hoping for under the tree. How I miss those catalogs.

I have so many wonderful memories from this time of the year. It is funny though, the memories are not about the toys that were opened Christmas morning but more about the festive celebrations and the large extended family gatherings.

All of us at CSSC realize what a challenging time 2020 has been. It has been an unprecedented, uncertain time for all of us. As we try to find our footing and figure out how to adjust, please know we are dedicated as ever to ensuring our seniors are cared for and remembered.

I want to extend to everyone a happy and healthy holiday season. We look forward to 2021 hoping we can begin to resume many of the wonderful programs and services that CSSC is known for.

"Every morning, you have a new opportunity to become a happier version of yourself."

– 518 Great-Spread of Positivity & Happiness

Be well,
–Diane Conroy-LaCivita

Let Us Introduce the 2020 Colonie Senior Spirit Awardees

Colonie Senior Service Centers (CSSC) was proud to present the 2020 Colonie Senior Spirit Awards during our Virtual Founders' Celebration, on October 29th. While this year's event was held virtually, due to these challenging times, we felt it was important to recognize the wonderful Colonie Senior Spirit Awardees, as they have a significant impact on our community's seniors and their families. The Colonie Senior Spirit Award is given to those individuals and businesses in our community who reflect the commitment, vision and leadership exemplified by CSSC's Founders to help seniors remain active, healthy, and independent.



The Marion T. Lamar Health & Wellness Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their commitment and dedication in developing opportunities for seniors to maintain and enhance their physical and intellectual talents. **This year's award goes to the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York.** The Regional Food Bank has been and continues to be a tremendous support to Colonie seniors. This year alone, they have provided over 70,000 pounds of nutritious food to CSSC to distribute to seniors, with the goal to keep seniors in our community healthy and physically well throughout the pandemic.



The Mary E. Brizzell Building a Senior Community Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their efforts to identify and strengthen the existing network of services for seniors and their families. **This year we are proud to present the award to Richard E. Rowlands, Esq. of Rowland, LeBrou & Griesmer, PLLC.** Rick Rowlands has been a tireless supporter and advisor to CSSC, investing his time and talents to the organization for over thirty years. His depth of institutional knowledge is so incredibly appreciated especially during these trying times.



The Fred G. Field Transportation Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their efforts to promote independence and self-reliance for seniors by developing and expanding senior transportation options. **This year's awardee is Carrie Ward of the Capital District Transportation Committee.** Carrie has been instrumental in providing resources, guidance and support to CSSC as we have expanded our transportation fleet, as well as the inclusion of technology to provide seniors with efficient and reliable transportation services in the Capital Region.



The Ann Marie Sheehy Bright Horizons Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their commitment and achievement in providing and enhancing access to adult day services and caregiver support for seniors and their families. **This year's winner is Allen R. Wolf.** Al is a tireless supporter and volunteer with Bright Horizons and has been doing this for over ten years. He has a tremendous relationship with staff and members of Bright Horizons, and is missed by all during the closure of the program due to the COVID pandemic.



The Jan Susan Medved Senior Dining Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their dedication and efforts to help seniors maintain their health through good nutrition. **It is our honor to present this year's award to Deb Riitano, Commissioner, Albany County Department for Aging.** Deb's commitment to seniors has never been more evident than when the Congregate Senior Dining Program needed to close this past March, due to the COVID pandemic. She immediately reached out to community

leaders to solve the problem of isolated seniors. She also provided CSSC with the resources to pivot our congregate dining program to create a "Grab and Go" program which allowed us to deliver over 37,000 hot meals to many seniors throughout Albany County.



The Joseph R. Simon Senior Housing Spirit Award is presented to an individual or organization for their vision and leadership in developing housing options for seniors.

Andrea Crisafulli and Crisafulli Bros. have made a strong commitment to seniors and Colonie Senior Service Centers over the years, by generously supporting both CSSC's annual Warmth of Winter event as well as our Umbrella of Colonie Home Maintenance Program. Through their generous efforts they assist seniors in staying and maintaining their homes, thus allowing them to age in place. We are very proud to award the Joseph R. Simon Senior Housing Spirit Award to such a worthy person and organization.

CSSC congratulates all of our winners, as they are most deserving of these awards. To watch the 19th Virtual Founders Celebration go to the CSSC on Film page at www.colonieseniors.org.

The 19th Annual Virtual Founders' Celebration was generously sponsored by BBL Construction, CDPHP, and Haylor Freyer & Coon. The support of these companies throughout the year has allowed us to continue to provide vital services to seniors and their families throughout the Capital Region.

If you would like to join the Colonie Senior Spirit Awardees and our sponsors in supporting seniors in our community, especially as we enter the winter season, you may make a donation to Colonie Senior Service Centers by using the enclosed envelope or by "Making a Gift" at www.colonieseniors.org. Your support is very much appreciated and will allow CSSC to continue to provide vital services in our community to thousands of seniors during these difficult times.

Special thank you to Goldstein Auto Group for selecting us for Subaru "Share the Love" event.

Share the Love event runs November 19, 2020 to January 4, 2021.



A Proud Story of Military Service

Joseph G. Orsini and his late wife Lillian moved into The Beltrone Living Center in November 2002. Born in Rome, New York, on June 5, 1923, Joe was the sixth of seven children (six boys and one girl). At the age of two, Joe's family moved to Albany hoping for a better life. His dad had worked in a foundry in Rome and was able to get a job with the railroad.

Joe attended St. John's Academy and St. John's Church, where he served as an altar boy. Additionally, he played high school football for four years. Upon graduation, Joe was drafted into the U.S. Army. He was sent to Fort McClellan in Alabama for infantry basic training. Joe remembered, "I wanted to be a gunner in the Air Force. I was drafted so you cannot ask for what you want. I was told machine gunners do not last long. I would be a machine gunner. I would not be flying though, I would be walking." At the time, he had one brother serving in the Air Force, one in the Navy and one in the Army.

From February 1943 through December 1945, Joe served in the 45th Infantry in North Africa, Sicily and mainland Italy. He remembers being "on the seas" the day he turned twenty traveling from the U.S. to North Africa. By the time they landed in North Africa, Joe explained, most of the fighting was over. A Higgins Boat, a landing craft used extensively in amphibious landings in World War II, brought his Division from Africa to a small town in Sicily. From there they traveled to Salerno, Italy, by ship. Joe remembers being on the first ship out of four that were trying to land. He commented, "Did they kick the heck out of us. We were never ready for that war. When we hit the beach, guys couldn't get off. When I made it to the beach, I had no machine gun, no ammo, and no assistant gunner."

Joe talks about his assistant gunner with fondness commenting, "Moxley was my assistant gunner. He was a good man. He was older than I was. He was in his twenties."

Joe went on to explain that throughout his two plus years of service, "The enemy tried to knock me out five times with my machine gun. Each time they failed. Each time they dropped a bomb to knock me out and missed me each time by a foot or foot-and-a-half. I truly believe this was the work of the Lord."

Joe lovingly remembers his late wife Lillian, whom he refers to as Lil. "My wife and I were in the same class. She always got hundreds. She was the smartest one. Somehow, I was drawn to her. In the sixth grade, I threw snow at her. I always admired her because she was so smart. We went steady. The night before

I went into the service I told her we are going to have to call it off. She cried. I wrote to her to let her know I was coming back. The Lord saved me for her. We were married on July 10, 1948."

After coming home and getting married, Joe worked for New York State in research and statistics for three years. He then worked for Mobil Oil Company for thirteen and a half years. He then joined a brother in ownership of "Academy Sales and Garage" in Rensselaer until retiring.

Lil was a high school English grammar teacher and worked as a librarian as well. At the time of her passing, they had been married for seventy years. They have one son, Michael, and two grandkids, Justin and Kaitlyn. Prior to living at The Beltrone Living Center, they lived in the Town of Colonie for fifty years.

At VFW Post 1019 in Albany and Post 8692 in Colonie, Joe participated in many activities and was a member and Captain of the Color Guard for years.

Joe, thank you for your service.



Bright Horizons – The Word is Gratitude

Gratitude is an affirmation of goodness and the recognition that the source of this goodness often comes from outside of ourselves. Practicing gratitude is a way to remain humble and to create an environment in which you and those around you feel valued and appreciated. A few exercises we can engage in to cultivate gratitude are:

- 1. A Gratitude Jar:** Grab a mason jar, decorate it if you wish, and each day write down three things that you are thankful for. Soon the jar will be overflowing with reasons to be thankful. As you reflect on your written words in your gratitude jar, positivity will overcome and turn that bad day around.
- 2. The Gratitude Box:** Every family member can write down on scraps of paper completion of prompts such as, “Thank you for . . .”, “What I love about you . . .”, etc.
- 3. Gratitude Focused Meditation** relieves stress and creates a more positive mindset. If you would like to try a few gratitude meditation examples, go to positivepsychology.com/gratitude-meditation-happiness.

4. Gratitude Journal: The first step is to get into a meditative state by following the foundation for meditation or by leading with a session of mindfulness meditation or concentrative meditation. The next step is for the person to write down three to five things they are grateful for and to take a moment to reflect on each of those things. Keeping a gratitude journal allows a person to reflect back through everything they are grateful for throughout the year.

Sarah and I are grateful for all of our seniors and their caregivers. We enjoy seeing everyone on our virtual program and feel very fortunate that we are able to offer this option during this difficult time. We surely create a lot of positivity during our virtual sessions!

Let us embrace change as an opportunity to spread thankfulness towards others and continue to build lives that have purpose and meaning for ourselves.

If you would like more information about our Bright Horizons program, contact Susan Napierski, Director, at snapierski@colonieseniors.org or call 518-459-2857, ext. 322.



Board Member Honored

The Department of Defense presented CSSC Board Member Jim Morrell and his wife Kathy the Seven Seals Award in a special ceremony in late November. Mr. and Mrs. Morrell received this award for their years of support of both active duty members of the military as well as our veterans.

The Seven Seals Award is presented in recognition of significant individual or organizational achievement, initiative, or support that promotes and supports the ESGR mission, to include the efforts of the more than 4,500 volunteers who carry out ESGR's mission across the nation on a daily basis.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is the lead U.S. Defense Department program promoting cooperation and understanding between civilian employers and their National Guard and Reserve employees.

Congratulations Jim and Kathy!



Food Glorious Food . . .

December's Many National Days of Recognition:

Tuesday, December 8	National Brownie Day
Wednesday, December 9	National Pastry Day
Sunday, December 13	Ice Cream Day
Wednesday, December 16	National Chocolate Covered Anything Day
Thursday, December 17	National Maple Syrup Day
Friday, December 18	Bake Cookies Day
Saturday, December 19	Oatmeal Muffin Day
Thursday, December 24	National Chocolate Day National Egg Nog Day
Saturday, December 26	National Candy Cane Day

“People who love to eat are always the best people.”

– Julia Child

Here Comes Santa Claus (virtually) Ho, Ho, Ho!

Please join CSSC on Wednesday, December 9, at 6:30 p.m., for a festive, celebratory evening including our annual tree lighting, a visit from St. Nick, as well as, a community sing-along with **Rafi, the Singing Jeweler**. All of these wonderful festivities will be brought to you via Zoom. All you have to do is give us a call and we will email the Zoom link to you along with song sheets.

To register, please call Diane at 518-459-2857 ext. 305.



HELP CSSC WIN THE...



HOW TO VOTE

1. Easy! Go to timesunion.com/capitalregiongives
2. Click on the link to vote
3. Find Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc. from the nonprofit listing
4. *click* and your're done
5. One vote per day, per device. Voting ends December 10.

The top 10 nonprofits, by your votes, will each win \$10,000 in free advertising from the Times Union. Winners will be announced online and in the paper in December.

Defensive Driving Classes at The Beltrone Living Center



Roger Dames, CSSC's Driver Fitness Coordinator, will conduct Defensive Driving Classes in December as follows:

Saturday, December 5, 2020

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Classes will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at The Beltrone Living Center, 6 Winners Circle, Albany, NY. Cost is \$25 per person, due before day of class. To reserve your seat, call 518-459-2857, ext. 303.

Thank You to Our Many Supporters in 2020



Albany County
Office for the Aging

The Salvatore and Anna
Beltrone Family Foundation



Campito Plumbing & Heating, Inc.



Roemer Wallens
Gold & Mineaux, LLC
Counselors at Law



Holiday Angels

Gifts will be delivered to seniors throughout the community on Saturday, December 5th from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. by Holiday Angels (CSSC and CAP Com Staff).

(Left to Right) Christopher McKenna, President/CEO CapCom FCU, Willis Reed, CapCom FCU Director of Insurance Services, Laurie Miedema, CSSC Development Director, and Diane Conroy-LaCivita, CSSC Executive Director.



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

Executive Director

Diane Conroy-LaCivita
dconroylacivita@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 305

Administrative Operations and HR

Carol Ripley, Director
cripley@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 310

Bright Horizons

Susan Napierski, Director
snapierski@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 322
Colonie 518-459-7967
Latham 518-244-5206

Development

Laurie Miedema, Director
lmiedema@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 304

Driver Fitness Center

Roger Dames, Coordinator
rdames@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 326

Finance

Andrew C. Koenig, CPA, Director
akoenig@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 306

Lifelong Wellness

Caroline Barrett, Director
cbarrett@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 327

RSVP and Volunteer Coordinator

Marisa Geraghty, Director
mgeraghty@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 308

Tool Box

Leonard G. St. Gelais, Coordinator
lstgelais@colonieseniors.org
518-608-4758

Transportation Services

Don Anderson, Director
danderson@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 301
To Schedule a Ride: 518-459-6064

Umbrella of Colonie

Nicole Brammer, Coordinator
nbrammer@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 311

The Beltrone Living Center

Debbie McClune, Site Manager
dmclune@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2711

King Thiel Senior Community and Sheehy Manor

Aimee Richardson, Site Manager
arichardson@colonieseniors.org
King Thiel: 518-429-6292
Sheehy Manor: 518-782-2350

Media and Communications

Michael DiGiuseppe, Specialist
mdigiuseppe@colonieseniors.org
518-459-2857, ext. 337



Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc.
6 Winners Circle
Albany, NY 12205

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. Postage Paid
Albany, N.Y.
Permit No. 74

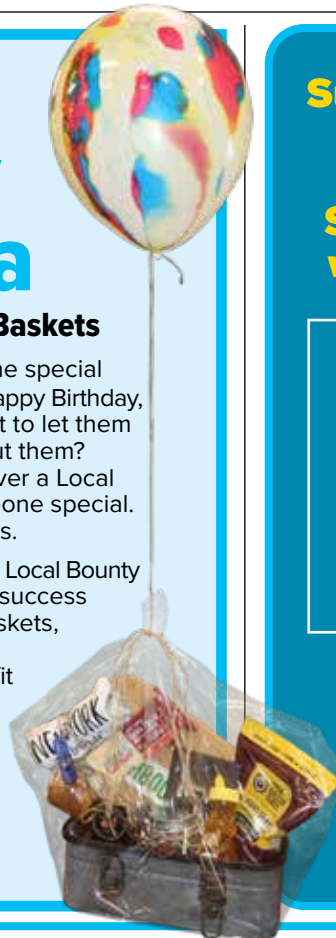
A Great Holiday Gift Idea

CSSC's Local Bounty Baskets

Looking at sending someone special something to wish them a Happy Birthday, a Happy Anniversary, or just to let them know you are thinking about them? Consider having CSSC deliver a Local Bounty Basket to that someone special. Free delivery up to ten miles.

Introduced in August, CSSC's Local Bounty Baskets have been a great success thus far. These beautiful baskets, filled with a variety of local product and produce, benefit local producers and farmers as well as Colonie Senior Service Centers.

For additional information, please call Diane at 518-459-2857, ext. 305.



Support the Programs and Services of Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc. with a year-end gift!

Online at
www.colonieseniors.org
by clicking "Make A Gift"
or by mail at
Colonie Senior
Service Centers, Inc.
6 Winners Circle
Albany, NY 12205

Reminder!

#Giving Tuesday
is December 2.
Please go to our website
and donate to CSSC.