



Office for
the Aging



Celebrating NY's Older Volunteers

MAKE YOUR MARK

Older New Yorkers' Day
Tuesday 11.17.20
Online event
Hosted in Albany, NY

Older New Yorkers' Day

NOVEMBER 17, 2020
VIRTUAL EVENT

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.”
— **Muhammad Ali**

Thank you for attending!

NYSOFA Staff



Office for the Aging

Our mission is to help older New Yorkers be as independent as possible for as long as possible through advocacy, development, and the delivery of person-centered, consumer-oriented, and cost-effective policies, programs, and services that support and empower older adults and their families, in partnership with the network of public and private organizations that serve them.

The following pages contain the 2020 Older New Yorkers' Day awardees for the counties we serve. We salute them for their contributions.

The following awardees were submitted by area agency on aging (AAA) directors as an expression of their gratitude for the service of their volunteers.

NYSOFA thanks the AAA directors for providing us with such thoughtful submissions and allowing us to share them in this commemorative booklet.



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Greg Olsen, Acting Director



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

November 17, 2020

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to send greetings to everyone participating in this virtual celebration of *Older New Yorkers' Day*, hosted by the New York State Office for the Aging.

The generations who came before us are cherished and admired individuals from whom we can learn and improve ourselves. We respect their lifelong experiences and lessons passed down to us, and each year the Empire State sets aside a day to recognize them as the foundation of our state and nation, and to honor extraordinary members of this special population.

As the early epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year has been especially difficult and demanding for the Empire State and its people. Yet nowhere is human strength and resilience more visible than among inspiring Americans who came before us and faced other challenges – from various wars, to domestic conflicts, to economic crises, to social and political unrest. They carried us through difficult times, emerging with faith, hope, and optimism in the potential of future generations.

This year's Older Americans Month theme, "Mark Your Mark," gives us the opportunity to recognize the profound legacy and impact of older New Yorkers, and we admire and appreciate them for giving so much to us. I applaud all of the awardees being recognized for their contributions to our communities and fellow citizens through their ongoing advocacy, volunteer work, and civic engagement.

While these challenging times ask each of us to exercise safety and respect through social distancing, technology thankfully allows you to carry out this tradition in an online venue, reinforcing your sense of togetherness and purpose. We thank those who worked to set this virtual stage, which invites many Older New Yorkers to share a moment of gratitude, as we recommit ourselves to supporting and serving their best interests.

New York State is a united family of one people and your shared acts and contributions truly exemplify the phrase "E Pluribus Unum,"—"Out of Many, One." It is the lasting promise of the beliefs we inherited from our parents and the enduring flame of a bright future that we pass on to our children.

Warmest regards for a memorable celebration and best wishes for good health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew M. Cuomo".

ANDREW M. CUOMO

WE WORK FOR THE PEOPLE
PERFORMANCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ PRIDE



ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

**Office for
the Aging**

GREG OLSEN
Acting Director

November 17, 2020

Dear Friends:

Older Americans Month is recognized annually in New York State and across the country. This important designation in the month of May provides an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the enormous contributions older Americans have made to the country, their communities, and their families. And even as we face unprecedented challenges with the coronavirus pandemic, older adults across the state have continued to step up in their communities. The 2020 Older Americans Month theme “Make Your Mark” perfectly captures the role older New Yorkers have been making during this pandemic. Their time, experience, and talents benefit family, peers, and neighbors every day. This theme highlights the difference everyone can make—for older adults, for caregivers, and for communities.

New York State is home to more than 4.6 million people over the age of 60 and 3.7 million between the ages of 45 and 59, ranking fourth in the nation; and it is anticipated that New York’s older population will grow to more than 5 million by the year 2030. Older adults should be valued and honored for their life achievements and recognized for their experience, knowledge, wisdom, and accomplishments.

Many older New Yorkers are active community members involved in volunteering, arts and culture, and civic engagement. Additionally, they support many local programs, services, and organizations that are important to their communities such as hospitals, nonprofits, boys & girls clubs, mentoring, transportation, home delivered meals, health insurance counseling and assistance, and quality of care oversight in skilled nursing facilities, among others. In New York State, there are approximately 935,000 individuals over the age of 55 who contribute almost 495 million hours of service at an economic value of more than \$13.8 billion annually.

The New York State Office for the Aging has highlighted for years the significant contributions older New Yorkers make to their families, communities, and the economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated just how critical our network of volunteers is as they put themselves at risk every day to provide vital services to older adults in their homes to slow the spread of the virus.

As New York State celebrates this year’s awardees, we thank them for their selfless service, and today we pay tribute to them and the hundreds of thousands of other volunteers who contribute to our great state. We recognize how essential our older volunteers are. You are saving lives. I could not be more thankful and proud.

Sincerely,

Greg Olsen
Acting Director

Chair
Aging
Legislative Commission on Rural
Resources
Committees
Agriculture
Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks
and Recreation
Elections
Environmental Conservation
Higher Education

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



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November 2020

Dear Friends,

As chair of the New York State Senate Committee on Aging, I am delighted to join in recognizing all those who do so much to enhance the quality of life for New Yorkers of all ages. This annual observance of Older New **Yorkers' Day underscores the wealth of** talent, energy and dedication that plays such an essential part in making our communities stronger and our state a better place to live.

In these challenging pandemic times, the importance of community, mutual support and connectedness has become clearer than ever. The honorees we celebrate come from all walks of life and realms of experience. They come from cities, villages and rural hamlets. But they share an important trait: a capacity to recognize the needs of their communities and willingness to step up time and again to fill those needs. By their willingness to invest their time and energy in others, they make our communities stronger and our lives richer. They exemplify the highest levels of volunteerism and engaged citizenship, and they inspire us all.

To our honorees: On behalf of the New York State Senate, I thank you for your service and your tireless dedication to improving the quality of life for your neighbors, your communities and all of New York State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel May".

Senator Rachel May
53rd District, NY
Chair, Senate Committee on Aging



November 17, 2020

Dear Friends:

As Chair of the New York State Assembly's Committee on Aging, on behalf of the entire Assembly, I am pleased to welcome you to Older New Yorker's Day!

Today, as we celebrate Older New Yorker's Day, we are gathering together virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This virus has had a devastating impact on many people across our state and nation. I believe that no matter how young or old you are, this time will go down in history as one of the most unique challenges to our families.

To all of those who have been directly affected by COVID-19, I extend my heartfelt thoughts. I know that together we will get through this difficult time and build a better future.

I am so pleased to participate in this event as we recognize our state's most distinguished citizens. After a lifetime of participating in the growth of our state, you have continued to inspire your communities through volunteerism and service.

Older New Yorker's have a wealth of experience and expertise that can benefit and transform communities. Through your dedicated and selfless efforts, you have truly helped make our state better for all families. You should be proud of your contribution to protecting the quality of life, health and safety for yourself and your neighbors.

I am proud to join with you as we continue working to secure resources for the various services and programs that serve older adults throughout New York State. With more people living longer and as the "baby boomer" generation ages, it is essential that we continue to meet the increasing demand of such programs, and ensure that all older New Yorkers receive needed services, both at home and in their communities.

Congratulations on being honored at the 2020 Older New Yorker's Day! Thank you again for all the work you do for our community and I look forward to a great partnership.

Sincerely,

Harry B. Bronson
Member of Assembly



AWARDEE:

Joan Lipscomb

Albany County

Joan Lipscomb has devoted her life to her faith and family. She stated that she has lived by the motto “live with and for the people.” She is always willing to address the needs in her community, such as helping the homeless and offering support. Her kindness is unmatched and her community is better for it. She has been a part of the interfaith community, reaching out to people of all faiths and walks of life and volunteering for the Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, and the Jewish Federation of NENY. As an educator she strives to bring out the best in her students. She also is a volunteer on the Albany County Office for the Aging’s Advisory Council.

Joan was born at Brady Hospital in Albany and was raised and went to school in Ravena-Coeymans, where she resided for 83 years before recently moving back to Albany. Ms. Lipscomb attended the teaching college at Plattsburgh before embarking on a 32 year long career working for New York State Government. Joan’s motto is “Treat people as you want to be treated,” which has driven her service to the community. She said her mother played a large role in shaping who she is as a person, and realized that although her mother was tough on her growing up, the benefits of it ultimately became clear as she grew older. Joan had four children of her own and now has five grandchildren. Even though she now resides in Albany, she still travels to Ravena daily, stating she has always loved her hometown. She currently serves as a substitute teacher at two local elementary schools in the Ravena-Coeymans Selkirk district.



AWARDEE:
Jerry Sykes
Albany County



Jerry Sykes first witnessed the importance of giving of one's time and resources from his parents. He and his wife are a true testament of service for others. He grew his locally-based retail operation to a multi-state five-store chain with 80 employees. He promoted a friendly atmosphere and emphasized the highest level of service. He positioned the stores as fundamental supporters and contributors to community events and fundraisers. He empowered employees, establishing an organizational structure and environment that encouraged employees to make decisions, to grow as associates, and to feel that they were valued and fully invested in the company. He fostered an environment of service to others. Mr. Sykes donated his time and resources to so many organizations throughout the Capital District.

Mr. Sykes is a native New Yorker and has lived in the Albany area for over 30 years with his wife, Ilene, and their family. He has had a very successful career both in corporate and entrepreneurial settings.

He began his career at the retail department store Abraham & Strauss in 1961. He started as a trainee and worked to become a divisional merchandise manager. From Abraham & Strauss, he went on to other fine retail chains such as Jordan Marsh, Joseke's, and Filene's, and Cohoes Specialty in Albany County. He owned and operated Party Warehouse from 1989 to 2013. At Party Warehouse, Mr. Sykes centered his business on the community and supported service through events and fundraisers. Additionally, he served as a board member for St. Anne's Institute, Capital Repertory Theatre, and Daughters of Sarah Jewish Foundation. Mr. Sykes previously served as board president at the Colonie Country Club and at the New York State Museum Institute. He currently serves as a board member of Shabbos House, as the Endowment Board of Governors Chairman for the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York, and volunteers for the Jewish Coalition for Literacy's reading program.

Mr. Sykes strongly believes in giving back to his community. He learned early on the importance of volunteering time and resources for the betterment of his community. Mr. Sykes believes: "Volunteering is an avenue to encourage and support organizations, as well as giving the opportunity to share one's knowledge."

AWARDEE:

Alan Dibert

Allegany County



Alan Dibert came to the Allegany County Office for the Aging at the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, offering to volunteer. At that time, the office faced many challenges. Only half of the staff was allowed in the office, they had lost many volunteers, and there was a massive increase in the number of clients they were serving. Alan was willing to help with the home delivered meals and transportation programs, as needed. Since their needs were so large, Alan took on an immediate role, delivering meals on wheels five days a week for a route that was specially created for the increase due to COVID-19. During the height of the pandemic, Alan also assisted in getting groceries for clients in addition to delivering meals. Once the office began to re-open some services, Alan started transporting clients to doctor's appointments and shopping. Alan has been very flexible and willing to adjust his volunteering schedule to meet changing needs. The office reports that he takes great pride in his work and is very dependable, never once missing a day since his start. "He stepped in at a very difficult time without any hesitation to provide a service that was needed in our community. It is because of the commitment of volunteers like Alan that valuable programs can be offered."

Alan Dibert was born in Wellsville, NY, and was raised in Angelica, NY. Alan has lived in Maine, Massachusetts, Texas, and New Hampshire. Alan worked at Bush Furniture in Jamestown, NY as a computerized machine operator for 17 years. Through much of his career he specialized in computerized machine operation. Alan has also worked as an Uber and Lyft driver. When he is not working or volunteering, Alan enjoys playing in various pool leagues. Currently, Alan is a part-time Green Thumb worker as groundskeeper and provides maintenance at a local rest stop. He also is active in the Allegany Memorial Speedway in Wellsville, NY, as a flagger and light operator.

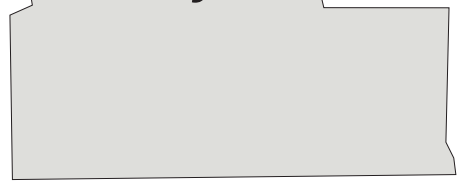
Alan says, "It just feels good helping people out. I like to meet people and volunteering for the Office for the Aging is a great way to do that. The people I serve are in need and appreciate the help I give. I enjoy putting a smile on their faces and petting their dogs."



AWARDEE:

Darlene Leonard

Broome County



Over the years, Darlene Leonard has become an expert in Broome County agencies and nonprofits. When someone struggles with a need in their life, she feels compelled to find solutions and offer assistance. In doing so, she has made a significant impact on the lives of older residents in her community. The Endicott Holiday Parade has grown tenfold over the years with Darlene's help, one of the many successful community events in which she participates. Her leadership qualities were enhanced when she graduated from the Broome Leadership Institute and Rotary Leadership Institute. There she learned skills that have served her as a professional, employee, and volunteer. She is a CERT (Community Emergency Rescue Training) graduate, making her an important community resource in times of emergencies. Darlene has taught classes in first aid, CPR, and emergency preparedness. Helping in the soup kitchen of her church is very rewarding, as Darlene feels passionate about assisting those in the greatest need. Likewise, she considers her membership in the Rotary club extremely meaningful. A Rotary motto—Service above Self, coincides with Darlene's work and life ethic.

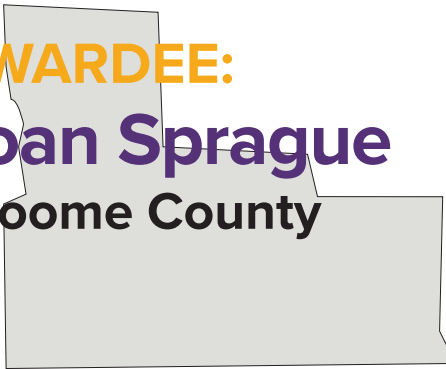
Darlene is a native New Yorker, born in Johnson City, and residing in Endicott ever since. She attended the Union Endicott school system and graduated from SUNY Broome in 1993 with an AAS in management and a marketing degree. She pursued college part-time for nine years while raising three children. In addition to school and full-time employment, she worked for the Town of Union Parks and Recreation as a park ranger and volleyball referee. From 1971 to 2000, Darlene worked as an activity director for three local nursing homes. She sincerely loved this phase of her career and sharing her life with the residents.

In late 2000, Darlene was appointed Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Western Broome Family Center. She was offered another position as Executive Director of Community Options for adults with developmental disabilities in 2006. She soon advanced to the Director of Susquehanna Day Habilitation. After working at several Broome County senior centers and Yesteryears, Darlene became the Johnson City Senior Center Executive Director at the end of her career path. She organized recreational, educational, and wellness activities and was grateful to assist retired seniors looking for these opportunities.

Darlene shares with us that you should "Find a mission that meets your past experiences and research the position before coming on board. You will get more personal satisfaction if the volunteering opportunity fits your skills, and you will leave with a smile and look forward to your next visit."

AWARDEE:

Joan Sprague
Broome County



Joan Sprague’s volunteer career started at a young age through the Girl Scouts. She remembers high school sorority activities in the community, specifically dances with residents at the local state hospital. As a young adult she became leader of a Cadette Girl Scout troop, which led to a job with the Girl Scouts. She’s a member of the Junior League and still participates in their volunteer activities. If you’re ever in Binghamton on a First Friday May through August you might see Joan on the BC Trolley, sharing local history and architectural facts. Every October she coordinates a downtown walking tour where actors portray the spirits of persons significant to Binghamton’s past. She’s instrumental in planning a house tour for the Preservation Association. Each December Joan coordinates more than 30 volunteers to deliver nearly 1,000 meals on Christmas Day for the Bandera Family Christmas Dinner. She delivers Meals on Wheels weekly and participates on workgroups for the Age Friendly Community initiative underway in Broome County. Once a week she drives someone to medical appointments for Faith in Action Volunteers. Other volunteer opportunities come and go as she is interested or as there is a need in the community.

Born in Utica NY, Joan moved to Binghamton at age 10 and has lived in the Southern Tier ever since, with the exception of college in Pennsylvania, and employment with the Girl Scouts in Florida and Germany. She has spent her life serving others, working for United Way as Director of the Voluntary Action Center and later as a Department of Social Services Medicaid Examiner. Her final years of employment were with the Broome County Office for Aging Nutrition Unit, where she coordinated the Home Delivered Meals Program. Joan has an elementary education degree from the SUNY system. Although she taught minimally in primary schools, her degree has served her well throughout her career in human services, including a monthly declutter discussion she continues to lead at a local senior center. Never married, Joan has a significant other and many great and supportive friends.

Joan shared with us that “it’s ingrained in the American spirit to help others. Your commitment to help can be large or small and it can be here and there. Not everyone has the time or drive for volunteering, yet I believe that most people will help others if asked.”



AWARDEE:

Doris Gross

Cattaraugus County

The Cattaraugus County Home Delivered Meals coordinator can't say enough good things about Doris Gross and her dedication to the Senior Wellness and Nutrition site. Her station manager says that Doris is friendly, prompt, and prepared to do whatever is necessary. Doris has been volunteering at the site for 18 years and has a bright smile and a bubbly personality. She positively impacts everyone who enters her orbit. Her experience and demeanor are a calming influence on everyone around her. Doris' supervisor shared that when she was a new manager, she was feeling completely overwhelmed, and Doris helped calm her, showing her the ropes. Doris' kindness was the reason the manager stayed on the job. Doris routinely starts her day by setting tables, packing meal bags for the home bound meal recipients, serving, and making trays for congregate diners. She rarely takes a moment to rest and is always making sure that everyone else has what they need. Her kindness and caring make her a favorite at the site and people look forward to seeing her every day. She is a dynamo and a blessing to the people with whom she works and serves.

Doris was born in the Little Valley area of New York. She is a lifelong resident of New York and lives just eight miles from the close-knit community in which she grew up. She met and married her husband, Charles, in 1963. Charles' family owned and operated a dairy farm, which Doris and Charles took over from his father when they married. They operated the farm until Charles' passing in 2002. At that time, one of their sons took over the family farm. Doris says that the farm is much smaller today than when she and Charles ran it, but she's glad it's still in the family. Doris and Charles were blessed with five children, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Doris began volunteering after her husband passed away to remain connected to the community.

Doris says, "Volunteering is a great way to keep busy. As someone who has arthritis, it's painful and my hands hurt a lot, but volunteering helps me stay active and exercising. It also keeps me involved with people, and that's really important."

AWARDEE:
Sylvia Say
Cattaraugus County



Even as she grieved the loss of her husband in 2018, Sylvia Say decided the best thing to do would be to give back to her community. She started volunteering for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program with the Tai Chi for Arthritis class. There she began to thrive and became dedicated to her practice of the art. As she mastered the forms, she began to work with the Tai Chi instructor to help teach and encourage other students. She still attends Tai Chi with a group of regulars who continue to practice their skills. She remains a constant source of leadership and encouragement. Sylvia was instrumental in rebuilding the volunteer database when a data crash resulted in the loss of over 270 volunteer records. She used her organizational skills to organize replacement paperwork, scan, and attach hundreds of replacement documents. Sylvia is a new member of the Advisory Council. There, she can further use her wisdom and knowledge guiding programs that will benefit other seniors. Finally, Sylvia serves her church community by being part of the cleaning team and as a prayer partner.

Sylvia was born in Olean and the youngest of five children. She is a lifelong resident of New York. She spent some time away in her early 20s, but returned to her hometown. Sylvia married the love of her life, Richard, in 1972. Eventually, they were able to purchase the house she grew up in, and she remains there still. Staying home with her young children was important to Sylvia and Richard—she feels blessed to have been a stay-at-home mom. Richard supported the family until suffering his first heart attack in his early 50s. Undaunted, Sylvia assumed the role of breadwinner, becoming a much-loved house manager for the rehabilitation center, where she cared for people with developmental disabilities and managed staff. When she “retired,” she worked on the memory unit at a local assisted living facility until she retired for real a couple of years later. In 2018, Sylvia lost her beloved husband. Instead of retreating, she reached out to the community to remain active. She now spends her time volunteering, doting on her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and attending church activities.

Sylvia says, “If you have the time to give back to your community, you should because it’s very rewarding. You get as much out of it as you put in.”



AWARDEE: **Patricia Messina** **Cayuga County**

For almost 18 years Pat Messina has volunteered in the kindergarten classroom at Owasco Elementary every Wednesday, where she reads, shares stories, and helps with writing. She also works with students at BOCES every year for spring clean-up and planting bulbs in the fall. For the past year Pat has worked with Genesee Elementary 4th graders, teaching them to sew. She has been involved with Habitat for Humanity, where she has helped build four houses. A recent effort included working with a group of women to create four quilts for Habitat's recent new homeowners. Pat is a creater extraordinaire! She knits, sews, and crochets, making prayer shawls and sensory mitts for older adults in need, makes numerous quilts for ill children through a program called "Project Linus," and contributes to the annual hat, mitten, and scarf distribution at Genesee Elementary. As a special project, she and her quilting friends created unique quilts for every funeral director in Auburn, which may be used to thoughtfully drape the body of a deceased loved one as they begin their journey to their final resting place.

Pat is on the board of the Ward O'Hara Agriculture Museum, where she volunteers in many capacities, including donning the clothes of an 18th century school marm, and sharing old time school and recess activities with visitors. She has long been active in her church, where she says, "There is almost nothing that I haven't done." She helps with monthly Red Cross blood drives, providing much appreciated homemade goodies for donors. And she has been a Friend of the Seymour Library, and has served on their board of trustees for 12 years. As an active RSVP program volunteer, Pat has logged over 1,144 hours of volunteer hours over the past 14 years.

Pat lives in Auburn and was a teacher at the Herman Avenue Elementary School for 35 years.

She describes herself by saying, "I am a worker bee. I identify needs and do what needs to be done. Volunteering helps you to grow and meet new people."



AWARDEE:

Betty Walosky **Cayuga County**

Betty Walosky has dedicated decades of service to her community. One of her long-term community connections is with Merry-Go-Round Playhouse. She started out helping with the box office during summers but grew to be involved year-round, as needed. At the Empire State Theater and Musical Instrument Museum at the State Fair, she serves as a greeter and at the refreshment table to help promote the museum and its antique Wurlitzer Organ. Betty has volunteered with the Red Cross for more than 18 years through blood drives at the Methodist Church. She also has been a long time participant in their church's Old Thyme Fair. Betty volunteers with the youth lunch program at Casey Park in the summer and during school breaks. Once a month, she helps cook and pack meals for 150 individuals served by the Salvation Army. Betty is also a regular participant in making pierogies and babka at St Nicholas Church. She is well known for her chocolate cakes that follow the monthly performance of ARC's FAME program.

Betty was active in the VFW before the loss of her spouse four years ago. She is a life-time member and supports the organization, as her son is a career Air Force veteran.

She recently joined the Weedsport Museum, helping with receptions and other activities.

Betty is originally from Syracuse. She states that her parents were always involved in their community, very active in church, and served as scout leaders. Betty moved to Auburn with her children in 1969 and worked as a bookkeeper and customer service specialist for several companies. She put her job and life skills to good work in various community programs since her retirement almost 20 years ago.

Betty enjoys a wide variety of volunteer activities, crediting her family and friends with helping her make connections where help is needed. She says she likes to be busy and follows her interests to stay active and involved while serving the community.

AWARDEE:

Dr. Thomas Morrissey

Chautauqua County



Dr. Thomas Morrissey has served the community as a volunteer and activist for over 40 years. He has received numerous awards, including Activist of the Year from the WNY Labor Council, UUP's Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service, and the Pearl H. Brod Outstanding Retiree award. As a history professor, Tom has always encouraged his students and others to develop a positive attitude toward cultural differences and to strive to gain knowledge of different cultural practices and world views. A long-time member of the Center for Peace & Justice, Tom also participated in an Interfaith Council. The purpose of these organizations is to create a more vibrant and equitable community by cultivating diversity in belief, opinion, and culture. Additionally, Tom has volunteered for the Friends of Reed Library and the WNY Chamber Orchestra.

Originally from Boston, MA, Dr. Morrissey moved to New York in 1972 to pursue his career at SUNY Fredonia. He retired in 2007 after 35 years of service. Tom and his wife Gerda, who is originally from Germany, make their home in Fredonia, where they have resided for 48 years. Tom has two sons, one of whom lives in Germany and the other in North Carolina. Tom & Gerda visit their children and two grandchildren as often as possible, and enjoy sharing German holiday traditions with them, especially at Christmas. Tom has also been known to spread holiday cheer throughout the season to all who are lucky enough to be on his volunteer route.

Tom often states that as a volunteer he receives far more than he gives. The people he has met throughout his years of service have enriched his life in many ways and he misses those he no longer has the pleasure of serving.

AWARDEE:

Dr. Cynthia Huling Hummel

Chemung County



In 2011, Reverend Dr. Cynthia Hummel left her full-time ministry because of cognitive problems due to early-stage Alzheimer's disease. Instead of giving up, she began a new ministry as an Alzheimer's advocate. Cynthia led an Alzheimer's Association Early Stage support group for many years. She served on their Southern Tier Advisory Council, helping to plan and organize social activities and educational events. Cynthia served as a National Early-Stage Advisor for the Alzheimer's Association (2015) and recently completed a two-year term on the National Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services, representing 5.8 million Americans living with Alzheimer's and related dementias. This year, she presented at the third National Institute for Health (NIH) Research Summit on the impact of living with dementia. She currently serves on the Advisory Board for Dementia Action Alliance and on several other national advisory boards. Cynthia is passionate about Alzheimer's research and is in her 10th year of an Alzheimer's study, and was recently selected to serve as a participant advisor to the National Alzheimer's Disease Clinical Trials Consortium. Cynthia was a Peace Corp volunteer in Jamaica and helped start a school for special needs students.

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Huling Hummel graduated from Rutgers College in 1976 in the first class of women. She received her master's in divinity from New Brunswick Theological Seminary (NJ) in 1996 and her doctorate in ministry in preaching from McCormick Seminary in 2003. Cynthia has two grown children: Emily and William, and two beautiful grandchildren. Cynthia currently lives in Elmira, NY. She plays guitar and sings in the band Country Magic, and in 2016, was inducted into the NY State Country Music Hall of Honor. Cynthia also leads the "Faithful Friends Singers" for those living with dementia and care partners. A lifelong learner, she enrolled in Elmira College in 2011 and is auditing her 39th class. She is an artist and the author of three books. Her book, "Unmasking Alzheimer's" is a compendium of stories and photos of the 36 masks she created. Ten of her Alzheimer's masks were displayed at the National Gallery of Art in Stockholm during the 2019 Dementia X Conference. She loves to travel, kayak, and swim. Cynthia enjoys serving as a substitute preacher in area churches.

Cynthia's goal is to reduce the stigma of a dementia diagnosis by helping others better understand the disease, advocating for person-centered care, and promoting dementia-friendly communities. To that end, she remains active and engaged in her community. It's about moving from Why Me? to What's Next? "Don't Focus on what you can't do. Focus on how you can still make a difference."



AWARDEE:

Nellie Davis

Chenango County



Nellie Davis has been an active volunteer at the Brightman Senior Center in Greene, NY, for over 10 years. Nellie welcomes guests with a smile and helps set up the center in the morning, so everyone can come in and enjoy themselves. She also helps with meal service and cleans up at the end of the day. Nellie's support and dedication to the Brightman Senior Center has made a difference in the lives of countless participants.

Nellie was born and raised in New Berlin, NY, in the hills between New Berlin and Morris, NY. She attended school in New Berlin and then moved to New Mexico shortly after being married. In New Mexico, Nellie raised her family of six children. In 1967, she moved back to New York and worked at a knitting factory in Norwich, NY, for four years. Nellie then started working in Greene, NY, at the Raymond Corporation in the Electric Circuit Assembly division and officially retired after 26 years.

Nellie is currently the president of the Del-Se-Nango Fun Haven Dance Hall in Mc-Donough, NY. She is a member of the Fort Hill American Legion Auxiliary Unit #376 in Oxford, NY. In 2019, Nellie was nominated as the Chenango County Senior of the Year and honored at the Chenango County Senior Day at the Fair. At 89 years young, Nellie loves to dance, and if the weather cooperates, she will go dancing at least once a week. Her favorite music is classic country, but she loves all types of music.

When Nellie isn't dancing or volunteering at the Brightman Senior Center, she enjoys reading and traveling. A favorite trip that she had was a trip to Hawaii, where she visited five different islands. Nellie also enjoys spending time with her four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Nellie shared advice on how one can stay young and active: "Your outlook on life is better if you keep busy doing something that you enjoy."

AWARDEE:

Joanne Kinville-Salmon

Chenango County



Joanne Kinville-Salmon has invested a lifetime of service to her community. As a child, she was a member of 4H, and later, when her children were young, she became a 4H leader. Joanne was also a member of band boosters for the Richfield Springs Marching Band. She helped sew garment bags, altered band uniforms, and marched with the band in parades. Additionally, Joanne was a member of the Richfield Springs Garden Club for many years.

Joanne continues to be involved in her community by volunteering at the New Berlin Senior Center, where she is involved in all aspects of the center. According to Peggy, the Senior Center manager, "Joanne is sorely missed when she is not there. She goes about her volunteering very quietly and doesn't expect much fuss or bother in recognizing her contributions. She is involved in a little bit of everything and doesn't sit still for long. Joanne helps organize the birthday cards, sympathy cards and sympathy packages for the Senior Center participants. She also reaches out to those who are in need, whether it be for a helping hand or just to lend an ear if someone needs to talk. Joanne also helps unload the bus when the food arrives at the center, then serves up the desserts and helps with clean up at the end of the meal. Joanne and her husband Warren also give rides to and from the center to participants who no longer drive."

For 27 years, Joanne was the school lunch manager. She spent 17 years at the Richfield Springs School district and 10 years at the Mount Markham School District. During that time, Joanne was an active member of the NYS School Food Service Association and served as an officer for Herkimer and Otsego Counties. Joanne also worked at Robynwood Assisted Living in Oneonta, NY as the evening supervisor for three years.

Joanne has two sons, three stepdaughters, one stepson, and eight grandchildren. Joanne and Warren will be celebrating their 20th wedding anniversary this year. Both are avid bird watchers and have eight bird feeders and five suet feeders in their yard. Joanne also enjoys counted cross stitch, sewing, and knitting and says she can't even begin to count how many baby sweaters she has knit over the years. During the warmer months, Joanne enjoys working in her garden and cans vegetables to enjoy all winter long.

AWARDEE:

Shirley Coffey
Clinton County



Shirley Coffey has been volunteering in her community for 60 years, which is more than half of her life. Many organizations benefit from the multitude of Shirley’s interests. She has devoted many years to the St. John’s Parish community as a trustee, eucharistic minister, CCD, confirmation class instructor, and greeter. She has taught senior fitness classes for 25 years. Even though she has health issues, she remains very active and is currently teaching osteoporosis classes for the local Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Shirley has also donated her time and talents to the Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital, where she delivered flowers and assisted at the patient information desk and surgical waiting area. Shirley and her late husband also served as foster parents for Catholic Charities, where Shirley was a past president of the Ladies of Charity. Shirley helped as secretary to the board of trustees of the North Country Catholic Newspaper. She also volunteers at the local Senior Center as an AARP tax aide.

The list of her volunteer achievements speaks for itself.

Shirley was born in Auburn, NY, and moved to Dannemora at a young age. She later settled in Plattsburgh, NY, with her husband, Richard. Shirley and Richard were married for 48 years and have five children, nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. After raising her family, Shirley worked for Prudential Insurance and then Our Lady of Victory Church. Her greatest passion is helping family, friends, and even strangers in need.

Shirley’s advice about volunteering is: “You forget about yourself when you are helping someone else. Volunteering keeps you in tune with life and reality. I have always felt I gained more when I gave!”



AWARDEE:

Mary Raciot **Clinton County**



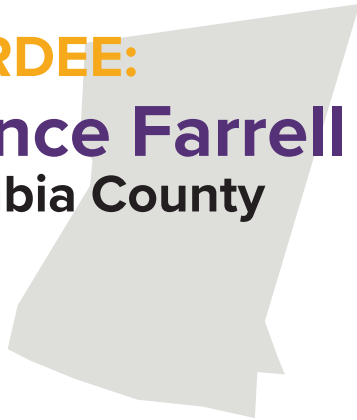
Mary Raciot is an active member of the Rouses Point Historical Society. She has spent years working on the purchasing and converting of the old railroad station into a museum that is now open for tourists and locals to visit. The Beautification Program is another village program that Mary is very involved in. Each summer she travels to Canada to purchase flowers for the downtown garden and hanging plants that are displayed throughout the village. Mary tends to these plants, watering them during the summer months. The Samuel D. Champlain stage is located in the village community park, where Mary volunteers her time to recruit musical groups to perform on the stage during the summer. These events are enjoyed by the local community members and people from other communities. Mary is very active in the St. Patrick's Parish, where she is a eucharistic minister and part of the Altar Rosary Society. She makes two quilts each year for the annual church raffle and prepares and serves food at the spring turkey dinner fundraiser. When Mary is not volunteering in her community she spends her time helping other organizations in her area. She donates quilts that she makes for relocating domestic violence individuals. The Christmas Bureau also benefits from Mary's time and generosity. Each year she buys toys and helps wrap gifts for children in need. Mary has a passion for helping those in need. Mary is also a past member of the Clinton County Office for the Aging Advisory Board.

Mary was born and raised in Mooers, NY and moved to Rouses Point when she got married. Mary has lived in the Village of Rouses Point for 59 years and is very involved in the village community. She has two daughters, Lori and Sally, who she says are "beautiful inside and out," and two grandchildren, Sarah and Justin. Mary retired from Northeastern Clinton Central School as an administrative assistant after 32 years. She enjoyed working in the school district and loved getting to know the students and their families.

Mary loves volunteering and appreciates the recognition but says that she couldn't do what she does without the help of others. "It takes more than one person to keep a village going."

AWARDEE:

Terence Farrell
Columbia County



Upon his retirement from the legal profession, Terence Farrell volunteered his time for Literacy Connections as a tutor for English as a Secondary Language. He also served as the legal advisor for the Hudson High School mock trial team. Terence has been volunteering for the past year and a half at the Columbia County Office for the Aging. There he has served as a counselor in the Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP), assisting clients with navigating the complex health insurance system. Terence works two days each week, helping to educate clients about Medicare options, thus enabling them to make the best choice with their enrollment. He is thorough, patient, and most importantly, a good listener. Terence is well-liked by the clients, and his volunteering is well appreciated by the Office for the Aging staff.

Terence hails from the state of Pennsylvania. He spent two years serving in the U.S. Army, being honorably discharged in 1970. In 1973, he graduated from the University of Texas School of Law in Austin, and has been practicing law ever since. Terence has lived in Columbia County for the past 20 years. He and his wife Cathy have been married for 32 years and are the proud parents of two children.

AWARDEE:
Karen Barkman
Delaware County



Karen Barkman’s various volunteer efforts include supporting her community’s church and emergency services efforts. Without volunteers, emergency assistance in Delaware County wouldn’t be readily available. Karen’s interest in the town’s historical background comes from her dedication to teaching others. It’s hard to find people to take on this role, so her involvement is very welcome and appreciated. Karen spent more than 40 years volunteering as a Girl Scout leader. This role was significant because she was a positive role model for young girls in their impressionable years. She was able to work with, teach, and help to develop the lives of young girls as well as broaden their horizons. There’s also always a need for instructors through the AARP Smart Driving program. Through Karen’s volunteer efforts with this program, she has enabled people living in Delaware County to take safe driving classes right in the county instead of traveling outside of the county.

Karen is a native New Yorker. She was born in Queens County, later moving to Meredith in Delaware County. She holds a bachelor of science degree in education. She taught in the BOCES system in Huntington, Long Island, in her earlier years, then chose to be a stay-at-home mom while raising her children. She later taught in Franklin Central School in Franklin, NY, from where she eventually retired. With four children and eight grandchildren, Karen has plenty of opportunities for activities with her family. She greatly enjoys her grandchildren’s sports and school activities. Karen has many different hobbies, including gardening, collecting shells, crafting, and cross-stitch, and she especially enjoys good food that she doesn’t have to cook! Her volunteer activities besides the Girl Scouts of America include the Meridale Community Church and the Meridale Ladies Aid, just to name a few. She relates her time with the AARP Smart Driver program to her teaching background by saying, “I’m a teacher. Once a teacher, always a teacher!” Karen acknowledges that the gratitude of people is her greatest reward. “When people say thank you, it’s like my paycheck. My gift from God is service. When I serve, I feel I’m doing what God wants me to do. Serving others makes me happy.”

Karen states, “I feel that volunteering is rewarding and satisfying. I would encourage everyone to consider giving back to the community or doing for others. You can always find something to volunteer for in your community.”



AWARDEE:
JoAnn DeWitt
Delaware County

JoAnn DeWitt’s volunteer efforts have been instrumental in the building of the local church, Delhi Christian Missionary Alliance. This project took over two years of around the clock work to complete. JoAnn served as the organizer to keep both morale and energy going by organizing meals. JoAnn believes that food nurtures friendship, so she developed and began running her own mini “Meals on Wheels” type program. She delights in reaching out to people in need—whether welcoming a new neighbor, a new baby, or helping someone who is ill, just home from the hospital or simply needing encouragement.

JoAnn has provided meals, personal care, and companionship to many older adults, including daily visits to help a 95-year-old parishioner remain at home with her son with disabilities. She’s helped a widowed lady close her Delhi home and move to the Delhi Senior Community. She makes weekly, treasured visits to a very dear and homebound friend for many years. As a Tai Chi for Arthritis volunteer instructor, JoAnn assists participants in increasing their mobility, balance, and breathing. She strives to keep students active and moving!

JoAnn grew up on a dairy farm that is now under the water of the Cannonsville reservoir. After they lost their home to the reservoir, her family moved to Oneonta. She attended the Oneonta school system and earned her associate’s degree in institutional food from SUNY Cobleskill. JoAnn began her career as the banquet manager at SUNY Oneonta. After she and her husband married, they moved to Delhi. There she continued her career with the Senior Dining Program at Delaware Opportunities, retiring after 39 years. At the Delhi Christian Missionary Alliance Church, JoAnn served as the music leader of her church quartet and is serving as a deacon and the secretary of the Women’s Guild. Two of JoAnn’s strongest talents are hospitality and friendship.

JoAnn continues to support the major public events of the Delaware County Office for the Aging, assisting in the kitchen for the Big Wheels Golf Tournament, Annual Pork Roast and Pie Auction, and Senior Fun Day. She has become a certified instructor of the Tai Chi for Arthritis program.

JoAnn says, “What I do, I do from my heart. I don’t feel like I’m volunteering. I do what feels right. Volunteering can be easy. Just help out where your heart takes you.”

AWARDEE:

Cheryl Lang
Dutchess County

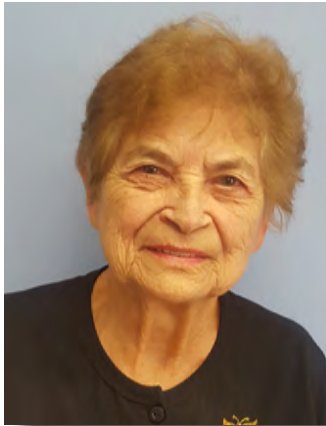


Cheryl Lang works selflessly to help her community. Whether it's keeping track of who is going to Zumba at St. Martins or organizing, packing, and delivering meals to homebound residents from Tritown Senior Center, Cheryl takes her responsibilities seriously with a smile and upbeat attitude. She pours her heart into her work, makes sure it is flawless, and steps in to help whoever and whenever she can. Several participants at congregate meals programs have named Cheryl as their emergency contact. She can be counted on to help get them to doctor appointments or other outings when their family members aren't available for support. The Dutchess County Office for the Aging says Cheryl is one of the most selfless and hard-working people they have ever had the pleasure of working with.

Cheryl was born in 1947 in Suffolk County and has lived in New York her entire life. She spent her career in data entry and mainframe computer management from 1967 to 2009. Cheryl is one of four siblings, one of whom was her late twin sister. At the age of 12, Cheryl's parents, Joyce and Allen, decided to leave their town of North Babylon, Long Island, due to overcrowding and quality of life issues. Her parents were looking for more laid back country life for their children and eventually settled in Pleasant Valley. Cheryl's maternal grandparents eventually relocated to Dutchess County, as well. In her 30s, Cheryl's grandfather was placed in a nursing home. Cheryl and her sister made sure to spend quality time with their grandmother and transport her to visit him. Helping out the older adults around her just became part of her family's way of doing things.

Cheryl has a photographic memory, a knack for numbers, organizing, and sorting data. This led her to a career in data entry and computer programming for over 40 years with local companies such as Federal Bearing Co., Toy House of Hudson Valley, Home Funding, St. Francis Hospital, & Health Quest. Since retiring, she has kept busy volunteering five days a week serving other older adults in her community.

Cheryl says, "Volunteering keeps you active and engaged socially, and allows you to help others and give back to the community. There's always someone else out there who could use a warm welcome. Spending time, sharing a kind word, or assisting other aging adults doesn't cost much, but can be rewarding for all, even if just for a smile."



AWARDEE:
Anna Szelowski
Dutchess County



Anna Szelowski means business in the kitchen. She never sits down, not even to eat her lunch. For the last 16 years, every Monday through Thursday, she has set up meal stations, portions, and packed meals for almost 50 area homebound older adults—all this in addition to having grandchildren at home for whom she cares. She makes sure everything from dishes to workspaces at the senior congregate center are cleaned up. After pausing to run a personal errand to the bank, she'll be back in the kitchen serving meals to congregate seniors in no time. Even when Anna's heading off for an afternoon bowling tournament (she bowls an almost 500 series) she still pops in to make sure "her duties" are handled during the week. If there is music involved, Anna is the first on her feet to start a line dance. She tracks the birthdays of area older adults, organizes greeting card signings for those ailing at home, and bakes birthday cakes to celebrate the special day. Once Anna's volunteer duties are complete for the day, she enjoys teaching Rummy to new friendship attendees, or watches over her table neighbor's bingo cards because their vision is failing and they often miss marking the number called. Anna is a generous, caring, fun, festive, and thoughtful volunteer. She embodies the idea of making people happy through food and games.

Anna is a native New Yorker born in 1932 in Lloyd, (Highland) New York. She is the middle child of five, and spent her early years finishing beauty school and beginning her career as a hairdresser. In 1975, she met her husband, Thomas, when he returned from service in the Navy. They married and relocated to Poughkeepsie. Anna opened Ann's Beauty Salon on Mill Street, styling local area patrons for almost a decade and engaging her community with her friendly smile and service. Content with her time as a business owner, Anna moved onto lighter work at Kem Cards, (another local company), as a playing card inspector for 16 years. This was a natural choice since Anna is fantastic at all games. Throughout her life, Anna's always been physically active, participating in many sports as a young girl and even winning trophies in archery competitions through the Ti Yogi Bowman's club. At 87 years young, she remains physically and socially active. In addition to her styling, game playing, and dancing skills, Anna is a great cook and baker, often bringing her homemade cakes and treats to locals at area friendship and community centers, as well as to neighbors and family.



AWARDEE:

Reverend James Giles **Erie County**



Reverend James Giles has been a community leader in restorative justice, prisoner reentry, violence reduction, and youth mentorship in the city of Buffalo. His focus on coalition building and building collaborative support systems has shaped future leaders, ensuring that his impact is far-reaching. In addition to leading Buffalo Peacemakers and Back to Basics Outreach Ministries, he is also the President of VOICE Buffalo; the administrator for the Stop the Violence Coalition; director of the SNUG Program, an intense violence interruption initiative focused on youth; a member of the board of directors for Catholic Charities, Northland Workforce Training Center, City of Buffalo EMS, and Youth Visionaries; and is the pastor of Greater Works Deliverance Fellowship. James is constantly looking for innovative approaches, including working to bring a skate park to the East Side of Buffalo through a collaboration with Play WNY, a division of the Ralph C. Wilson Junior Foundation.

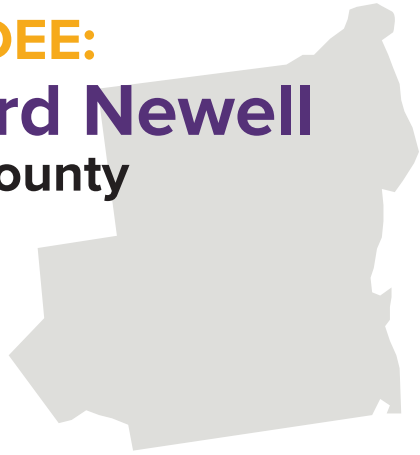
A native New Yorker, Reverend James Giles found his passion while in a jail cell 25 years ago. Upon his release, he began working to create a support system that would address the problems of addiction, reentry, and restorative justice for formerly incarcerated individuals through founding Back-to-Basics Outreach Ministries. Since that time, James has continued to address issues within the City of Buffalo, specifically focusing on reducing violence. In 2004, he helped establish the Stop the Violence Coalition with a goal to develop strategies to reduce gang conflicts. A year later, the Coalition held a meeting that involved members from nine of Buffalo's largest gangs to establish citywide peace. In 2007, he helped shape the Buffalo Peacemakers, which today has over 50 individuals who mentor and redirect youth to healthy lifestyles, mediate conflicts, and work with law enforcement officials to support safer neighborhoods. James currently resides in Buffalo with his wife of 50 years, Delores, and is the proud father of Antonio and Alisa, and grandfather of Jalen.

James is committed to making a difference, even in the face of setbacks. An act of arson recently destroyed a new headquarters for Buffalo Peacemakers, but James' response was simply "next time, we will rebuild in brick." James has a can-do attitude and commitment to impacting his community that does not waver in the face of adversity.

AWARDEE:

Richard Newell

Essex County

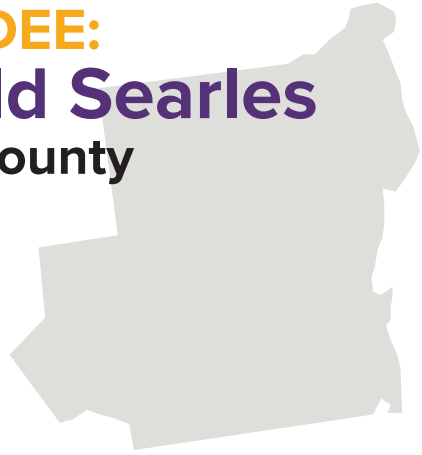


Everybody at the Schroon Lake Senior Site loves to visit with Richard Newell. A great conversationalist, he loves to socialize with everyone who walks through the door. He has been involved with the local community for many years and enjoys spending his time volunteering for many organizations. Richard has helped make important decisions with the Senior Club, as well as the Lions Club, and Historical Society. Richard volunteered as a docent for the Historical Society. His favorite thing about volunteering for the Historical Society is meeting the people that pass through, and hearing their stories. Richard says it is amazing how many people have roots back to Essex County. Richard helps with fundraising for the Lions Club and marvels at how beneficial of an organization it is for the community. Staff at the nutrition site say that they love how dedicated he is to his job and volunteer work. Richard continues to work hard and volunteer his time at the great age of 92—he even drives almost 30-40 minutes at times to get into town. They are honored to have him and say he is a huge help.

Richard was born in Paul Smiths, NY. He attended Saranac Lake Central School. In 1948, he moved to the Albany Area to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Richard was an engineer for General Electric (GE) for 20 years, and continued to consult for them for an additional 21 years. In 1995, Richard and his wife moved to Paradox full time, where they had renovated their summer camp into a four season home. After moving to the Schroon Lake area full time, Richard signed up for the Schroon Lake Senior Club. He recently received a lifetime membership, which he was very excited about. He has four children: Bruce, Michelle, Marcia, and Cathy. He also has 10 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Currently, Richard has been the Schroon Lake Town Assessor for 12 years and was just recently re-elected. On Tuesdays, he delivers home delivered meals to clients.

Richard says that everyone should volunteer; it makes you feel good. He says that if you are able to help others, you should. “Pay it forward!”

AWARDEE:
Donald Searles
Essex County



Donald Searles is always there to help out anyone in need. He looks out for people in the community and always lends a helping hand. Don drove the Schroon Lake Senior bus for many years, from which he retired at the age of 80. If the bus needs to be gassed up or needs a tuning, Don will volunteer to take it to the garage. If a chair at the senior center breaks, Don will bring it to the town shop for repair. Staff at the nutrition site say he is always “on call” and is available to help at a drop of a dime. You can usually see Don at the nutrition site throughout the week for lunch. He is friendly to everyone and knows all about the town. If you have a question about the town’s history, Don is the one to ask! Staff at the nutrition site are very grateful for Don and appreciate him volunteering to help others in the community.

Donald is a native New Yorker and resides in Schroon Lake in the southern part of Essex County. He grew up down in Cohoes and attended Siena College and then Syracuse University for Environmental Science. During his working years, Don worked with the United States Geological Survey for 31 years to help maintain the Hudson and Schroon Rivers for the Acid Rain Project. He also worked with the United States Department of Interior. He served in the United States Navy from 1954-1956. After retiring in 2004, Donald and his wife moved to Schroon Lake permanently. Don has been involved with many organizations in the Schroon Lake area, including the Schroon Lake Association, American Legion, and Senior Club. He is currently on the board of directors for the Senior Club and is the first vice president. Don was elected president a few times, as recently as three years ago. He has four children (Sheila, Susan, Mark, and Marybeth), “a lot” of grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

Donald says that he enjoys volunteering his time to help others in the community because “it feels good and gives you a sense of purpose.”



AWARDEE:
Patrick Burke
Franklin County

During his retirement, Patrick Burke has spent time volunteering at several local agencies in Franklin County. In particular, Patrick works as a volunteer at Citizens Advocates, by providing transportation for children in foster care for supervised visitation with their families. Patrick also is a volunteer medical transportation driver through the Franklin County Office for the Aging. Patrick is an integral part of the Office for the Aging Medical Transportation Program, as he seldom says no to a transportation need. No distance is too far for Patrick to travel. He can always be counted on when an older adult needs to be transported to Burlington, VT, Albany, or Watertown. His wife often travels along during these long transports to keep him company.

The Franklin County Office for the Aging was thrilled to recognize Patrick Burke for his volunteerism and dedication to help other residents of Franklin County in need, in particular the community's older adults. Patrick is a lifelong citizen of Franklin County. He currently resides with his wife, Judith, in Chateaugay, NY. Patrick and Judith have been happily married for 45 years. Patrick is the proud father of five children (and their partners): Brian and Tammy Burke of Holliston, MA; Cathy and Chip Cook of Chateaugay, NY; Kevin and Erin Burke of Malone, NY; Karen and Kyle Swanston of Chateaugay, NY; and Stacey and Dave Celano of Vienna, VA. Patrick is also a proud grandfather of 17 grandchildren: Maria, Nolan, Cade, Maddy, Conner, Anson, Jonathon, William, Quinn, Josie, Matthew, Patrick, Lily, Izabelle, Frankie, and Vincent. Patrick is also a great grandfather to Riley Cook. Prior to his retirement, Patrick was employed for 15 years through the New York State Department of Corrections as an Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor.

When Patrick was asked what advice he has about volunteering for others, he said: "Enjoy the time with our older adults." Patrick says he enjoys having long talks with older people when he is transporting them for long distances. Patrick hopes to have someone to drive him around when he is older and can no longer drive himself.

AWARDEE:

Jason Rolley
Franklin County



Jason Rolley has generously given his time to his community in a variety of roles that have greatly benefited people of all ages. The Franklin County Office for the Aging is thrilled to recognize him for his dedication to helping other residents in need. Jason has been a volunteer coach for the Tupper Lake Youth Baseball and Football programs for eight years. Additionally, has volunteered for the last two years as a volunteer driver for the home delivered meals program through the Adirondack Adult Center in Tupper Lake. Jason also served six years on the Tupper Lake Central School Board of Education. He is a very dependable volunteer. He is very professional and friendly toward staff and the older adults. He can be counted upon to deliver meals to a second route if someone calls in late or is absent. When Jason is not busy working or volunteering, he enjoys going to camp and hunting.

Jason Rolley currently resides in Tupper Lake, NY with his wife, Sharon, of 21 years. Jason and Sharon have three wonderful children together, Chance (age 18), Cody (age 15), and Cade (age 15). For the past 20 years, Jason has been employed at Sunmount Developmental Center, in Tupper Lake, NY, as rehabilitation counselor.

When asked what Jason would recommend to anyone who is interested in volunteering, Jason said “Be committed to the work you do, and be reliable.”

AWARDEE:

Glyndon VanWoert

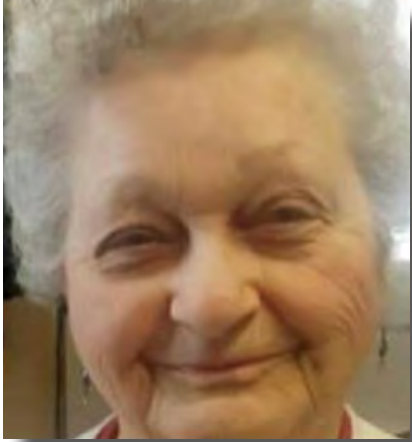
Fulton County



Glyndon VanWoert has significantly contributed to his community. He is the past president of the Perth Senior Club and was also a board member at the Hagaman YMCA. For 15 years, he assisted VISTA with tax preparation. Additionally, he has volunteered with the Fulton County Office for the Aging's Nutrition Program, delivering meals to people who are homebound. Glyn shares that it is important to him that he makes contributions to his community.

Glyndon VanWoert was born and raised in Cooperstown, NY. He attended college before enlisting in the Air Force, where he served for four years. He fought in the Vietnam War, in the Communications division. After the Air Force, Glyn enlisted in the Air National Guard, where he served for 17 years in the Medical Supply Division. Glyn maintained a part-time role in the Air Guard and worked full-time with the Federal Government. After retiring from that job, he worked for a time with the New York State Department of Tax and Finance. He has been married for 40 years and enjoys spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren. He is involved with his church and the senior club.

Glyn says, "Whatever you do, do with passion. You have to be passionate about everything you do. It has always worked for me."



AWARDEE:

Lula Anderson

Greene County

Lula Anderson has made a big difference in her community in a variety of ways. She is involved in several organizations, such as the Ashland Cemetery Association, VFW Auxiliary, W-W-J-P-L Golden Age Club, and the Ashland United Methodist Church. Lula has volunteered for several years and is always willing to help in any way she can. She and her sister started a craft show at the Windham Masonic Temple in the 1980s, which brings many people to the area. It is run by the Masons now, but she is still a vendor and has spent almost 35 years selling her baked goods and crafts. Lula crafts an assortment handmade goods such as pillows and hand towels. Her baked good include delicious pies of all kinds. She continues to be a very active member of her community.

Lula is 88 years old and lives in Ashland, NY, Greene County. She started working at an early age in boarding houses, then for New York Telephone for 20 years. She and her husband George had three sons and a daughter and moved to Florida for a few years. When her youngest was five, Lula began working as a housekeeper and for more than 30 years worked at Onteora Park and many more mountaintop locations. For more than 20 years, she has written a weekly column for the local newspaper, titled "Ashland Speaks." This column spreads local news about events in her community and church, such as fundraisers, anniversaries, and birthdays. Through her column, she encourages involvement in the community and volunteerism. Lula also writes a section titled "As I Remember It," where she shares her stories and memories about how the community used to be. This column helps the community reflect on Ashland and how it has changed over the years.

Lula believes everyone should volunteer because "At sometime in your life you will need people to help you." She has encouraged her children and others to volunteer and told her children that if you have something to give away, God will give you something more. "Volunteering makes the world a better place to live."

AWARDEE:

William VonAtzingen

Greene County



William VonAtzingen has always been there when the community needed him. After serving in the Army for two years during the Korean war, Bill moved to Greenville, NY, in Greene County in 1957. He then went on to own and operate a clothing store. He has been married to his wife, Susan, for 62 years. They have raised three successful children and now have three grandchildren. He is a powerful motivator to thousands of people.

Bill volunteered at Notron Hill Methodist Church for 63 years. He was a lay leader in the '70s when the Norton Church and Greenville merged to create the church standing today. At the church, Bill held many different positions within the religious community.

Every year following turkey suppers, Bill washed endless dishes. He claims he has washed more dishes during his time than anyone else there!

Bill has also been a member of the Rotary Club for over 60 years. During his time with the Rotary Club, he brought leaders of all backgrounds together to provide services within his community. Bill is also a lifetime member of the Greenville Fire Department, where he served on the rescue squad for 15 years. Serving on the rescue squad was very rewarding for Bill. He emphasizes the benefits of helping others and saving lives. Bill also sat on numerous boards including the Albany State Bank Board, Greenville Pioneer Board, and the Greenville Advisory Board. He was also the board director of the National Bank of Coxsackie for 20 years. Bill and his wife have also volunteered with the Greene County Department of Human Services, delivering home meals to those in need. Through this program, Bill and his wife delivered meals to countless individuals in their community who needed extra assistance. He has been a tireless volunteer for numerous organizations. Bill and his wife have slowed down since last year, volunteering when they can and when they have the energy.

Bill has had numerous volunteer and humanitarian experiences throughout his lifetime. When asked why he volunteered, he stated, "I always felt that as a volunteer, it was a great way to give back to the community."



AWARDEE:
Kenneth Locke
Hamilton County

photo unavailable

Kenneth Locke has participated in parades, funerals, and community events as a member of the American Legion. He has volunteered countless hours with Indian Lake Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Ken helps by driving the ambulance and assisting the crew, as needed. Ken is known for always offering compassion or humor to those in need; he can easily make anyone smile on a bad day. He spent many years taking care of his mother, father-in-law, and two aunts. In the last few years, he has been available to transport people who are homebound to social events, doctor's appointments, and the pharmacy. It aids in their ability to live on their own as opposed to a facility. Ken is instrumental in keeping older adults in the community active and independent.

Ken was born and raised in Indian Lake, and still resides there. He was a member of the United States Army and served two years in Vietnam. Upon returning, he married the love of his life, built the home they share, and they had three children together. Ken has been married for 41 years and is "still going strong." He went to work for the Hamilton County Highway Department right after the service and retired after 34 years of service.

When asked about volunteering, Ken shared with us that "Everyone should volunteer in some capacity, as it seems like you always receive more than you give. When you see someone you helped walk down the street it gives you a wonderful sense of pride and urges you to want to do more."



AWARDEE:
Alice Megargle
Hamilton County

Organizations do not succeed unless there is a core of support—someone who will be available to lead and assist in the work that is required for the group to operate. Alice Megargle is one of those individuals who provides the foundation for success. She is the first to arrive, last to leave, and is willing to fill the gaps that frequently occur along an organization’s path. Wells is known to be an active town, and it’s easy to see why with residents like Alice. She works day in and day out to better the town. Alice volunteers with Wells Improvement Group, as well as the historical society, library, and garden club, among others.

Alice is originally from the Potsdam/Canton area of NY. She attended Potsdam University, pursuing a degree in education. She has held elementary teaching positions in NY, Minnesota, Missouri, and Ohio until her retirement in 2000. Alice and her husband Robert have been residents in Wells for 35 years and “full time” residents for the last 10. Alice is part of virtually every organization in Wells; one can always see that serving others brings her joy. It is very often that she rises to leadership positions in the organizations and has served as an officer and board member many times.

Alice says, “Helping others is the most rewarding activity one can experience.”



AWARDEE:
Gail Domion
Herkimer County



Gail Domion has brought joy to many people in her community. She goes above and beyond to help people. She wants people to have nutritious, affordable food, even on a fixed income. She has provided transportation to many people to get them to their doctor's appointments. Without people like Gail, many in the community would not be able to get needed medical care. Gail has helped those who reside in her building feel a sense of community and even like a family. She has shown that volunteering is about creating a community in which people want to live.

Gail prepares traditional Sunday dinners for her neighbors each week. For a small contribution, and with little assistance, she cooks a three-course meal for 25 to 30 people. For many of the residents, this is the best meal they have each week. Gail started with RSVP by donating her time to the Food Sense program. When the volunteer coordinator of Food Sense became ill a few years ago and could no longer volunteer, Gail took over the program and has been coordinating it ever since.

In addition to running the program, she takes orders from residents at Prindle, processes food stamp orders, completes the Food Bank paperwork, and packages the orders for pick-up. On delivery day, Gail is there to ensure that the orders go to the correct people. She has even delivered the groceries to the apartments needed. Since 2009, Gail has also devoted much of her time to the RIDE program at Catholic Charities. She has driven thousands of miles and has helped older adults in Herkimer County remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. She was awarded the Catholic Charities of Herkimer County Volunteer of the Year Award at the Catholic Charities of the Albany Diocese Annual Gathering in 2017 for her outstanding contributions in serving those in need, especially the older adult population. Gail helps a woman in Utica who has no family and is confined to bed in a rehabilitation facility, assisting her with legal issues and essential correspondence of all kinds. Gail gives her time, support, and companionship freely.

Gail said that if you volunteer, "You meet a lot of nice people, and I make new friends every time I volunteer, so many people need help, and it feels good to help them."

AWARDEE:

Ralph Dow

Herkimer County



Ralph Dow has dedicated his life to the service of other people. He started with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) by volunteering at the Kuyahoorra Food Pantry. In 2003, he became the Food Pantry coordinator. Over the years, he has spent countless hours working to make the Kuyahoorra food pantry a not-for-profit entity, and last year his hard work paid off. He also secured a new location and was able to get the food pantry out of the church basement to better serve volunteers and clients. If Ralph gets a call that someone is in need of food and the pantry isn't open, Ralph will open the pantry to serve them. Ralph has increased the number of volunteers at the pantry and has contributed to increasing monetary and food donations to the pantry. Ralph gives of himself, and he believes that he should show others how thankful he is for what they do to help. Ralph writes a handwritten thank you note to all who donate their time, money, or food to the pantry.

Ralph Dow was born in Westdale, NY in 1930. His parents taught him volunteerism early by teaching him to help at fundraising and church suppers. Ralph enlisted in the United States Navy in 1950, where he served in the Korean War until 1954. In his thirties, he was a member and elected president of the Jaycees (Junior Chamber of Commerce). Later, Ralph joined the Knights of Columbus and served as Financial Secretary and Grand Knight. After moving his family to Newport, NY in 1977, he became very active in St. John's Catholic Church serving as trustee, Eucharistic Minister. Later he was the Sunday school teacher, Bingo chairman, and Parish Council Chairman and Finance chairman.

In 1990, he was asked to help form a local council in the Knights of Columbus. He served as District Deputy and Chairman of the Board of District Deputies for the Syracuse Conference. He has also been an active member of the VFW Post #7220 for 19 years. Ralph has been an RSVP volunteer since 1999. To date, he has donated over 11,000 hours of his time in service to his community through various volunteer jobs. He is 89 years old and still going strong. In addition to the time he spends at the pantry, Ralph also serves on the Ecumenical Food and Shelter Council and RSVP Advisory Board and was a volunteer transporter for the RIDE program. Ralph has earned several awards over the years for his volunteer work.

AWARDEE:
Lorna Christie
Kings County



Lorna Christie is a longstanding member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Sorority, Inc., Theta Chapter. She joined the sorority many years ago while in college as a Kappa Omicron Tau (KOT). Upon graduating, she became an official member of the Theta Chapter, located in Brooklyn. This sorority is made up of educators dedicated to helping others. Lorna held many positions in this organization that allowed her to volunteer and work with children and young adults. After retirement, Lorna started volunteering with the Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals (CCMP). Volunteering with CCMP gave her a more positive outlook on life.

Lorna Gwendolyn James Christie was born in 1945. She attended Plum Church of God in Christ, where she learned about the importance of helping others and volunteering. Lorna attended Mt. Horeb Public School in Kingston, Jamaica. In 1967, she migrated to the US with dreams of a better life. She continued her education, attending Central Evening High School. She then went to Medgar Evers College and graduated with a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education.

Lorna accepted her first teaching position at Harlem's St. Benedict Day Nursery School. She later went on to obtain her master's degree in education from Adelphi University. Lorna loved working with nursery age children. She used her degree and continued to work with children from ages 4-6 years old at the Willoughby House Child Care Center, which later was renamed Brooklyn Bureau Community Services. She worked there until her retirement in 2010.

Lorna believes, "Helping to make a difference in other people's lives is one of the greatest things we as human beings can do." You get to connect with other volunteers and learn new and exciting things while helping to foster change in a positive way in other people's lives." She says, "Volunteering is such a powerful and rewarding experience. I would encourage everyone to find time to help out and volunteer."



AWARDEE:

Elizabeth Stanley **Kings County**

Elizabeth “Lizzo” Stanley enjoys guiding and helping children in any way she can. At the start of her journey, she volunteered for two years with the Parent Teachers Program for P.S. 156 in Brownsville. They then offered her a permanent position, assisting the principal with administrative help. Since then, she has taken several children “under her wings” as if they were her own. She has personally given money to families, buying graduation outfits for children whose parents were not able to do so. Elizabeth has changed so many lives just by being who she is—sharing her love and wisdom with children over the years. Many of her students are still in contact with her.

Lizzo Stanley is as New York as it gets, with her witty personality and strong work ethic. She is a native New Yorker who has spent over 45 years living in the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Bushwick and Flatbush Avenues. Lizzo has dedicated her time and energy in several areas, including working with the Board of Education for 10 years. After working with the Board of Education, she worked with SCO Family of Services for 30 years as a childcare worker, supervisor, and program manager. She has dedicated her life to the social services field and her wonderful family. Elizabeth has four children (two boys and two girls), eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild, all of whom she loves dearly. She says the best part of having children is raising them to be good human beings. One of her proudest accomplishments was that all of her children finished college and landed great jobs, contributing to a wide range of professions. Elizabeth hopes that she can help the youngest grandchildren and great-grandchildren to follow the same route.

Lizzo’s words of encouragement: “Doing something without pay is okay. Volunteering to help others is the nicest thing that you can do. I do not always have the answers, but if I cannot help them, I will find someone who can.”

AWARDEE:
Jesse Schantz
Lewis County



Jesse Schantz has been involved with the Lewis County Agricultural Society since 1971, thanks to his neighbor and friend Donald Sauter. Jesse was the secretary of the fair board from 1972 until 1996. In 1997 he became an Emeritus board member, but in no way did that mean he was any less involved. In 1993, the Lewis County Fair Premium Book was dedicated to Jesse, naming him “the Heart of the Fair,” and stating that his job description was much too long to print. The Fair is a special place for many, including Jesse, who was active in the NYS Association of Agricultural Fairs and served as president of fair managers in 1989.

Jesse was also an involved member and Deacon of Castorland Baptist Church, a member of the Lewis County Pomona Grange, National Grange, Lewis County 4-H, director of Lewis County Maple Producers Association, Northern NY Maple Producers Co-op, Lewis County Holstein Club, and the Lewis County Farm Bureau. You can now often find Jesse under the grandstand, where he continues to help with the entries. These entries showcase multiple different local talents, such as quilts, cookies, paintings, and photography. An avid horticulturist, one of his projects was the addition of the famous and stunning fair gardens—people from near and far come to the fair rave about the beautiful grounds.

Jesse was born in 1934. He spent two years in the Army, 1954-1956, before working for Ridle-Vue Farm in the Town of Denmark. Jesse married Betty Riddlespraker in 1956. With military and farmer roots, Jesse later served on the Denmark Town Board and as Councilman and Justice of the Peace from 1970 to 1978. Jesse then ran and served as Lewis County Clerk from 1979 until 1993. He was also the Lewis County Commissioner of Jurors for many years. Jesse currently resides in Lowville, NY. He loves to dance and plays a mean Polka on the accordion. Jesse is a husband, father, grandfather, a fantastic friend, and a great neighbor to many.

When asked for his thoughts on volunteering, Jesse said, “Get involved in different organizations that fit your interests.”

AWARDEE:
Paul Maginn
Livingston County



Paul Maginn’s volunteer journey with Catholic Charities of Livingston County began in 2014 as a volunteer driver for the Faith in Action program. Paul has fulfilled many roles as a volunteer at CCLC to date. He has served on the board and been the Faith in Action’s volunteer transportation coordinator since 2016 and has co-coordinated the last two years of CCLC’s gala fundraiser. The mission at Faith in Action is to provide direct one-on-one assistance through volunteer support services to older adults and those living with disabilities, within a network of community support. He spends six or more hours a week coordinating volunteer drivers for older adults and individuals with disabilities for transportation to and from medical appointments, grocery shopping trips, and bank and post office errands for the upcoming week. Paul has built an amazing relationship with clients and volunteers alike. He speaks at both St. Matthew’s and St. Mary’s churches to recruit volunteers for the Faith in Action Program. Paul is a great example of a dedicated volunteer—he is always willing to give 110% to others.

Paul graduated from SUNY Potsdam Crane School of Music and taught music for 32 years, 22 years at Webster Central Schools, and 10 years at Gates Chili Schools. He was the Director of the Webster High School Marching Band for 15 years. He traveled to Florida for the Citrus/Disney World parades and three times to Phoenix for the Fiesta Bowl Parades. Paul impacted many lives, as he gave private music lessons for 40 years. He was the president of the Monroe County School Music Association from 2008-2010. Paul has resided in Livingston County for 20 years. He has been married to his wife Lynn for 22 years, and they have three grown children and two grandchildren. In addition to his many volunteer roles at Catholic Charities of Livingston County, Sent by Ravens Food Pantry, Foodlink, and his church, Paul loves to watch sports with his family.

Paul says, “I volunteer because I want to give back for all the blessings that I have received over the years. It is very rewarding and humbling to help people in need. It has been an eye opener for me to see so many people that need our help through Livingston County. It is wonderful being a part of such a hardworking and dedicated staff at Catholic Charities. The attitude and love that shines forth from all our volunteers, and inspires me to be there for others.”



AWARDEE:

David Parish **Livingston County**



David Parish was part of the group that initially advocated for an Office for the Aging in the county, saw it transition to a county agency, and has served on its advisory committee since 2007. David has a reverence for history and has served as the Geneseo Village and Town 100 hundred plus historical talks and lectures. He served as president of the county historical society for eight years; during that time, he helped collect stories from members of many long-time resident families. In 1995, the Livingston County Sheriff called older adults together from 17 towns, and TRIAD was formed. In the third year, David was elected president and held the office for 23 years. Under David's leadership, many initiatives to educate residents, enhance safety, and support law enforcement were implemented. For 15 years, David served as an active member of the Red Cross Board and for 25 years he served as a volunteer fundraising kettle coordinator for the Salvation Army. David has made significant contributions to the Geneseo United Methodist Church, Order of the Eastern Star, County Masonic Association, Environmental Management Council, Temple Hill Cemetery Board, and Jail Ministry Committee. He is a past president of the Geneseo Rotary and a Paul Harris Fellow.

David is a native of Niagara Falls. He graduated from Buffalo State Teachers College in 1954 and served in the Army as a communications specialist for two years, mostly at Fort Polk, LA. Returning to Niagara Falls to teach grades 4-6, David earned two master's degrees and was working for a doctorate in education when he met his future wife, Ava. Their son was born in 1965. With Ava's support, David earned a master's degree in library science at SUNY Geneseo, as he wished to obtain an academic position. Achieving this goal in 1967, he was appointed an academic librarian, and then department head at Milne Library. David published six reference books through Libraries Unlimited.

Ava contracted breast cancer in 1983; she fought bravely through treatment, but ultimately passed away in 1986. As David's mother lived alone in Niagara Falls, he brought her to live with him in Geneseo. Knowing she needed social contact, David introduced her to the Geneseo Young at Heart Club, and, at 55 years of age, he himself became a member.



AWARDEE:

Lawrence Armstrong **Madison County**



Lawrence Armstrong has helped his neighbors all of his life. He remembers the blizzard of 1966 was the first time he pitched in on his own initiative. “I just picked up a shovel and just started shoveling people out,” he said. “Some people paid, some didn’t. It didn’t matter. You just helped where you could.” He is currently an RSVP volunteer driver for Madison County Office for the Aging’s medical transportation service, logging hundreds of miles a month. He goes above and beyond this to provide rides to neighbors and relatives when he can despite his own health challenges. If able, he takes folks shopping. He is even helping a cousin who is recovering from shoulder surgery by driving her back and forth to work. He often mows lawns and removes snow from sidewalks and driveways free to older neighbors in need. He pitches in to help his neighbors wherever and whenever he is able.

A native and lifelong resident of Oneida, Lawrence attended Morrisville College. He worked at Oneida Limited as well as an Oneida funeral home before entering the Air Force. After retiring from the Air Force, Lawrence worked at Thermal Systems in Canastota in the thermal engineering field. When he was laid off at age 57, older neighbors asked for his help with lawn mowing. He had been mowing his aunt’s lawn for about 15 years at the time. Currently, he regularly mows four yards, in addition to his own, and in the winter, helps with snow removal. Lawrence exercises at the YMCA and is part of a Breakfast Club that meets regularly at Sweet Temptations.

Lawrence said volunteering keeps him active: “When you stay active, you stay young.”

AWARDEE:

Beverly Thorp

Madison County



Growing up on a farm during World War Two, Beverly Thorp experienced rationing and saw her parents generously give to neighbors in need. For almost half a century, she has been active in improving her community through St. James Catholic Church, and through other civic organizations. Mrs. Thorp is an RSVP Bone Builders facilitator at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, on the board of directors for CRIS (Cazenovia Resources for Independent Seniors), on the founding committee, and a member of CASA (Cazenovia Area Senior Association), a charter member and lifetime member of CAVAC, treasurer of the local chapter of Philanthropic Educational Opportunities, and a lector, usher, money counter, and funeral committee member at St. James Catholic Church. She also conducts a prayer service at the Crouse Community Adult Day Care Center in Cazenovia.

Mrs. Thorp and a friend collect unsellable flower bouquets that are donated by Tops Supermarket in Cazenovia. Pre-COVID, they separated the flowers into small bouquets and distributed them while visiting with the residents of the Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing Home in Chittenango.

Beverly Thorp was born and raised in Minoa. She met her husband, Bob, in high school there. After they married, they moved to Erieville, where he managed a farm. Later they settled in Cazenovia, where she still lives. Bob was a master carpenter and kept bees on the side. Later, that and an apple orchard became a business, Thorp Apiary. Beverly managed the books and did everything else in honey production except keeping the bees and extraction. She still operates the honey business. At 84, she still does the bottling and helps with the marketing, although she admits she needs help lifting the 60-pound pails. The honey is available at all the stops along the Thruway and a few other places. Beverly is proud of her family. Two of her daughters are nurses and the other owns her own cleaning business.

Asked what advice she would give other volunteers, Beverly said, "Keep a kind and caring attitude."



AWARDEE:

Mary Anne Sears

Monroe County

“The best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your arm.” Mary Anne Sears has taken this quote to heart, stating, “Whenever I see a need, I try to step in.” She has volunteered 21 years at Spiritus Christi Church; six years at St. Pius Church; two years at Al Sigi Center; three years at Rochester Psychiatric center; spent 16 years serving as a senior companion; five years helping at the Open Door Mission; four years assisting the Holy Childhood; and has recently begun working with Habitat for Humanity. She plans to retire this summer after working 15 years as the Director of Senior Programs at the Chili Senior Center. She has made a significant impact on the seniors who attend and will sorely miss. Mary Anne is already looking toward other opportunities to serve her community and those in need.

Mary Anne is a native New Yorker and has lived in New York the majority of her life. She has one son and two grandchildren, ages 12 and 17, whom she loves dearly. Mary Anne received her degrees in gerontology and therapeutic recreation from the University of Northern Colorado. She returned home to Monroe County in New York, where she began her career working at the ARC of Monroe County for nine years. Following this, she worked at St. John’s Alzheimer’s Unit for 16 years before finally moving on to become the Director of Programs for the Aging at the senior center for the Town of Chili. She has received awards from the Lions Club of Chili 2018, “Woman of Distinction”, nominated by Senator Michael Ranzenhofer; received the “Outstanding Citizen Award” from the Towns of Chili and Gates; and received the “Distinguished Service Award” for her care and dedication to each person at the Chili Senior Center and for supporting the Lions Club of Chili.

When asked for her thoughts about volunteering, Mary Anne says: “The greatest gift I have learned over the years is to listen to your elders. They are awesome teachers and we need to remember that they were not always ‘old’. Do not ever think that because they are older, that they have not made a difference in the world. Everyone makes a difference. They have had their challenges and hardships throughout their lives and I believe that has made them stronger. I have learned more from them than any classroom or lecture hall could have ever taught me. Be a sponge and take it all in. Do not ever ask someone how they are and then not be able to take the time to listen.”



AWARDEES: **Christine & Karl Andrejczyk** **Montgomery County**

For 19 years, Christine and Karl Andrejczyk have run the AMEN (All Ministries Embracing Need) Place Soup Kitchen. AMEN provides free meals and food to those in the Amsterdam community who are in need. To date, AMEN has served more than 500,000 meals, and for the past three years, it has provided food to hundreds of clients each week. The pantry also offers weekly food for a local Middle School Backpack program.

Chris and Karl are active in helping other organizations get food and resources needed to run their programs. In 1997, they created a volunteer group called RESTORATION, with the mission to save a local historic church. The church was saved and reopened in 1998. For more than 10 years, it was the location of the AMEN Place Soup Kitchen, providing meals to hundreds in the community and serving as a place of worship during that time. The project was funded totally by donations and volunteers. For their work, Chris and Karl received a 1998 NY State architectural award.

Christine is a native New Yorker from Amsterdam. She has a degree in horticulture from SUNY Cobleskill and worked as a surgical assistant for an oral surgeon until she retired. Karl grew up in Massachusetts. He received a degree in pharmacy science from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and then worked for 35 years at Bristol Myers Squibb. Karl has been an active board member of the Northeast Regional Food Bank representing Montgomery County. Chris has been the recipient of several Catholic Charities awards. In 2002 the Andrejczyks received a humanitarian award from Hispanic Outreach of the Albany Diocese for their community outreach and educational programs. In 2016, they were recognized for their service to those who are disenfranchised in the community of Amsterdam. Chris and Karl have been married for 36 years. Both like gardening and enjoying the beauty of the Adirondacks with their four rescue dogs and cats.

When asked about volunteering, the Andrejczyks say, “For more than 19 years, we have had the great fortune of never having a shortage of those in the community who want to help. It's the joy you get from helping others. People are always willing to help us with our mission of providing food and service to the community. That's the beauty of volunteering; you can be any age to be of service to others in some way.”

AWARDEE:

Nancy Vertucci

Montgomery County



Nancy Vertucci could teach a masterclass in volunteerism. She is an active and engaged board member. Nancy has donated her time and talents to many organizations, including St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, the Montgomery County Office for Aging Board of Directors, and the Montgomery County Office for Aging Advisory Board. She is a past board president of the Community Chamber of Commerce and a past board president of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Montgomery County. The organizations for which she volunteers value her wealth of knowledge, generous heart, and thoughtfulness. The Montgomery County Office for the Aging states that Nancy is usually the first to volunteer at all of their events. Whenever she is on site, the staff appreciate that she makes the time to visit everyone in the office. Nancy does this because she feels it is important to have a visible and active Board of Directors.

Nancy was born in Washington, DC, and grew up in the Albany area. She moved to Amsterdam in 1975, the year she married Gabriel Vertucci, who passed in 2007. Nancy and Gabriel had two sons.

When asked about volunteerism, Nancy says, "One has a civic and moral responsibility to improve their community. I recognize and believe in the importance of the Office for Aging and its efforts to help older adults maintain their independence, dignity, and quality of life."

AWARDEE:

Billie Ali-Seck

New York County



While Ms. Billie Ali-Seck is currently in a wheelchair, she is very active in her community. She belongs to numerous organizations in the city that assist seniors thrive in their everyday lives. She is a member of the Harlem Honey and Bears Swim Team from Hansborough Recreation Center. They perform at local venues all over the state and were featured on television. Ms. Ali-Seck is a swimming member of the team. She is instrumental in proving that even with limitations, you can still contribute. She is also the treasurer for the team and maintains the group's vital records. At the parks and recreation facility in Hansborough, Ms. Ali-Seck teaches quilting to residents of the neighborhood. She also used history to educate older adults in how to create face masks. She assists with arts and craft classes at Abyssinian Development Corp, Kennedy Older Adults Center, and New York City Cultural Affairs Agency.

Ms. Ali-Seck moved from Cincinnati to New York City in 1967. She worked for 22 years at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in the Nursing Department, where she nurtured and cared for her patients. She currently resides in Central Harlem, where she raised her daughter, Aissatou Bey-Grecia. Ms. Ali-Seck has three grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. She is a positive influence on her family and her neighborhood and is always volunteering her service to make positive changes. Ms. Ali-Seck is founder of the annual Women's Tea for Women's History Month, where she invites outstanding individuals to speak at the reception and share their expertise and experience. She started this foundation to honor local everyday leaders. Ms. Ali-Seck is on the board at Sydenham Renaissance Health and Hospital and Harlem Advocate for Seniors. She advocates for older adults with limited physical abilities, ensuring all events are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. She is also involved in her church, St. Marks, where she is a soloist in the choir.

When asked about volunteer, Ms. Ali-Seck says, "It is important to make an impact on your community no matter your limitations. There are benefits to volunteering: it keeps you engaged with the audience, it keeps you up to date with your craft, and when you teach, guide, and show others your craft, you feel awesome."



AWARDEE:

Trudy Francis

New York County

Trudy Francis was an active member of District Council 37 and worked specifically with the Political Action Committee as a telephone bank operator and poll watcher. She was involved with the Police Athletic League, preparing and serving holiday meals and packages for Thanksgiving and Christmas. She was also active with the Community Board 10 Planning Board. Trudy supported and participated in the food pantry at St. Joseph's on 125th Street. It was here she began introducing her grandchildren to the benefits of serving the community. As a member of the Democratic Club, Trudy volunteered in voter registration activities and other events. Trudy supported Harlem Week from its inception more than 40 years ago. Even during this pandemic, Trudy is a loyal supporter of the community. A faithful member of the Harlem Food Bank, Trudy reminded those members that she is only a phone call away whenever they need to talk. Trudy is and will continue to assist even as she is 95 years young.

Trudy was born in Georgia on June 18, 1925. She moved to Harlem and lived on 132nd street with her mother and two brothers, Benjamin and Buddy. Trudy graduated from Julia Richmond High School and later married John R. Francis from Jamaica, West Indies, also a Harlemit and community activist. They had four children: Stephanie, Natalie, John, and Leslie. She raised her children in Harlem, providing them with college educations. Her children were encouraged to support the residents of Harlem by her example of community service. Trudy assisted in church activities at St. Thomas the Apostle, serving lunches and supervising activities for students. She became a school aide within the NYC Department of Education at various Harlem elementary schools. After her retirement, she was often greeted on the bus and in the community by her grown students. They recognized, reminded, and appreciated her as "Ms. Francis" in their greetings.

When asked about volunteering, Trudy says, "Use your time wisely to encourage the young people to learn how to assist others in need; give your best to help those who have little or no food or homes; be an example to the youth by your actions; and help the youth understand how they develop and expand their relationship with society by giving of their time and smile. Also, we are able to expand our knowledge by strengthening friendships in the community."

AWARDEE:

Donald Dixon

Niagara County



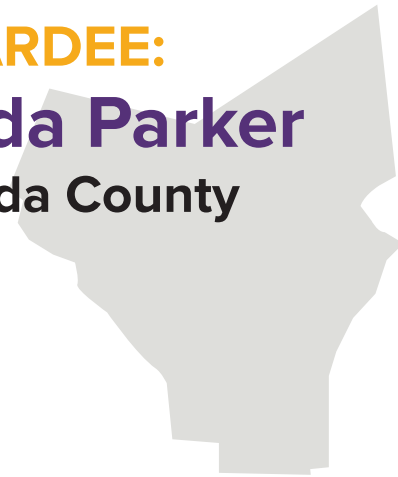
Donald Dixon has the enthusiasm and work ethic of someone much younger than his venerable 92 years. He is friendly and has no trouble communicating with people in all age groups. At the Olcott Beach Carousel Park, Don runs rides and mans the Skee-ball machines. The volunteers, student employees, and guests at the Park look to him as a role model. Don is a 10 gallon blood donor and one gallon platelet donor for the American Red Cross and Boys State Chairman for the Gasport American Legion 1253. He works the Friday night Bingo for the Dale Association, where he is also a volunteer for the Memory Minders program. He has donated his time to Habitat for Humanity, the Crop Walk, and is a former secretary for the Medina Chamber of Commerce. He enjoyed volunteering as an usher, ticket taker, and concession stand worker at the Historic Palace Theater in Lockport. For the Niagara County Office for the Aging, Don has volunteered for their home delivered meals program. He's versatile, dependable, and flexible. He is tireless and genuine; one of those rare, unselfish people who we would all aspire to be.

Don is an extraordinary 92 year old dynamo! He was born in 1928 in Waterbury, Connecticut and moved to Lockport in 1932. He is a 1946 graduate of Lockport High School and a graduate of the State University of New York at Morrisville. He and his wife Mabel were married for 55 years; she passed away in 2009. They have two children, Bruce and Lynette, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Don is an Army veteran, drafted in 1950, and placed with the 278th Tennessee National Guard. His first year in the military, he was a communication jeep driver. His second year, he was an Army cook. He studied food technology in college and still enjoys baking pies.

When asked for his advice on volunteering, Don simply says: "Keep active!"



AWARDEE:
Linda Parker
Oneida County



Linda Parker’s passion for helping the less fortunate in her community shows in everything she does. As her pastor explained, she has the biggest heart, and it shows through her volunteerism. Linda has been an active volunteer for over 40 years. Linda has helped with the Rummage Room, a used clothing area for people in need of clothing, volunteering to clean the church, and setting up space for regular church meetings. For more than 30 years, Linda has also volunteered at the Prospect Library. There she assists people with finding books, greets people, and keeps record of borrowed library books. She is also a past trustee member of the Prospect Town Library. For more than seven years, Linda has volunteered during from May to September, as a guide for the Town of Trenton. She gives guided walking tours, explaining the history of Trenton and the area of the historic Trenton Falls. Linda enjoys sharing the town history with those in her community.

Linda Parker, age 73 years young, is a lifelong resident of New York State, having grown up in Boonville, NY. She currently resides in Prospect, NY. She is the mother of three sons and six grandchildren, as well as having raised her niece. She is a care manager for the Neighborhood Center in Utica, NY, having worked there for the past 16 years. While in her 50’s, she obtained her bachelor of science degree in gerontology from Utica College. Her career as a care manager has led her to be a specialist in services for older adult clients. Linda has gone to specialized training in insurance and elder care in order to serve older clients and assist them in remaining independent in the community.

For more than 40 years, Linda has stayed on as a care manager, not only as a way to stay active but because she cares so much for the population she serves.

When asked to share some advice, Linda tells us that “Actions speak louder than words. If you give of yourself to those in need, the hope is that they will pay it forward to do the same for their brothers or sisters.”



AWARDEE:
Richard Blansett
Onondaga County

A light gray silhouette map of Onondaga County, New York, positioned to the right of the text.

Richard (Dick) Blansett demonstrates the power of making a difference for the CNY community through his virtually full time volunteer engagement with Honor Flight Syracuse (HFS). Dick joined HFS in 2012 and serves as treasurer and member of the Nominations & Governance/Development committee. He planned, organized, and executed significant mission departure and welcome home tasks involving hundreds of volunteers, e.g., providing wheelchairs/other supplies, manifesting/ticketing, coordinating/arranging support from critical organizations (American Airlines, airport staff, TSA, Fire Department, EMT personnel, National Park Service police, et al). His superb performance helped HFS provide program benefit opportunities for many aging military veterans, flawlessly performing a myriad of essential financial and logistics tasks. He spearheaded logistics for all 14 HFS missions through 2019. Dick also negotiates and administers contracts related to each mission. His experience and talents have proved invaluable resources in developing HFS' stable financial position. As the treasurer, he prepares and tracks the HFS annual budget of several hundred thousand dollars, demonstrating fiscal responsibility and overall good governance.

Dick's national and community service is reflected throughout his career. Dick was the regional development director for the American Red Cross from 2000 to 2011. He served with the 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard from 1967 to 2000. He is also a past district scout executive for the Boy Scouts of America.

Dick was born in Watertown, NY, and currently resides in Liverpool with his wife Julie, also an Honor Flight Syracuse volunteer. They have two children and two grandchildren.

AWARDEE:

Joseph Godley

Onondaga County



The Dunbar Association, Inc. says it is fortunate to have Joseph Godley as one of their volunteers. For the past four years, Joe has been volunteering his time driving Dunbar's participants to their senior program. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, Joe walks from his home to Dunbar to use their van to pick up every older adult who needs a ride to and from their weekly programs. Joe walks into the doors of Dunbar with a smile and great conversation for every person he encounters. His dedication to service is second to none. Other participants love him because he consistently goes the extra mile for each one of them. The many participants who utilize a walking apparatus receive the red-carpet treatment from Joe. He goes to their front door to assist them to the van, puts their equipment into the vehicle, and repeats all of this once he drops them off at Dunbar. Aside from taking participants to and from Dunbar, Joe also takes them to the pharmacy to pick up their medication, to and from special events, as well as encourages them to attend the Syracuse University women's basketball games. When Joe transports people to and from the games, which has now become one of the seniors' main winter outings each year, you won't find him sitting in the stands because he volunteers to get all everyone their drinks, popcorn, programs, and anything else they might need while watching the game.

Joseph Godley was born in 1950 and is a Syracuse native. Joe is the second oldest of seven children and is also a proud father of three of his own. He has spent his entire life contributing to the well-being of others. The country is grateful for Joe's military service in Vietnam and the Army Reserves in Mattydale, New York. For 25 years, Joe was one of the top executives for the Donnie Fielder Basketball Tournaments, which provided summer basketball recreation to inner city youth. He was a member of the first-ever class of inductees of the Syracuse Urban Sports Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sports world. Joe spent 20 years of his life working in the automobile industry and is going into his 40th year in contract sales at the Carrier Dome, where he gladly carries the title of Master Vendor. Tim Fox from local New Channel 9 aired a segment entitled "Tell Me Something Good," which showcased Joe and all he does in and for the community.

Joe's energy is contagious—to know Joe is to love him! His advice to everyone is to stay active and get involved in the community.



AWARDEE:

Marvin Shandler **Onondaga County**



Marvin Shandler has a deep sense of compassion and integrity and values service to others. He says he learned this from his father and brother. His Dad helped local kids play sports in the Bronx. Before his 15-year-old brother died from brain cancer, he helped raise funds for area baseball fields. Marvin was the caregiver for his father, cousin, and wife before they passed. He also volunteered with the local American Red Cross and has traveled to assist with national disasters. He is the president of the East Syracuse Kiwanis and organizes fundraisers to support community children. Marvin is very active with the Temple Concord Food Pantry. He joined the volunteer team at Hospice CNY in 2016 and has helped many hospice patients by providing a much-needed break for their family members. He has driven hundreds of miles to deliver patient supplies and organizes supplies for Camp Healing Hearts, a grief camp for children who have experienced loss. Marvin has a busy non-volunteer life as well and enjoys taking his grandsons on cattle drives in Colorado. All who know him say he is a kind, caring, full of life, one-of-a-kind gentleman.

When asked about volunteering, Marvin quotes Mr. Rogers and says, “There are three ways to ultimate success; the first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind.”



AWARDEE:
Kay Viggiani
Ontario County



Kay Viggiani has served her community tirelessly. She has helped educate many nurses about caring for older adults, helped find homes for the homeless, and cared for the dying. She has also provided education for numerous older adults on advance directives, health care proxies, and end-of-life care and caregiving.

Kay currently volunteers for the Ontario County Office for the Aging in several capacities. Not only is she an advisory council member serving as vice-chair, but she is also a coach for the “Powerful Tools for the Caregiver” program. Additionally, she teaches workshops on advance directives and end-of-life care. When Kay learned of Ontario County’s home care aide shortage, she volunteered to help form a task force to develop strategies to recruit more people to become certified home health aides. In addition to volunteering for the Office for the Aging, she donates her time to Family Promise of Ontario County, helping homeless and low-income families achieve independence. Kay is also passionate about the public library system and has been on the board of trustees of the Clifton Springs Library for many years. She has also volunteered for the Canandaigua Comfort Care Task Force and served as a hospice volunteer for the House of John.

Kay was born in Pennsylvania, and her family moved to Rochester, New York when she was only five years old. She moved to Clifton Springs in Ontario County about 47 years ago to raise her family. Kay became a registered nurse, earning her bachelor’s degree from Alfred University and her master’s degree from Syracuse University. She later worked at Genesee Hospital and Thompson Hospital. She then became a professor at Keuka College, where she developed the Gerontology Program. Though Kay retired 15 years ago, she remains as an adjunct professor teaching nursing and gerontology to this day. When asked about her advice on volunteering, Kay responded: “Do it—it enriches your life beyond measure.”



AWARDEE:

Dr. William Bassett

Orange County

Dr. William Bassett's volunteer and community activities are countless. Not only is he an active member of the Wallkill-East Rotary, but he is also the club's top member-recruiter. As an active Rotarian, he has served as past district governor, coordinator of the Pine Bush High School Interact Club/Junior Rotary, organizer of the annual Circleville Middle School career fair, and the annual distribution of dictionaries throughout the Pine Bush elementary schools. Additionally, Dr. Bassett is a member of the American Legion, has donated time to the Tri-County Partnership/Hope Not Handcuffs program, and has served as a board member of the Orange Regional Medical Center. Whether it is helping with local roadside clean up or a pancake breakfast fundraiser, you will always see Bill Bassett! Dr. Bassett is an extremely active, well-respected member of his community.

Dr. Bassett served as superintendent for both the Pine Bush School District and Orange-Ulster BOCES. Dr. Bassett and his wife Susan reside in Pine Bush, NY, and raised their three children in Orange County. They are now the proud grandparents of three wonderful grandchildren. Dr. Bassett is a veteran of the U.S. Navy.

Dr. Bassett shared his thoughts about community service: "Volunteering is a great way to give back to the community many times by only giving of your time. You feel good about helping others or a community organization. People appreciate volunteers and it generates a great deal of personal satisfaction to know that you gave of yourself to help others."

AWARDEE:

Betty VanLeeuwen

Orange County



Shortly after retiring from teaching, Betty VanLeeuwen began her next “career” in volunteerism. She served on the board of Museum Village, taking a significant role on the fundraising committee for many years. She hosted meetings at her home, sold tickets for their annual gala, and even donated countless items to fill baskets for the silent auctions. She also joined the Rotary Club of Goshen, where she served as president. Betty participates in almost every Rotary event that raises money for scholarships, eradicating polio overseas, feeding those in need, and many other worthy causes. At the Great American Weekend in Goshen each year, she’ll be found serving up hot dogs or ice-cold drinks on blistering hot days at the Goshen Rotary’s booth, with a smile on her face. Betty and her friends from her PTA days spearheaded the creation of the Kiwanis Club of Washingtonville. She is a founding member and the club president. Betty can often be found handing out dictionaries to kids in elementary schools, helping to raise money for scholarships for young adults bound for college, handing out gloves and hats from the mitten tree at the County Kids Food Pantry, or selling raffles for fundraisers at various events throughout the county. Betty VanLeeuwen certainly lives up to the Rotary Club slogan “Service Above Self.”

Betty was born to German immigrants and raised in New Windsor, New York. She graduated from Newburgh Free Academy and married Henry (Hank) in 1966 shortly before graduating college. Betty has three children, two of whom are adopted. Betty is blessed with five beautiful grandchildren for whom she gets up early every morning to care for and put on the bus. She helps when they are sick and helps with homework and dinner at night. Betty molded young minds as a teacher at Round Hill Elementary School in Washingtonville for more than 30 years. She was an active member of the PTA for many years before retiring. Teaching was the perfect profession for Betty as she has the patience of a saint and a knack for reaching kids. Most kids would say Mrs. VanLeeuwen was their favorite teacher.

On many occasions, Betty would visit students’ homes to speak to their parents one-on-one, and many times would buy clothes for the less fortunate kids she taught.

Betty says, “Volunteering and helping others lead to new friendships and a sense of satisfaction when you can make a difference in someone else’s life.”



AWARDEE:

Gilbert Cain

Orleans County

Gilbert Cain has volunteered for hospice since June 2015. Since then, he has mastered the residence volunteer meal serve position and now trains new volunteers. He won the 2018 Hospice of Orleans Volunteer of the Year Award for outstanding volunteer service. In 2019, he provided over 700 hours of service. Gil is the kind of volunteer that takes time to learn people's favorite foods and makes certain that those foods are available. Gil has been known to deliver spaghetti dinners, lemon pie, and special donuts to patients at all hours of the day and night. Gil donates holiday meals prepared by Tops and Wegmans for residence patients and their families. Patients are able to sit down to a delicious holiday meal and all of the trimmings due to Gil's generosity. He works at least six shifts per week in the residence. Gil also participates in hospice fundraisers and is a friendly, welcoming face around the campus. Hospice patients and family members are amazed at all that Gil does at the age of 85.

Gil is a native New Yorker who lives in Medina. He retired from Lipton's after 38 years where he worked as a distribution analyst. In addition to volunteering at hospice, he is an active volunteer for his church.

Gil would offer to other New Yorkers that volunteering is a great way to keep your mind and body busy. Gil states: "Volunteering and giving to others is a great way to lift your spirits and feel rewarded at the end of the day."

AWARDEE:

Louise Henderson

Orleans County



Through her work as a library assistant, Boy Scout leader, 4-H assistant, and church volunteer, Louise Henderson has been fortunate to touch the lives of many community members.

Louise often talks about how she has helped children learn to read and shared with them the virtues of patience, kindness, and using their manners. For many, she has been an encouraging mother figure who could be counted on to help with homework and provide assistance on necessary life skills. As a 4-H leader and mother of six, Louise was able to help many young people by sharing words of wisdom when life advice was needed, and guiding them to a brighter path.

Louise Henderson was born and raised in New York and has lived on the same property in Orleans County since the early years of her marriage. She and her husband John bought and remodeled a one-room schoolhouse into a home where they raised their six children. In 1984, disaster struck when their home caught fire. The schoolhouse was gone, but resilient as ever, Louise and John built their current house on the ashes. Louise worked at the Cornell Cooperative Extension for 20 years. She then spent 25 years as a library assistant at the Swan and Hoag libraries. Louise is the proud grandmother of 13 grandchildren and has 23 great-grandchildren.

Even now, as a retiree, Louise still volunteers at the Hoag Library. When she is not working, you can find her surrounded by family celebrating birthdays, holidays, and planning and creating 4-H projects.

If you are ever lucky enough to obtain advice from Louise, she would remind you that kindness, patience, and being polite will never go out of style. After her lifetime of service, she would also ask that you never stop learning and giving back to your community.

AWARDEE:
George Donahue
Oswego County



George Donahue graciously volunteers his time to organizations across Central New York. As a volunteer for the home-delivered meals with the Oswego County Office for the Aging, George remarks that delivering meals to the clients on his route is “more than just a meal delivery.” George identifies that as some of his clients have no social interaction, he makes time to engage in a friendly conversation with them. By getting to know the clients, George will report to the office if the clients present any concerns that may require further follow up. He ensures the client is safe before leaving their home. In addition to George’s commitment to delivering meals in the Parish area, George assists in operations at the Parish Dining & Activity Center. He and his wife engage other participants in activities and projects to bring social networking to the community. During George’s many years of volunteering, one experience seems to stand out the most. George volunteered with the American Red Cross Disaster team to assist with the 9/11 tragedy. George states he felt the need to be in New York City and offer reassurance, comfort, and medical attention as necessary. George added that during his time in NYC, he was humbled by the overwhelming amount of compassion that everyone had for one another. George feels that this time in American history is definitely the most tragic he has ever encountered, but he would assist again if called to action.

George was born in Jersey City, NJ. His family moved to Pulaski, NY, in 1954. George was an active military member where he was a proud serviceman of the US Air Force. In 1963 at the end of his assignment in the military, George and his family relocated to Parish, NY, where he continues to live today. George and his wife Donna have been married for 59 years; they have four children, and 15 grandchildren. When George retired from his career as an electrician, he realized that he was not ready to fully slow down and decided that he wanted to continue helping others.

George feels that volunteering has made a difference in his life and feels the world would be a better place if everyone took a small amount of time each week to help someone in need. He is constantly seeking opportunities in his community to help people out. He shared, “I have made many new friends and can respect the hard times people go through.” George believes his volunteer experiences make him a role model to his children and grandchildren. He hopes that they will carry on his legacy of acts of kindness in the community and volunteer as often as possible.

AWARDEE:

Diane Koffer

Otsego County



photo unavailable

Diane Koffer is dedicated to her community. She shares her love for cooking and baking with many, including area youth involved with the UPBEAT Kids Club. The club is open anytime school is not in session, and Diane uses her talents to teach children how to cook. Diane also shares her culinary skills as an active member and full-time volunteer at Christ Episcopal Church in Cooperstown, where she prepares dishes for church socials and fundraisers and plans events.

Diane also serves on many community committees and transports people who need rides to medical appointments. Over the years, Diane has been an active volunteer for many community organizations, including the Cooperstown Booster Club, Little League, Project Prom, Christ Episcopal Church, Cooperstown Food Pantry, American Legion Auxiliary, VFW Auxiliary, DAR and Veteran Services. She is the designated cook for the Cooperstown Emergency Squad meetings, and has organized and cooked for the Christ Episcopal Church “Octoberfest” event.

Diane is humble, caring, loving, and creatively ambitious with both kids and adults. Her compassion for others and steadfast priority of sharing positivity and goodness benefits the community every day by bringing light and hope to those who need it.

Diane was born in Staten Island, New York, and married her husband, Joseph Koffer, in 1963. They raised four children together, relocating to Hartwick in 1975 and then to Cooperstown in 2010, where they now reside. Diane worked as an LPN for 30 years at Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown, where she is a fixture in the community. During her children’s younger years, Diane was well known for her involvement in sports and scouting activities. Today, she is a committed grandparent of 12 grandchildren. She may often be found attending one of her grandchildren’s sporting or school events or supporting activities for veterans and active-duty military in support of her grandson and other family members.

Diane shares that “Giving back is important. The more you give to others, the better you feel. Volunteering makes your life full and happy... and happiness is contagious.”



AWARDEE:

Tom Landon & Poppy

Otsego County

Tom Landon is a native New Yorker who grew up in Canandaigua, New York. He spent his career as an oceanographer with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). He returned to Oneonta, where he currently lives with his wife, Sue, and dog, Poppy. Poppy isn't just any regular family pet. The Landon's found Poppy on the Internet and drove 3 hours to meet her for the first time.

The tiny 20-pound bundle was curled up in the corner of her cage, shaking and whimpering and wouldn't make eye contact. A year later, Tom enrolled Poppy in a therapy training program in January 2018 through Bassett Healthcare. In May 2018, Poppy received her official Therapy Dogs International certification. This came at a very opportune time, as Tom's wife, Sue, who had been having difficulties with cancer for several years, took a turn for the worse and was required to start chemotherapy in January 2019. Tom and Poppy accompanied Sue to every treatment, providing support not only to Sue, but to many others at the facility.

Now, Tom and Poppy make weekly visits to staff and patients at Bassett Hospital, A.O. Fox Hospital, FoxCare Center, the Plains at Parish Homestead, Helios Care (Hospice), and the Stram Center. With each visit, Tom and Poppy bring smiles and good cheer to all. Although everyone loves to see and interact with Poppy, Tom is the real key to making these visits so enjoyable. He is warm and friendly without even trying. Tom has a great read on people and situations, instinctively knowing if someone needs more time with Poppy, or maybe even a little less, and Poppy follows his lead. When they are with a patient or staff person, that individual is their only focus. They are an amazing team together. Every week, Tom uses his time to give back to his community. His work with Poppy is often focused on those who may need an extra pick-me-up during times of illness or distress. Tom and Poppy bring a small piece of joy and calm to those who need it most. Tom has touched so many lives with his caring, positive attitude, and demeanor.

The enjoyment that Tom and Poppy get from their work as volunteers is evident. When asked about what advice he would have for others regarding volunteering, Tom responded, "Not only should everyone do it, but they should do it often."

AWARDEE:

Ronald Cummings

Putnam County



Ronald Cummings has dedicated his life to serving others. As a member of the Putnam County Traffic Safety Board's Keeping Seniors Mobile program, he made it his mission to support responsible driving skills and behavior for older Putnam County residents. This program has three key elements: assessing car fitness, reviewing the rights and responsibilities of driving, and discussing the relationship between health and driving. Ron organizes this program every year and schedules sessions for each of the four seniors centers operated by Putnam County. As the program's face and its principal cheerleader, Ron brought credibility to the program and enthusiastic support from the participants who took advantage of the opportunity provided. After the program's success and support from local law enforcement, Ron had the opportunity to present Keeping Seniors Mobile to the NYS Traffic Safety Board in Albany.

Ron was born in New York City and raised in Westchester County in the town of Scarsdale, NY. From his high school days and through college at Parsons College in Iowa, he engaged with organizations that helped people. Ron was a faculty member for the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association, where he taught First Aid and CPR. He developed an infant CPR program for parents. This program went nationwide and overcame resistance from the medical profession to training parents to counter infant sudden death syndrome for fear of traumatizing them. Ron was a Boy Scouts of America leader for the Scarsdale Police Department Explorer unit. He also served as a volunteer special patrolman.

Ron and his wife Justine moved to Putnam Valley 49 years ago. Upon arrival, he joined the local volunteer fire department and ambulance corps. He also became a New York State EMT instructor at the local Peekskill Hospital. Ron was chosen for the County Traffic Safety Board due to his ongoing community service activity and career in insurance risk management. He currently serves as Vice-Chairman on the Board.

Ron describes himself as "volunteer junkie" deriving great personal pleasure in doing volunteer work with the consequences and positive results being readily visible and giving immediate feedback.

Photo unavailable

AWARDEE:

Christina Capizola **Putnam County**

Christina “Tina” Capizola, is an outstanding volunteer who generously shares her time with older adults in Putnam County. She is president of the Mahopac Seniors who meet on Saturdays at the William Koehler Senior Center. During the meetings, Tina provides leadership to the seniors on the committee as they plan weekly meetings, trips, and parties. She devotes many hours of planning and preparation to ensure the senior club is successful. Tina also regularly invites guest speakers to meetings, to assist the participants in staying informed of important health and other issues. As president of the Mahopac Seniors, Tina has been an invaluable asset to the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and has encouraged many participants to volunteer at local schools, nutrition programs, and driving older adults to their doctor appointments. Tina also serves as an active member of the Office for Senior Resources Advisory Board. She is relied on for her assistance in reaching the frail and isolated in her town. Tina is well known for her participation in community matters that address the many needs of older residents in Putnam County.

Tina Capizola was born in 1944, in Manhattan, New York. Her grandparents had a summer home in Lake Secor, Mahopac. Tina spent all her summers in Putnam County. In 1963, Tina and her husband, Nicholas, moved to Mahopac. She was always a working mom. Her first position was at Grand Union grocery store, then Boyers department store. Tina completed her career as a custodian at Mahopac High School for 27 years.

Through her many years of working with the public, Tina learned that being involved and caring for neighbors is the American way of life. Tina enjoys volunteering, especially serving older adults. Keeping older people involved and active in the community helps lessen social isolation. She feels grateful to help others by providing a place for them to gather as a group. Weekly outings promote social interaction with their friends and acquaintances and a feeling of purpose and enjoyment in the gathering.

AWARDEE:

Dennis Rawlins

Queens County



Dennis Rawlins volunteers with the Octagon Neighborhood Association, working closely with the Association president to get things done in the community. He worked on getting speed bumps on most of the streets in his triangular community and a traffic light at a busy intersection. Dennis also keeps a watch on the garbage dumping in his community, which he reports to the appropriate department to be addressed. He volunteers at the Allan Community Senior Center in many capacities, greeting everyone with a smile. He socializes with them, sometimes playing cards or dominoes. He often shares news of interest regarding retired transit workers and veterans or simply listens. He also helps with setting up and decorating for social events at the senior center and helps clean up after events.

Dennis enjoys traveling. He is a trip coordinator for Diamond Tours, with his wife Gloria. Together they make trips fun events for participants who do not enjoy flying anymore. He is the “D” under the title of D&G Presents. He makes travel for older adults fun and enjoyable.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies, Dennis came to the US in 1962 at 16, along with his mother and two siblings. He lived in New York City, where he continued his education before moving to Cambria Heights, Queens. Dennis worked as a parking attendant for Kinney’s Parking Company before entering the US Navy. He served in the Navy for four years during the Vietnam era. After his discharge, he became a train operator for the New York City Transit Authority, where he worked for 25 years until his retirement.

Dennis later became restless and took a job as an assembler for Walmart, where he worked for 13 years, filling his newfound time off. He and Gloria currently resides in Queens. They have four children and eight grandchildren, all living outside of New York City. Dennis often travels to visit them, as his family is very important to him. His brother and sister also live outside of New York City.

When asked for advice about volunteering, Dennis says: “Speak with the director of your organization, ask what is available for volunteers to do. Try to make yourself available to help in any capacity. Do whatever you can, from wiping down tables, putting on tablecloths, and wrapping silverware for the next day. It all helps in the end.”

AWARDEE:

Gloria Rawlins
Queens County



Gloria Rawlins is a member of Maranatha Baptist Church in Queens Village, New York, under the leadership of Pastor A'kim Beecham. She is a hospitality unit member, and greets members and guests with a smile and a welcome into service. Gloria is actively involved with the Allen Community Senior Center. She is assistant secretary to the advisory board; the monthly birthday party planner, where seniors actively participate in the birthday party program; Co-chair of the Women's Senior Center 46th Anniversary Gala 2020; and a member of the Bid Whist Club. During this challenging time of COVID-19, older adults in quarantine have missed their friends and socialization. Gloria continues to volunteer (virtually) as a bingo caller for Allen Community Senior Center.

Gloria meets with older adults in her neighborhood every Tuesday and Thursday to walk in a community park while having socially distanced conversation. This outdoor activity is critical for older residents during this pandemic. They are also planning a social distancing picnic and anticipate having an excellent time eating, chatting, and listening to music. Gloria loves to volunteer when it comes to older residents of her community. She believes in sharing information to keep people informed on current events like voting information, the location of food pantries for fresh vegetables, and free groceries. Gloria also volunteers at the Octagon Neighborhood Association, Inc. as the election supervisor.

A native New Yorker born in Brooklyn, she currently resides in Jamaica, New York. Gloria has eight siblings. Gloria and her husband Dennis are parents to four children and eight grandchildren, all living outside New York City. She enjoys visiting them often. After completing her studies as a medical administrative assistant, she retired from the Long Island Vision Optometric Center in Westbury, New York. Gloria enjoys traveling. She is a trip coordinator for Diamond Tours, which exclusively plans trip by land. Some older adults prefer not to fly, so this is an opportunity for them to see America by land and take in exciting sights along the way. Gloria is the "G" in D&G Presents, which makes travel for seniors enjoyable.



AWARDEE:

Sister Ursula Joyce

Rockland County

Sister Ursula Joyce's involvement with the community has improved the quality of life within Rockland county. With an extraordinary participation in community affairs, she has served as a board member for St Thomas Aquinas College Board of Trustees, the Center for Safety and Change, the Rockland County Commission on Human Rights, Home Aides of Rockland, the Chairperson of the Rockland County Child Care Coalition and more. Sister Ursula is the Executive Director of the Dominican Sisters Housing Administration.

Sister Ursula Joyce, OP is a native New Yorker. Her roots trace back to Harrison, NY. Her parents William and Beatrice Joyce migrated from County Mayo, Ireland, in search of the American dream. They raised their two children, Ursula and Bill, in New York. At the age of five, Ursula's family settled in the Bronx. Sister Ursula first met the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill at the former St. Joseph School located on Bathgate Avenue, Bronx, NY. The relationship with the sisters was cultivated during her four years at Aquinas High School, and she entered the congregation. She earned a B.S. in education from St. Thomas Aquinas College, an M.S. in psychology from St. John's University, and a Ph.D. in psychology from Fordham University. She continued with post-doctoral studies at Lehigh University, Eastern Michigan University, New York University Medical School, and Harvard University Graduate School of Design. As an educator, Sister Ursula has taught at levels from elementary school to graduate school. A licensed psychologist, from 1963 to 1983, she held a variety of positions at St. Thomas Aquinas College. Those positions include chair of the Psychology Department and Director of Student Personnel Services. During her tenure as vice president of the Sparkill Dominican Sisters (1972-76), she coordinated the development of Thorpe Village. In 1994, she had a similar role in the development of Dowling Gardens. Since 1981, she has served as executive director of the Dominican Sisters' senior housing ministry, overseeing both Thorpe Village and Dowling Gardens.

When asked about volunteering, Sister Ursula says, "When you volunteer, you get back 100 percent and more! You have an opportunity to grow personally and learn. You also meet so many wonderful people from all works of life."

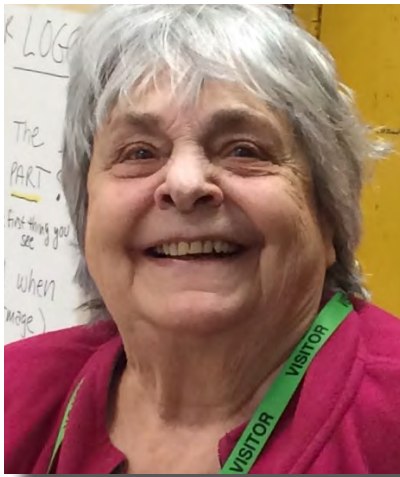
AWARDEE:
Ann Morgan
Rockland County



Ann Morgan built Creative Aging in Nyack (CAN), from its start as a small group to the membership of 103 that it is today. She listened to the needs of older adults in her community and worked with them to build an organization that serves their needs. Ann accomplished this feat within two years. Creative Aging in Nyack supports seniors in Nyack who wish to continue living a stimulating and healthy life in their current homes and apartments. CAN's meetings are open to all, even though the membership is limited to those within the 10960 zip code. Ann has held meetings with the leadership of the Nyack YMCA, Montefiore Nyack Hospital, and the Nyack Library, always with a small group from CAN to help build collaborations. The older writer's laboratory, "OWLS" meet regularly at the library.

Ann Morgan was born in Ohio and grew up in Pennsylvania. After graduating from Skidmore College and doing a year of graduate studies at Brown University, she taught English to middle school and high school students at the Pingree School in Massachusetts and the Spence School in New York City. In 1976, she and her husband Vin Morgan moved to South Nyack just before the birth of their first child. For the next 14 years, Ann devoted herself to raising their two children while working part time as a copywriter and editor. She volunteered as a Girl Scout leader and served for many years on elementary and middle school PTAs. The family moved to Upper Nyack in 1986, and she began graduate studies at Bank Street College of Education. Ann graduated in 1990 with a master's degree in education with a focus on computers in education. She then developed software for children with language disabilities. She also created and taught the Writer's Workshop at Bank Street for four years. In 1993, Ann became the Director of Admissions for the Graduate School at Bank Street. In July 2017, Ann identified and organized a small group of like-minded community members who formed Creative Aging in Nyack (CAN). Ann recruited an advisory team, set up sub-committees to gather information, and began leading bi-weekly meetings. By its second year, Ann had orchestrated CAN's incorporation as a nonprofit group in New York State, established an affordable membership program, and created an impressive website.

When asked about volunteerism, Ann says, "Know that your help is needed and will be appreciated. Take time to think about what you enjoy, about the skills you have, and about the wisdom you have gained. Then contact friends and organizations and ask about opportunities. Give volunteering a try!"



AWARDEE:
Francine Rodger
Saratoga County



Francine Rodger’s most outstanding contribution to the community has been the decades she has spent with the local library. From its early beginnings in the 1960s, through a major building campaign in the late 1970s, to its establishment as a public library district in the 1980s and today, she helped to create the Clifton Park Halfmoon Library Foundation and serves as president. Francine has also worked on behalf of older adults, serving on the Senior Center Board for the past 30 years supporting Care Links. This organization strives to keep older adults in their own homes as long as possible. She has also served as the chair of the CAPTAIN/CHS Senior Services Committee.

In her 50 years as a member of the League of Women Voters, Francine has chaired numerous studies and coordinated a voting information program for Saratoga County 5th grade students. She supported voter information through the creation of and participation in an online voter guide, and also served as chapter president for three years. Francine is currently in charge of publicity for the Saratoga County League of Women Voters. Francine says that she does it all in the hopes of encouraging citizen participation in her community.

Francine was born in Brooklyn in 1943. She attended high school on Long Island, and graduated from Cornell University in 1963. After three years in Albany, she moved to Saratoga County, where she raised four children. Francine’s family served as hosts to high school exchange students from Germany, Spain, Japan, and Brazil. Francine and her husband have always been active in their community and continue to do so to this day, despite the limitations aging has placed on them.

Francine shares with us that “You should volunteer what you can when you can, as you receive so much more than you give. Even if you feel you are volunteering very little, every little bit helps. Today as health problems limit my ability to go out, I do what I can from home. The power of the Internet allows so much ability to volunteer remotely. My greatest reward has been the people I have met.”

AWARDEE:
Barbara Thomas
Saratoga County



Barbara Thomas has provided leadership for more than 30 years to the League of Women Voters. She arranged for public education programs on issues such as whether or not to dredge PCBs from the Hudson, environmental impacts of nuclear energy, the benefits of paper ballots and optical scan voting machines, and a series on Making Democracy Work. Barbara coordinated League efforts to assess and lobby for the accessibility of polling sites throughout the county. She was president of the League as it developed many important programs. They included the “Take Me To Vote” program, which reaches more than 1,000 5th graders every year, and the “First Vote” program, which facilitates the voter registration of HS students. She has organized and moderated the League’s nonpartisan candidate forums.

Barbara was a founding member of the SC Economic Opportunity Council, which developed the congregate dining programs that are now run by the Office for the Aging. She has chaired the Mayor’s Senior Advisory Committee for the last four years. One concrete benefit of her hard work was getting the Post Office to install a handicap accessible mailbox in Saratoga Springs.

Barbara was born in Queens and lived there until she was 20 when she married Bob Thomas in South Carolina. Bob was a meteorologist serving in the Air Force. Barb and Bob had one son, Mark in SC, another, Steve, in Newfoundland, and two more, Larry and Zach in Billings, Montana. From Billings, they moved to Pennsylvania before settling in Saratoga County in 1971.

Barbara worked for Southern Adirondack Planned Parenthood for 15 years, moving from Director of Outreach to County Clinic Director to Executive Director. Other jobs include working as a substitute teacher in many schools throughout Saratoga County, and as the coordinator of a day habilitation program for the Center for the Disabled. After her husband died in 2012, Barbara moved from West Milton to Saratoga Springs.

Barbara has three teenaged grandchildren.

AWARDEE:

Rev. Phillip Grigsby **Schenectady County**



Rev. Phillip Grigsby devoted the past 34 years of his life to serving and advocating for the most vulnerable citizens of Schenectady County through Schenectady Inner City Ministry's (SICM) many well-regarded programs. Although employed, it was a job that always required going "above and beyond," being fully available, as the principal contact for the security service. In addition to expanding the existing food pantry, he has added programs addressing food insecurity and socialization. He provided worthwhile opportunities for volunteers. Well regarded throughout the county and beyond, Rev. Grigsby's leadership has enhanced the quality of life for tens of thousands of people of all ages. He is a leader in addressing human rights and human needs through: building coalitions; supporting and serving older adults in a variety of ways; and, serving as a role model to many other leaders in our community. He has received numerous awards, including the Victor A. Lord Courage of Convictions Award from Equinox of Albany, the Sr. Serena Branson Award from the Council of Community Services of NYS Ecumenical Relations Award, NYS Conference, the United Church of Christ Leadership Award, Church World Service Interdenominational Ministers' Conference Award, the Ed Bloch Award, and the Interfaith Alliance Campbell Peace and Justice Award.

After graduating college, Reverend Phil married Janet Lynn Phillips. They've been married for more than 50 years. Following their wedding, they immediately left for Sierra Leone, as Peace Corps volunteers for two years. Upon returning to the US, Rev. Grigsby enrolled at Yale Divinity School and accepted a position as an associate minister with the First Congregational Church on the Green in Norwalk, CT. He was ordained there in 1976. He then served as the executive director of Christian Community Action in New Haven, CT. They moved to Davidson, NC, where Janet taught sociology at Davidson College. Rev. Grigsby then was called to the position at SICM. They currently reside on Avenue A, where they have lived and raised their family for the past 34 years. They are the proud parents of two adult sons: Matthew and Christopher.

Rev. Phil feels that his greatest reward has been making a difference in the lives of individuals and in the life of the community. He says "Volunteering is in your self-interest and the community's self-interest. It is good for your health; and the health of the community."



AWARDEE:

Diane Marco **Schenectady County**

Diane Marco has worked tirelessly in and for her community for over 40 years. She has served the Town of Rotterdam as an elected official in many capacities such as town board member, deputy supervisor, and treasurer of the former Rotterdam Industrial Development Agency. Now in her retirement from her 38 year career in banking, she holds the position of Rotterdam Town Clerk. Diane performs wedding ceremonies on her own time and donates the clerk fee to the Rotterdam Boys & Girls Club and the Rotterdam Senior Association. These positions exemplify her commitment to the youth and aging of our community. In 2019, Diane was awarded the John F. Kennedy Democratic Leadership Award by the Schenectady County Democratic Committee. Diane is well respected by all who work with her. She is always there to lend a helping hand. She is a true example of selfless volunteerism that has made her community a better place in which to live. Diane takes great joy from giving her time and talent to help others and doesn't even think of herself as a volunteer.

A native New Yorker, Diane Margaret Marco was born in 1951. She has one daughter and two granddaughters. A lifelong resident of Rotterdam, Diane is the current Town Clerk of Rotterdam, holding the position since 2012. Prior to her Town Clerk position, she served on the Rotterdam Town Board for eight years, holding the position of deputy supervisor. Diane is a 38 year veteran of the Credit Union industry, working in Rotterdam for Transims Federal Credit and then Sunmark Credit as part of a 2003 merger. She held several positions within the credit union, including assistant treasurer and treasurer on the board of directors as well as office manager and branch manager before retiring in 2005. Throughout her life, Diane has always been involved in many organizations, volunteering her time or playing an active role in the organization. Such organizations include Rotterdam Girls Softball, Rotterdam Pop Warner Cheerleading, Sons of Italy, Schenectady Democratic Women's Club, Rotterdam Democratic Club, Inc., Rotterdam Youth, and Senior Programs, Albany-Schenectady Town Clerks Association, Board of Managers for Rotterdam Boys and Girls Club, and Rotterdam Senior Citizens Association and Young at Hearts.

Diane invites others to get involved and stay active through volunteering. She has made many friends through volunteering. She encourages everyone to find an organization or two that they feel strongly about or that they see making a difference in the community and get involved.

AWARDEE:

Father Michael Hartney

Schuyler County



Father Michael Hartney became fully involved in the civic affairs of Schuyler County when he moved to Watkins Glen in 2006. He served two terms on the Schuyler County Youth Board and then two terms on the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce Board. On both boards he brought his unique voice as a member of the faith community to their deliberations.

Realizing that underage drinking was a critical issue for the county's youth he sought out the County Committee on Underage Drinking and Drugs to become a member. Similarly, when it became clear that affordable housing was a critical issue for the county, he initiated the re-organization of the defunct Habitat for Humanity affiliate. Since then, Habitat has built two homes and is looking forward to its third. As the Episcopal Priest in Schuyler County, he served churches in Montour Falls, Catharine and Watkins Glen. Representing the County Human Services Committee, he serves on the Southern Tier Central Regional Development Board's evaluation team for federal funding of human services projects. Additionally, he has organized a county fund to financially assist county residents when other county agencies are unable to help.

Father Hartney moved to Watkins Glen 14 years ago, as rector of the Episcopal Churches of Schuyler County. He previously pastored churches in East Aurora, Canajoharie, Fort Plain, and Albany, as well as churches in Marathon, FL, and Hanover, NH. A native of Western Massachusetts, he grew up in Orange, Massachusetts, graduating from Yale Divinity School in 1974. He has pursued continuing education at Saint George's College in Jerusalem on multiple occasions. He retired from active ministry in 2016. In retirement he has continued his active participation as a New York State certified mediator with the Community Dispute Resolution Center. He also serves as president of its board. Active in the Episcopal Church governance for decades, he has served as a Deputy to multiple General Conventions representing the Dioceses of Western New York and Rochester. An automobile enthusiast, an appreciation inherited from his father, Father Hartney has found a home in Watkins Glen, "the soul of American racing." Beginning in 1960 as a child with his father, he has attended the Indianapolis 500 for almost 60 years. He and his wife, Susan, have four children who have provided them with eight grandchildren.

When asked about volunteering, Father Hartney says: "If you live in a community, you have to become involved; otherwise you are reaping the benefit of living there but are giving nothing back. Volunteering often takes you out of your comfort zone to experience someone else's life and circumstance. It is a perspective that everyone should gain."



AWARDEE:
Henry Lutz
St. Lawrence County

Henry Lutz is a critical part of the operation at the Gouverneur Community Center. At the age of 83, he volunteers a significant number of hours at the center. He takes the initiative and does what needs to be done. He is continually checking in with the volunteers, offering assistance. St. Lawrence Office for the Aging says, “You can always depend on Henry to be there and work efficiently. He always helps seniors with cane and other modifications to help make their homes safer, so they are able to age comfortably at home.”

Despite resigning from a maintenance position at the Pine Grove Senior Housing, he still assists residents with maintenance problems. Henry hosted a card party once a week for some of the residents in his apartment building to provide opportunities for fun and socialization. He also enjoyed driving in a parade for the Make-A-Wish float in the summer of 2019.

Henry discovered his compassion for older people as a junior in high school when he began to provide care for his grandmother. He moved in with her to provide company and to take care of everything for her. He made improvements to her house to make her life easier. That compassion has stayed with him today at 83 years old. For many of his early years, Henry worked for EJ Noble Hospital as head of maintenance. He was employed as the Town of Fowler Supervisor for several years, and head of maintenance at Pine Grove Apartments. For 30+ years, Henry installed bathrooms in the homes of many older people. He usually only accepted money to cover the cost of materials for the installation process.

Henry is described by his peers as a compassionate and caring person who never complains and has an “I can do it” attitude. He takes the initiative to get things done without hesitation and is always there to help out.



AWARDEE:

James Shaw

St. Lawrence County



James Shaw played an essential role in securing a \$105,000 grant from the Lions Club International Foundation to expand and renovate the CHMC Diabetes Education Suite. Without his tireless efforts, they would not have secured the community support and funds for this essential upgrade. Diabetes is an ever-growing concern in St. Lawrence County, particularly within the aging population in that community. James is not only concerned with his own health, but the health of his friends, family, and neighbors. He has spent countless hours (and miles on his car) to improve access to lifestyle education to benefit his community. James is a dedicated Lion, participating at the leadership level for many years.

James puts his ego aside and solves the problem at hand. He invests his time and talents into improving his community. Whether he rings the Salvation Army bell during the holiday season or teaches a diabetes prevention class, most often, you find him working tirelessly in the service of others.

James has lived in New York State his whole life. He and his wife moved to Heuvelton in 1977. He and his wife have four children and eight grandchildren. He attended SUNY Canton for Automotive and was in the U.S. Army Reserves from 1970-1976. James has worked on a dairy farm for 20 years and then worked for the Town of Oswegatchie for 20+ years. He has been a volunteer for 32 years, participating in several groups to help his community. People who know James describe him as having a positive impact on the North Country through his lifetime dedication to service. He is an example of what it means to be a dedicated community member.

When asked his thoughts about volunteerism, James says, “There is a lot to volunteer for. It makes you feel good giving back to your own community.”

AWARDEES:

Larry & Cathy Storm

Steuben County



Many small pebbles of kindness can create a mountain of goodwill. Larry and Cathy are living embodiments of this sense of community spirit. Both are lifelong residents of Steuben County, residing in the greater Bath area.

For Larry, that has meant coaching Little League Baseball, Cinderella Softball, Ambulance Corp, and Bath Volunteer Fire Department. They have served their church in many ways, especially in the kitchens. He's also known for "Larry's Tip of the Week" via the Fire Department's electronic billboard. Cathy has been a member of the auxillary. She can often be found sewing for the Fire Department, school plays, Pregnancy Resource Center or creating prom dresses for girls in need. She has also spent many fun hours baking at Family Life Ministries.

Larry & Cathy met when Cathy asked a friend: "Are there any good men still around?" Her friend arranged a blind date, and 41 years later, the two are still inseparable. Circumstances in their lives have created an optimistic attitude in each of them. They have faced health challenges that have created a desire for them to help others as Apnea Monitor Counselors (1980s). More recently, they provide helping hands and companionship for people facing unknown and frightening medical situations. As they both graduated from Bath-Haverling School, they maintain school connections through their children and grandchildren. Cathy often substitute teaches there. Their home, known to many as "Grand Central Station," has always been open to their kids' friends and now to their grandchildren's friends. No one has ever been turned away, especially at mealtime. They also opened their home up to three very special foster children.

Larry and Cathy believe it is everyone's privilege to show that all people have been created with value. They demonstrate this daily by serving others through kindness, respect, and open hearts. They both say, "When you see a need, you fill it. There must be something good about living this way because we keep doing it."



AWARDEE:

Robert Wheeler **Steuben County**



After retiring from the Veterans Administration Medical Center, Robert Wheeler has immersed himself in a life of service to veterans. He is currently one of two ride captains in the Southern Tier for the Patriot Guard and an American Legion Rider. Bob is a state trustee of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks and a past state veterans chairman. Bob serves as the Elk's Veterans Administration Voluntary Service (VAVS) representative, with a territory spanning from Jamestown to Ithaca. He says that he likes this role because he can help direct funding to support local veterans' needs. To further demonstrate his commitment, Bob drives the VA medical transport bus, assisting veterans living in isolated, rural areas to needed medical appointments. Bob's commitment to veterans spans nationally. For the past 20 years, he has participated in the Rolling Thunder Ride. This annual motorcycle rally held on Memorial Day brings hundreds of thousands of veterans to the Mall in Washington, D.C., to remember POW and MIA veterans. In 2014, Bob was one of 457 individuals invited to the "National Reading of the Names." The annual event remembers those who have fallen in the wars since 9/11. At this event, he had the honor to follow General David Petraeus, who read the names of those lost from the 101st Airborne Division. Bob recently received an invitation from the National Parks Service, inviting him to participate in the cleaning/handwashing of the Vietnam War Memorial on Memorial Day weekend this year.

Bob was born in his grandmother's house in Osceola, PA, but lived most of his life in Steuben County, NY. After graduating from high school, he enlisted with the Army during the Vietnam War and trained as a medic. Upon completion of his training, he was selected to continue training as a lab technician and served the remainder of his enlistment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After completing his enlistment, Bob returned to Steuben County. He met his wife, Frieda, and together raised two children, Nicole and Jack. Both Bob and Frieda retired from the VA Medical Center in Bath; Bob was the facility manager. Frieda, who began her career as a nurse, retired as the domiciliary manager. It was essential to both of them to raise their family, which now includes a set of twins and a set of triplets grandchildren, with an appreciation for service to others, especially veterans.



AWARDEE:
Minnie Paramore
Sullivan County

Minnie Paramore consistently volunteers her personal time to support the Bethlehem Temple Church of Monticello. She has been faithful to the same church for over 50 years and often provides transportation to community members, including many older parishioners. She has served as a Sunday school teacher, Sunday school superintendent, choir member, deaconess, missionary, secretary, and is currently serving as an executive board member.

Minnie Paramore has resided in Monticello, NY for the past 66 years. Her family relocated there from Bromley, AL. Minnie is a retired home health aide who loved caring for older adults. She is a volunteer for the Office of the Aging nutrition advisory council. Minnie is involved with seniors at the Neighborhood Facility Senior Center. She was happily married to Robert Paramore for 54 years until his death in 2016. She is the proud mother of seven children and a blessed grandmother of 16 grandchildren. She even helped raise two of them, and she is a double blessed great grandmother of 11 great-grandchildren.

At 84 years old, Minnie is full of life. She loves serving and taking care of her family. She is a kindhearted, humble, loving, beautiful person from the inside out. When asked her thoughts about volunteerism, Minnie says: “Volunteering within your community, working with seniors and church is rewarding in that you are able to help a diversity of people. Helping to make someone else’s day more enjoyable can also bring enjoyment to yourself and you may make a new friend.”

AWARDEE:

Dennis Wood

Sullivan County



Dennis Wood's presence never goes unnoticed at local Wurtsboro Board of Trade events, such as the Founders Day Street Fair, Wurtsboro Halloweenfest, and Wurtsboro Spring Fling. From 1995 through 2003, Dennis volunteered for the Boy Scouts of America. Dennis is also part of the Knights of Columbus Organization. He is always ready to help where ever he is needed. However, the most noticeable difference Dennis has made in the community was the establishment of the Cans for Kids fundraiser. Dennis began collecting cans and bottles out of the neighborhood recycling bins in 2017, collecting enough cans that summer to donate \$500 to the Backpack Program for the local elementary school, Emma C. Chase. In his second year, through donation bins that he placed in his backyard as well as in the town, he made \$750. His daughter assisted with the books and helped him grow this program to help local schools. The Backpack Program provides students in need with a backpack full of non-perishable food to take home at the end of each week and just before school breaks. With the help of collection can sponsors, the fundraiser has grown each year. In 2019, they raised \$2,000 to distribute throughout the community, supporting Emma C. Chase Backpack Program, school supplies and music and art programs, Mamakating Library, and Mamakating Little League.

Dennis was born and raised in Florida, NY where he met and married his high school sweetheart, Linda. Dennis and Linda had three kids, Dennis II, Kelly and Michael, and moved to Wurtsboro, NY in 1992. Dennis and his family firmly planted their roots in Wurtsboro, where he now enjoys watching his two grandchildren grow. Dennis has been a butcher since the age of 17, when he learned the trade at his parents' store in Florida, NY. Dennis has managed the meat department of several local grocery stores, allowing him to stay very involved with the community while gaining and firsthand understanding of the community's needs. Working locally has lead Dennis to meet and get to know so many people in his community. He expresses that volunteering has helped him get more active and lead a healthier life.

Dennis shares: "I want people to know that little things can add up. I was able find a way to help others without taking money out of the community's pocket, one nickel at a time." Dennis also stresses that if everyone would volunteer just one hour a week, we could accomplish so much more. Dennis is passionate about the environment and encourages everyone to do their part for conservation.

AWARDEE:

Manuel Sorensen

Tioga County



Manuel Sorensen has made a significant impact on his community through volunteerism. As a member of the Campfield Fire Department, he has helped save lives. He tells of an instance where he performed CPR for 45 minutes, helping the person to survive. Manuel has also donated his time and talents to Tioga Opportunities by delivering meals and providing medical transportation. He has volunteered for the Broome County Emergency Squad, as well as Gideons International. At this point in his life, Manuel feels that he has the time to volunteer to make a difference in people's lives, which he enjoys doing.

Manuel grew up in Pioche, Nevada. His father was a pastor, and his mother was the county librarian, overseeing the library and local museum. Manuel attended college in South Carolina, where he received his degree in medical radiography. Manuel eventually moved to New York in 1976 and currently resides in Owego with his wife, Karen. He was employed by GAF Corp. in the Technical Service Department. He then moved on to the Lockheed Martin Corporation, where he held the role of senior technical specialist/lead technician in the Materials and Failures Analysis Lab and level III industrial radiographer. He has the distinction of being one of only six level III radiographers within Lockheed Martin to be certified in military electronics radiography. He retired in 2019 after 39 years of service.

Manuel has two children, a son and daughter, of whom he is very proud. His son, Phillip, is a software programmer, computer hardware engineer, and synchrotron programmer/operator at Cornell University's Wilson Laboratory of Elemental Particle Physics. His daughter, Ann Marie, serves as a part-time ESL professor at Binghamton University and also holds the title of Director of the Literacy Volunteers of Broome & Tioga counties.

Manuel would like to share the following advice to individuals thinking about volunteering: "Make a difference in somebody's life. Find something you like to do and then do it. Enjoy life! Do your best and don't be afraid to fail."

AWARDEE:
Elizabeth Conger
Tompkins County



Betty Conger has held a role in the Carrington Fuller Post 800 Legion Auxiliary for 43 years and plays Taps at their ceremonies. She is a current member of the Groton Youth Commission along with the Joint Recreation Committee. Both of these committees oversee recreational programs within the community. Betty teaches Cub Scouts the importance of flag etiquette and citizenship. An avid reader who loves children, she reads once a month at the Groton Public Library for story time and to the 3-year-old class at Groton Elementary through the Izzy Reads program. Betty serves on the Friends of the Library. For the past three years, she has been president of the Groton Alumni Association, where she coordinates class reunions and alumni activities.

Betty is also on the committee for Tompkins County Girl's State. This program for high school junior girls focuses on providing citizenship training; to afford the girls an opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens; and to inform them about the duties, privileges, rights, and responsibilities of American citizenship. As a committee member, Betty donates her time to work with high school girls, which helps grow future leaders grounded in patriotism.

Betty has lived in Groton her entire life. She worked as a personnel administrator for 26 years and then as an administrative assistant at Cornell University for 12 years. Betty has been a widow for 24 years. She has two sons and six stepchildren, as well as several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Betty has held many municipal positions in her community. She's been a trustee on the Groton Village Board for 19 years and also volunteers for the Tompkins County Council of Governments, serving currently as co-chair. She has held the position of co-chair for the past two years. In the past, she has served as deputy mayor and as an alternate for the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Consortium, as well as many other committees.

Betty advises everyone, "Do what you love to do. I truly enjoy reading to children, so I do it as often as I can. Don't be afraid to try new things, too. I find new things all the time." When asked why she volunteers, Betty replied, "I do it because I love my town and village, and I want to preserve its greatness for generations to come. Keeping a community viable is incredibly important to me."



AWARDEE:
John O'Connell
Tompkins County

John O'Connell has faithfully served his church and community. John has volunteered at the Immaculate Conception food pantry for the past year. He helps other volunteers sort the incoming food donations, and every Monday morning he helps to sort and package the food in preparation for Tuesday's service. John also volunteers his time to his fellow residents at Cayuga Nursing and Rehabilitation. John donates his time and experience to talk with residents who may need a friend. He also donates clothing and other items to those in need and helps fill the bird feeders in the courtyards each week. Along with filling the feeders John also volunteers his time at the corner store in his community. He is a part of Cayuga Nursing's outreach efforts to area schools, and last spring he helped collect and donate money for South Hill School.

John is a native of New York State and has lived here for most of his life. He has been a resident of Cayuga Ridge for six years. John has an associate degree and worked in construction. He credits his parents and grandparents for his work ethic and desire to help others. His father, Frank O'Connell, was a dairy farmer and athletics coach, and he was instrumental in setting up the Ithaca Co-op, a farmer-led grocery that later became the P&C grocery store. John's mother was a beloved home economics teacher. John's grandfather, Elmer Seth Savage, was also a farmer, and he earned his PhD from Cornell. Savage Hall on Cornell's campus is named in honor of him.

John says that volunteering is a good thing to do and an easy thing to do: "You are helping your fellow human beings. Volunteering helps keep your health up and has helped me through some hard times." Tompkins County certainly thanks John for all his hard work!

AWARDEE:

Fran Drakert
Ulster County



Fran Drakert has dedicated nearly 30 years to the Hudson River Maritime Museum, a vital cultural institution in the community and New York State. She exemplifies the generosity of volunteers, giving freely of her time and talents to the museum. Staff and guests of the museum greatly appreciate the depth of her knowledge of local history and Hudson River lore. She acts as docent at the Rondout Lighthouse for tours and events. She has entertained hundreds of visitors as she's portrayed famed female Lighthouse Keeper Catherine Murdock, who kept the light burning for over 50 years, from 1857 through 1907. In addition to working in the museum gift shop, Fran has participated in cataloguing and preserving the museum's collections and archives.

Thirty years ago, Fran and her husband Bill moved to Ulster County from Westchester County. Upon their arrival, they both began their volunteer relationship with the Hudson River Maritime Museum (HRMM). Their daughter Donna lives in North Carolina, and their son William lives in Ulster Park, NY. Sadly, Fran's husband Bill passed in 2013, but she continued volunteering with the museum. In addition to regularly volunteering at the HRMM, Fran also enjoys participating in adventures with Elder Hostel, and loves taking windjammer sails in Maine.



AWARDEE:

Thomas Wadnola

Ulster County

For 17 years, Thomas Wadnola has been teaching computer classes to older adults at the Kingston Senior Computer Learning Center. He manages the computers for the organization and serves on the board of directors. He has been involved with the Town of Ulster Little League for the past 12 years in various roles. He has also spearheaded efforts by the Mid-Hudson Library System to create computer classes for older adults at multiple libraries in Ulster County. In addition to his adult education work, Tom has also donated his time and talents to the Boy Scouts of America.

Tom Wadnola is a lifelong resident of the Town of Ulster in Ulster County. During the Vietnam War, he proudly served his country in the United States Air Force. He is a Disabled American Veteran and is involved with his local American Legion Post. Tom had a long career with IBM as a computer programmer and a systems administrator, and is now happily retired.

Tom Wadnola inspires his colleagues to make a greater effort in their volunteer activities. His students value and respect him. His military service is appreciated by his country.

Tom's contributions have made Ulster County a stronger community.

AWARDEES:

Sarah & Rick Husa

Warren County



Following retirement, Rick and Sarah Husa found themselves in a position shared by many in their age group as members of the sandwich generation. There was the fun and commitment of spending time with the kids and grandkids, while giving increasing care to their own parents. The volunteer opportunities with the home delivered meals program in Warren County aligned with Rick and Sarah's desire to remain active members of the community. For over 15 years, it has remained a consistent, enjoyable, and flexible way to give back. Delivering meals on one to three routes a week has become a favorite volunteer activity that has developed a number of new friendships among the clients and fellow volunteers.

Rick is from suburban Philadelphia, while Sarah grew up in Plattsburgh. They met at Cornell University, where they experienced the beauty of Ithaca's gorges and the turbulent times of the late 1960s. Rick graduated in 1970 and joined the VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program in Wayne County, NY. His main project there involved providing assistance to the migrant workers who arrived seasonally to pick the region's peaches, cherries, and apples. They were married after Sarah's 1971 graduation and moved to Albany, where Rick pursued his master's degree from SUNY Albany. After teaching downstate in Warwick, NY, for two years, they accepted positions at an American High School in Kaiserslautern, Germany, which gave them the opportunity to travel extensively throughout Europe during breaks in the school year.

Following the birth of their first child, daughter Emily, in Germany, they returned to the States and settled in Glens Falls, where son Ben was born.



AWARDEE: **William Cormier** **Washington County**



William Cormier is a man who has dedicated his life to his community. An active church member, he serves in many capacities. In 1967, he co-founded the Salem Rotary, was a charter member, and has held the office of president four times. William is a continuing member of the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce and its founding president in 1995. He is a member of the Washington County Historical Society and was a recipient of the James Cronkhite Award in 2004. In 2001, he was chosen for the Riverside School House list of honorees by the Fort Edward Historical Society. William has been a member of the Association of Public Historians New York State since 1984, a certified New York State town historian since 2003, a supporter and member of Historic Salem Courthouse Preservation Association since 2002, served as clerk of the Salem Planning Board for 10 years, has been the chair of the Salem Historical Preservation Commission since 1976, and has written numerous grants for historic preservation and record's management. In 1995, he developed a records management system and historical archives for the town and village of Salem, and upgraded the storage system and facilities for the town in 2019. He served on the board of the Mary McClellan Hospital for many years, and volunteers his time at the Salem Food Pantry. William has written several historical articles for local newspapers and has given many educational programs to adults and students since 1984. He has successfully placed the Revolutionary War Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 and was instrumental in developing the National Historic District in the village of Salem in 1975. William is the author of "The Back Shop and Other Tales," a railroading book about Salem; "Next Year in Salem," a chronicle of the Salem home front during WWII; and most recently, a vintage photograph book, "Along the Battenkill." William also wrote the Salem section for the "Covered Bridges of Washington County, New York," and "A Crease in the Landscape," the story of the slate industry in Washington County.

William "Al" Cormier grew up in the Leominster, Massachusetts area. In 1957, he earned his BA from the University of Massachusetts and master's of education from Cornell in 1965. William married Sara Jane Smock in 1957. They have three children: Bill, Bob, and Rebecca, and one grandchild, Jacob. He is a former teacher and high school principal and served in the NYS Army National Guard in the First Armored Rifle Battalion.

About volunteering, William says: "We should strive to live a life of 'Service Above Self.'"

AWARDEE:

Carolyn Ouderkirk **Washington County**



Carolyn Ouderkirk has been volunteering for 25 years in various capacities and has been a great asset to the Fort Ann community.” Carolyn is the secretary of the Old Stone House Library Committee and is active with its pre-school and summer programs for the children of Fort Ann. She belongs to a book club that meets monthly at the library. Carolyn is also the secretary and a founding member of the Fort Ann Historical Society. She played an integral role in researching, editing, promoting, and publishing the book “Fort Ann: 300 Years of History” in 2007. Carolyn is the “official” typist for the Queen Anne Seniors, actively participating in their many activities. She once hosted a baby shower for the mothers in need, living at the Wait House in Glens Falls, collecting clothing, diapers, and toys. Carolyn is also a member of the Fort Ann Rotary Club. Activities include serving a graduation breakfast, planning Trivia Night, and participating in Photos with Santa and Operation Santa Claus.

She also donates food and funds to the Fort Ann Central School backpack program and the Cornerstone Church food pantry.

In early 2001, Carolyn had begun volunteering with the Red Cross. She had trained to help during local fires, flooding, and other emergencies. She also served as the editor of the Red Cross monthly newsletter. One week after 9/11, she assisted in New York City, where she spent three weeks serving meals to the families of the victims. She returned during the Thanksgiving holiday and spent another three weeks at Ground Zero, serving meals to the workers. Following Hurricane Katrina, she went south and helped to rebuild damaged homes.

Carolyn Ouderkirk was born in Massena, New York. Her first husband, Richard Aulicino, passed away in 1992. Her second husband, Eugene Ouderkirk, passed away in 2015. She has one brother, Richard, and one nephew and four nieces. She has lived all around the country, and in 1995, she moved to Fort Ann. Carolyn started her career as a teacher at West Point Elementary School in West Point, New York. She then worked for a boat-building company in Florida, followed by positions as office manager for two law firms in Albany.

When asked for advice about volunteering, Carolyn stated, “Bring your heart and your sense of humor to your volunteer service, along with your enthusiastic spirit, which is a priceless gift. What you’ll get back will be immeasurable!”

AWARDEE:
Franklin Clark, Sr.
Wayne County

photo unavailable



Franklin Clark, Sr, is well known for his commitment to the community. Frank has an unselfish dedication to public service in his many various volunteer roles. For 52 years, he has been a firefighter with the Williamson Fire Company. He has also donated his time and talents to the Health and Safety Group of Williamson, the Wayne County Senior Action Council, and the Sons of the American Legion of Williamson. Frank has coached hundreds of kids at Williamson and Victor Central Schools in soccer, baseball, and basketball. He's served as the director of the New York State Volunteer Fire and Police Association and held numerous officer positions in various regional and state organizations.

Frank has lived in New York State his whole life and has been married for the past 56 years to his wife, Linda. They have two children, a daughter, Yvonne (Mike), and son, Franklin Jr. (Chris). He has five grandchildren: Amanda, Kelsey, Lindsay, Lacey, and Cameron. Frank also has two great-grandchildren, Natalie and Eric Jr. Frank shares that his children and grandchildren are the biggest joy of his life (aside from his wife, of course!) Frank worked at Xerox Corporation in Rochester for 36 years, enjoying a career that included production, procurement, and management.

Frank has dedicated his entire adult life to helping the people of his communities, young and old alike. He says, "There are plenty of volunteer opportunities, so just go and have fun. The biggest reward is a smile and a thank you."

AWARDEE:
Thomas Herendeen
Wayne County



Thomas Herendeen’s impact on his community is immeasurable. He served as treasurer of the Lyons Chamber of Commerce and has donated his time and talents to organizations such as the Literacy Volunteers, Grace Episcopal Church, the Lyons Democratic Committee, Village of Lyons, and the Lyons Community Center. Tom has also dedicated countless hours tutoring students in need. Tom has a keen eye for efficiency and has saved local nonprofits a significant amount in expenses. He routinely provides for those around him with a lot of energy and no complaints.

According to the Wayne County Office for the Aging, “Tom is a man who embodies the spirit of altruism. He does so much that many others do not want to do, or don’t have the knowledge to do. Our community has gained so much from his involvement and dedication. He has provided knowledge and taught skills to many in the community.”

Tom was born in NYC and moved to Florida when he was 5, where he attended school. He spent his summers in New York. After one year of junior college in Florida, he joined the Coast Guard for four years. As an electronics technician, he performed search and rescue and port security in New York Harbor. After that, Tom resumed college, graduating from Syracuse with a BS in environmental engineering. In June 1977, Tom married his wife, Jill. After college, Tom worked for many companies, including the Genesee Computer Center, Kodak, Digital Equipment Corporation, Chase Bank, JP Morgan, Digital’s Network Product Group, Lucent, and Nortel. Tom has lived in Lyons for almost 20 years, where he keeps busy with the Ohmann Theater as the manager and projectionist and helps the community in many different ways.

About volunteering, Tom says, “Don’t be afraid to try something out of your comfort zone, but also be careful not to overextend yourself. And don’t get caught up in company politics.”

AWARDEE:

Sr. Alice Conrad, RDC Westchester County



At 88 years old, Sister Alice Conrad has served Westchester County since 1953. When Sr. Alice recognized an unmet need in Westchester County, she began Shepherd's Flock to help those who serve the poor and homeless, and often who are themselves in need of assistance. To this day, Shepherd's Flock mission remains the same. It provides basic necessities such as food, clothing, and furniture for people experiencing economic hardship, especially those who work and are not eligible for any government assistance. Sr. Alice has volunteered with schools, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, daycare programs, camps, parishes, and for several of the Divine Compassion ministries. She has volunteered and collaborated with several businesses and organizations such as Family to Family, Don Bosco, Bloomingdale's, Open Arms, Rainbow Outreach, Lifting Up Westchester, and Maria Ferrari Children's Hospital. She was a teacher, administrator, and community service provider. She served as campus administrator at the Sisters of the Divine Compassion campus, and was also the city clerk in Rye, NY.

Sr. Alice began her ministry as a teacher and moved on to serve Westchester at several community-based organizations. Sr. Alice brings out the best in all people with her loving and charismatic manner.

A representative of Bloomingdale's says, "As one of the original and continuing sponsors of Shepherd's Flock, Bloomingdale's is thrilled to support Sr. Alice Conrad in her mission to serve families in need. She has brought together our employees, their friends and families, as well as numerous organizations and businesses to collaborate on behalf of the working poor. Sr. Alice inspires us all with her compassionate heart and joyous spirit!"



AWARDEE:
Vincent Greco
Westchester County

Vincent Greco is 92 years old and has been a Westchester resident for 70 years. As a retired teacher and guidance counselor, he has influenced countless young persons who went on to highly productive careers. As the current commander of the American Legion Post in Armonk, Vince has worked with multiple groups of older adults, encouraging them to use the facilities for a variety of activities including bingo, dances, and dinners. Vince also played a major role in the Legion's Boys State Program, introducing over 30 outstanding nominated boys (and now girls) to the Armonk Town Board for the past 10 plus years. As president of St. Patrick's Parish Council, he was involved in obtaining space for a variety of senior groups which, in turn, implemented great programs for a large number of older residents in the Westchester community. He helped establish the Authentic Science Research Project at Byram Hills High School, a program that became the national model for teaching research in science and has been replicated by over 1,000 school districts.

Vincent Greco was born in Brooklyn, New York, but moved to Westchester County to begin his teaching career. Vincent, his wife, Mary Lou, son, Paul, and daughter, Diane lived in Silver Lake for 30 years before moving to Armonk for the past 40 years. Vince served in the Navy during World War II and continued his military connection as commander of the American Legion Post in Armonk. His entire professional career was in education.

Vince is constantly on the go. His boundless energy is the envy of many. He engages in a variety of physical activities each week, including tennis, golf, lawn bowling, and until recently, ballroom dancing. He continually reinvents himself and is a lifelong learner.

His inspiration comes from his deep faith, his loving family, and many friends.



Office for the Aging

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