

THE SENIOR STARTER

APRIL 2023

THE PLACE TO START FOR SERVICES

BY THE

**TOWN OF COLONIE
SENIOR RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**



Greetings!

With April being recognized nationally as Volunteer month, I would like to formally thank all who volunteer their time and talents. A great big shout out to all the volunteers who devote their time to the Town of Colonie Six (6) not-for-profit senior citizens clubs annually. These clubs continue to provide Town of Colonie seniors with opportunities to engage in social and recreational activities, autonomously and with minimal supervision by our department. The dedication and energy these volunteers possess is amazing!

Just so you have an idea of the scope of the volunteers who assist with our clubs, the following are some of the titles of the positions they hold: Club Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, Secretaries, Membership Chair, Sunshine Club, Trip Leaders, Advisory Committee Representatives, Picnic Committee members and Activity Leaders. Our clubs exist and thrive due to the selfless acts of these volunteers. If you belong to a club, please take the time to let these individuals know how much you appreciate them.

If you have never volunteered, there's no time to waste. Our clubs are always looking for new recruits. There are various ways you can help out; just ask your club officers and they will gladly take you under their wings. I can guarantee you that you will reap the rewards of your service.

Sincerely,

Angelina

Angelina J. Searles
Director



Inside This Issue

- ⇒ Greeting - Angelina Searles, Director
- ⇒ Staff Contact Info. Pg. 2
- ⇒ Veterans' Programs, Pg. 2
- ⇒ StateWide Medicare Corner Pg. 2
- ⇒ Caregiver Stress & Burnout, Pg. 3
- ⇒ Volunteer Opportunities, Pg.3
- ⇒ Heating Oil Assistance, Pg. 3
- ⇒ Senior Clubs Pg. 4
- ⇒ Town Supervisor's Message, Pg. 4
- ⇒ "Celebrate a Senior" Spotlight, Pg. 5



12 Metro Park Road, Suite 103
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(518) 459-5051

Newsletter Editor
Carrie Blanchard

All You Can Eat Breakfast

To Support our local Veterans

When: Sunday, April 9th & Sunday, April 23rd

Time: 8am - 11:15am

Cost: \$12 per person

All monies raised to towards Veterans' Benefits

Who: Open to the public

Location: Robert L. Weininger

VFW Post 8692

140 VFW Road

Albany NY 12205

Includes: Eggs (made to order), Pancakes, French Toast, Sausage, Bacon, Home fries, Coffee, Tea & Juice.

Take-out orders are available, just call 518-456-7794 the morning of the breakfast to place your order.



Monthly Veteran's Assistance

Starting in May, a representative from the NYS Department of Veterans' Services will be available to assist veterans with any questions or issues concerning eligibility for benefits, VA health care or any other veteran related concerns.

When: Monday, May 8 then the 2nd Monday of the month thereafter.

Time: 12-2pm

Location: Our office - 12 Metro Park Rd. Ste.#103, Albany, NY 12205

Appointments Required!

Call our office 518-459-5051, ext. 2 to schedule



StateWide's Medicare Corner

COVID-19 Fraud SMP Alert

Scams related to COVID-19 are rapidly increasing as the public health emergency is approaching an end. Scammers are targeting older adults and those with serious long-term health conditions who appear to have a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19. Fraudsters are attempting to bill Medicare for sham tests or treatments related to COVID-19 and are targeting individuals to illegally obtain money, personal information, and Medicare numbers. Individuals are using test sites, telemarketing, texts, social media, television commercials, and door-to-door visits to perpetrate COVID-19 scams. Coverage of COVID-19 vaccines will not change for people with Medicare when the public health emergency ends, it will still be available without cost sharing. COVID-19 tests could also be covered, consult your insurance plan directly for details.

The public health emergency is ending soon, COVID-19 scammers are out in full force! Be on the lookout for:

- Ignore offers or ads for COVID-19 testing or treatments through unsolicited calls, texts, emails, television ads, websites, and social media sites.
- Don't fall for pressure tactics or time sensitive offers.
- Be cautious of COVID-19 survey scams that offer money or gifts in exchange for personal, medical, or financial information.

Understanding Medicare coverage is important to help protect yourself from Medicare fraud schemes. For more information on Medicare covered services call an outreach counselor at 800-333-4374. New York StateWide Senior Action Council can assist with Medicare questions, appeals and billing issues, Medicare Fraud, and Patient's Rights.

**JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST BY
EMAILING CARRIE AT
BLANCHARDC@COLONIE.ORG**



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Caregiver Stress & Burnout

Caregiver stress affects about 36% of the 53 million unpaid family caregivers in the United States, according to a recent report by *AARP & The National Alliance for Caregiving*. To give you some tools to better recognize caregiver stress and burnout, let's explore some of the symptoms. Plus, experts offer several ways you can better manage caregiver stress, and when it's time to seek help to prevent it from reaching the level of burnout.

What is caregiver stress?

Caregiver stress occurs when the emotional, mental and physical impacts of being a caregiver become overwhelming. It can happen to anyone who takes care of a person with a disability, health condition or someone who is elderly. One of the main challenges is having too little time for themselves or their family and friends. Caregiver stress may be experienced in a variety of ways, including:

- Overeating or not eating enough
- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Experiencing feelings of isolation or depression
- Treating the person you're caring for poorly

What is caregiver burnout?

Caregiver burnout comes from caregiver stress that's left unaddressed and reaches the level of exhaustion. While everyone has a unique experience of caretaking, here are some top reasons for burnout:

- Too much workload or demand placed on c/g
- Loss of control from lack of resources/knowledge
- The emotional toll of seeing your loved one struggle w/ mental, physical or behavioral issues

Here are some ways to manage caregiver stress:

- Practice setting boundaries. Saying "NO" when your plate is already full.
- Prioritize time for yourself each day - even if it's just a few minutes to have break.
- Ask for help and support from your family, friends, health care community including seeking professional help if needed.
- Schedule time for activities or people you enjoy

When caregiver stress becomes burnout

Burnout is a serious health concern. When caregiver stress becomes too much to handle and the signs of burnout appear, it's important to seek help. If you think you may be experiencing depression, anxiety or another mental health condition due to caregiver burnout, a professional therapist can work with you to help reduce and eliminate your symptoms. There are also services available for caregivers including: adult day care, home health aides, and caregiver support services.

Our staff can help you find information and resources for caregivers.

Give us a call, 518-459-5051, ext. 2

**Funded in Part by Albany County Dept. for Aging*

Volunteer to Make a Difference

Have you ever thought about volunteering?

If so, The Town of Colonie Senior Resource Dept. is continuously recruiting volunteers to provide Telephone Reassurance and Grocery Shopping Assistance to seniors in need.

The Telephone Reassurance Program - provides a simple, yet effective, way to promote social connection and address senior loneliness. This opportunity allows you to volunteer right from your home.

The Grocery Shopping Assistance Program - consists of grocery shopping for seniors who are unable to do so on their own. Although it may sound like a small task it can make a world of difference to a senior in need.

There are amazing benefits to volunteering such as giving back to your community, making a difference, and bringing joy into your life.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact: Sue Conlon • 518-867-3931 • conlons@colonie.org



Financial Assistance w/Heating Oil

Albany Community Action Partnership (ACAP) is providing funding for a portion of heating oil for eligible Albany County homeowners and renters. The grant enables us to fund deliveries to low income Albany county residents. The income eligibility is specific to each family and is assessed during the intake.

How to Apply:

- Complete ACAP's Client Intake Application
- Provide the following documents:
 - ⇒ ID
 - ⇒ Proof of Income (household)
 - ⇒ Oil Bill

ACAP will contact you directly to inform you if you are approved. If you are approved, ACAP will send the approved amount directly to your oil company.

For more information, call ACAP at 518-463-3175, ext. 125 or email them at jdejesus@albanycap.org.



THE POWER OF CHANGE

Senior Clubs of Colonie

In honor of National Volunteer Month, I'd like to take this time thank the all the club members that volunteer and help out their club. Whether you become an officer, serve coffee, sell raffle tickets, call Bingo or anything that helps to keep your club running smoothly....THANK YOU!

I have had the privilege of working closely with all the clubs, especially the officers for the past 15yrs! The dedication you have for your respective club(s) is truly remarkable and seniors in the Town of Colonie are lucky to have you!

With thanks and appreciation, Carrie Blanchard

THANK YOU!



Peter G. Crummey
Town Supervisor

TOWN OF COLONIE

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Supervisor Crummey's Colonie Connection

According to many historians, the month of April gets its name from the Latin word "aperire", meaning *to open*, because plants, flowers and trees begin to grow or bud. As the snow melts and the temperatures rise, I hope that you will step into Spring at one of our many events across the Town highlighting our dedication to the environment and to our community's natural beauty. Our Library will celebrate Earth Day by hosting a variety of programs on April 22. This includes a compost bin and rain barrel sale, which help our residents enjoy the environmental benefits of reduced trash in our landfill and cleaner water. Also, on April 22, in partnership with the Town's Planning and Economic Department, the Library will host a Repair Café which will help you save money by teaching you the necessary skills to fix broken, everyday objects so they don't need to be discarded. We will once again recognize Arbor Day at an event held at our historic Pruyn House on May 13 from 9-12pm. Our Conservation Advisory Council will hand out free seedlings and educate the community about conservation.

I would like to congratulate our *Celebrate a Senior* Honoree Sarah Wellen. Sarah's creativity and dedication has led her to be successful in many areas. I applaud her on her long-time commitment to teaching and on her remarkable triumphs as a poet.

Don't forget to submit nominations, including a photograph, to blanchardc@colonie.org by April 15 for our next Town of Colonie *Celebrate a Senior* segment.



Celebrate a Senior Spotlight

April is National Poetry Month and an opportune time to spotlight award winning, published poet and author, Sarah Wellen. Sarah is a resident of the TOC who has fine tuned her interests and talents to the extent of sharing them with others. Sarah was introduced to poetry in grade school and soon started writing her own poems to share with others for various holidays. While attending college, Sarah began writing poetry again. Sarah earned both her BA and MA from Adelphi while working in a glove shop to help pay for college, completing her student teaching and maintaining an active social life. It was there where she met her future, beloved husband of 50 years, Rick.

Sarah had taught English for seven years before taking a sixteen-year break from the classroom to raise three daughters and one son. Sarah began writing poetry again when their youngest was nearing school. Although, like most artists, she could share stories of rejection, this did not stop Sarah from sharing her expressions with others. Friends and family were continually lucky recipients of her work. Being an artist who has been able to think outside of the box, Sarah creatively placed an advertisement in the local paper. She offered to write a personalized poem for people at \$1 per line; people responded. Sarah's creative flow had touched the people in her local area and led to a radio interview where she further shared her expressive verses.

Sarah has since been published in *The Patent Trader*, *The Orange County Register*, *The Night Heron Poetry Anthology*, *Oasis Journal* and *The Martin Downs Bulletin*. In 2001, Sarah won a statewide poetry contest in Florida which was sponsored by *The American Association of University Women*, of which she was a member. A collection of her poetry, titled *Reflections* was published in 2007; this also highlighted Sarah's photography. She participated in Open Mike Sessions and Poetry Slams, gave poetry readings to groups and had been part of a four-poet panel in a poetry workshop. Sarah made contributions to various other anthologies and won prizes for her art.

Sarah taught high school English and English as a Second Language (ESL) for over 35 years. She is also an amateur guitar player who had lectured on folk music's role in our cultural heritage. Sarah has been a member of the *American Italian Museum* for many years and created their on-location thrift store, that to this day, contributes its profits to the museum.

IF LIFE IS BUT A DREAM

If life is but a dream
In the scheme of things,
When I die,
Scatter my ashes to the wind
To be one with the Earth,
Nurturing nature.

Like a runaway balloon,
My soul will soar to the sky
And beyond, into space,
Becoming a star
Shining upon mortals
Basking in my afterglow.

After eons in the universe,
In a starburst
I will become stardust
Roaming the world,
Touching people,
Inspiring them to dream...

By Sarah Wellen

