

# THE SENIOR STARTER

NOVEMBER 2023



THE PLACE TO START FOR SERVICES  
BY THE  
**TOWN OF COLONIE**  
**SENIOR RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

## Greetings!

November has been designated as **National Family Caregivers Month**. It's a time for when we recognize, honor and celebrate the love and sacrifice of the more than 4.1 million NYS caregivers and over 50 million Americans who provide care to their loved ones. The responsibility of caregiving is often undervalued, unseen and comes with burdens that many do not share. Some ways to share your appreciation include voicing your gratitude, writing a note of thanks, lending a listening ear, and if possible, offering up the gift of time. If you are a caregiver, or know someone who is, and would like some assistance and/or support, please contact our office to speak to one of our caseworkers.

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, **Veteran's Day**, we honor our military men and women for their service to our country. This month we focus our Senior Spotlight on Bruce Mendini, a veteran, who has had extensive involvement with the *Honor Flight Network*, which flies veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit military monuments and honor fallen colleagues. Thank you to Bruce, and to all our military veterans, for your courage, sacrifice and duty to defend our freedom!

**Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!**

Sincerely,  
*Angelina*  
Angelina J. Searles  
Director



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12 Metro Park Road, Suite 103  
Albany, NY 12205  
(518) 459-5051

Newsletter Editor  
Carrie Blanchard

## HEAP - Home Energy Assistance Program

### 2023-2024 Income Guidelines

Household Size	Gross Monthly Income
1	\$3,035
2	\$3,970
3	\$4,904
4	\$5,838

Application Assistance Dates for all HEAP Benefits:

**December 13, 2023**

**January 10, 2024**

**February 14, 2024**

**March 13, 2024**

**10am -12pm**

**Town of Colonie Senior Resources Dept.**

**12 Metro Park Rd. Ste. #103**

**Colonie, NY 12205**

**APPOINTMENTS NECESSARY - PLEASE CALL TO SCHEDULE**

**518-459-5051, ext. 2**

**HEAP Benefits Available for Application include:**

- ⇒ **Regular Benefit**
- ⇒ **Emergency Benefit** \*not available till 1/2/2024\*
- ⇒ **Heating Equipment Repair/Replacement:**  
*assists with cost to repair/replace furnace, boiler or other direct heating equipment.*
- ⇒ **Clean & Tune:** *cleaning of furnace/chimney*

## Neighbor Helping Neighbor

As an agency, Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc (CSSC) continues to support local residents as a good neighbor. Our monthly food distribution day helps those in need. Join us on **Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am - 12:30pm @ The Beltrone Living Center.** The number of participants continues to grow. We ask for your patience and kindness extended to all involved.

**Please bring your own reusable grocery bag for your items!** Questions about this program, please call 518-459-2857.



**Regional Food Bank**  
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

## StateWide's Medicare Corner

### **Medicare Open Enrollment Scams**

"Watch out for scams during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period as you look for your best health coverage options, don't forget to keep an eye open for fraudsters! **Open Enrollment** can quickly become an **"Open Season"** for scammers," announced Maria Alvarez, Executive Director of StateWide.

Medicare Open Enrollment is an annual period during which Medicare beneficiaries can make changes to their health and prescription drug plans. It's an opportunity to review and adjust your coverage to ensure it aligns with your healthcare needs and budget. This period typically runs from October 15th to December 7th, with any changes made taking effect on January 1st of the following year.

### **Alvarez advises seniors to beware of these typical Medicare Enrollment Scams:**

- Watch out for people who: Claim they work with or represent Medicare, are an "official Medicare agent".
- There are no Medicare representatives and Medicare will never cold-call you.
- Say you must join a Medicare prescription plan (also known as Part D). It is voluntary to join a Medicare prescription drug plan.
- Ask for personal information, such as your Medicare number, Social Security number and/or bank information.
- Threaten or pressure you to enroll in their plan. You will not lose your benefits and have the entire Open Enrollment Period to decide on a plan.
- Offer you gifts to enroll in their plan -- it's illegal.

If you suspect your Medicare or SS number has been compromised, think you've been enrolled in a plan without your permission, or if you have any questions about Medicare fraud and what coverage is best for your needs, reach out to StateWide's certified counselors today.

**Call 800-333-4374 for assistance!**

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



## STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

**Angelina Searles, Director**  
**searlesa@colonie.org**  
**518-459-5531**

**Carrie Blanchard, Specialist II**  
**blanchardc@colonie.org**  
**518-459-3977**

**Katie Connelly, Caseworker**  
**connellyk@colonie.org**  
**518-459-3259**

**Sue Conlon, Caseworker**  
**conlons@colonie.org**  
**518-867-3931**

**Racheal Dames, Caseworker**  
**damesr@colonie.org**  
**518-459-5764**

**Chris Molinari, Specialist**  
**molinaric@colonie.org**  
**518-459-2516**



## Albany County Veterans Bureau

100 Heritage Lane, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12211  
518-447-7710  
M-F, 8:30am-4:30pm

Email: [veteransbureau@albanycountyny.gov](mailto:veteransbureau@albanycountyny.gov)

Website: [www.albanycounty.com/departments/veterans-service-bureau](http://www.albanycounty.com/departments/veterans-service-bureau)

We provide information and services to veterans living in Albany County, assisting veterans and their dependents in filing claims, obtaining important documents, and determining eligibility for the benefits and services they have a legal right to.

**ALBANY COUNTY**  
*Cares* about our veterans

## Monthly Veteran's Assistance

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

**When:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month

**Time:** 12-2pm

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

**Appointments Required!**

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



## Veterans Crisis Line

Connects Service members and Veterans in crisis, as well as their family members and friends, with qualified responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text-messaging service. This is a free service and available 24/7 by dialing 988 then PRESS 1 or <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>



## Stratton VA Medical Center - Albany

The health center offers a number of services to support caregivers and the veteran. If you are a caregiver for a veteran, connect with a support coordinator at 518-626-6020 or email [vhaalnslacaregiver@va.gov](mailto:vhaalnslacaregiver@va.gov).

The Caregiver Support Line is available if you need support outside of the Albany region, have questions about caregiver support services nationwide, or just need someone to listen at 855-260-3274.



## National Family Caregivers Month

November is National Family Caregivers Month and the theme this year is "Caregivers Connect". This campaign highlights the importance of connections as a way to get information about your loved one's disease or condition, share experiences, get support, or form a closer bond with your loved one. For more tips or information, visit <https://www.caregiveraction.org/national-family-caregivers-month>. There are services available to help you navigate the caregiving process, as well as provide support to you as a caregiver. A great place to start is by calling our office, as its core to our mission to educate and assist seniors and their caregivers. *\*Funded in part by Albany County Department for Aging*

### **Free Online Support & Education for Caregivers**

The NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and AgingNY have partnered with Trualta to offer a web-based caregiver education and support platform at no cost to any unpaid caregiver in NYS. Funding for this initiative is supported in the Fiscal Year 2023 state budget through NYSOFA programs to address social isolation and expand caregiver supports. New Yorkers can access the service from any computer, tablet or smartphone: <https://newyork-caregivers.com>



### **Local Support Services**

**Alzheimer's Association - NENY:** Offers virtual education programs, virtual caregiver support groups & social programs. Call 518-867-4999 to speak with a local specialist. The National Alzheimer's Assoc. Helpline is available 24/7: 800-272-3900.

**Catholic Charities Caregiver Support Services:** Offers respite services, support services & support groups. For more information, call 518-372-5667.

**Eddy Alzheimer's Services:** Offers education, support groups, respite and care teams. If you're caring for someone with Alzheimer's/dementia, contact us for assistance; 518-238-4164 or <https://www.sphp.com/find-a-service-or-specialty/memory-care-and-alzheimers/eddy-alzheimers-services/>





## Senior Clubs of Colonie

### Christ Our Light Seniors

Pres. Sal D'Amore, 518-458-1648

**Business Meeting:** First Monday @ 12:30pm

### Colonie Senior Citizens Club

Pres. Kathy Ingalls, 518-482-5049

**Business Meeting:** First Wednesday @ 10am

### Lisha Kill Seniors Citizens Club

Pres. Shirley Hamm, 518-869-3020

**Business Meeting:** Second Tuesday @ 9:30am

### Menands Senior Citizens Club

Pres. Diane Leonard, 518-465-3771

**Business Meeting:** Fourth Thursday @ 10:30am

### Towers of Colonie Silver Streakers

Pres. Ralph Della Rocca, 518-542-1807

**Business Meeting:** First Monday @ 1pm

### Thunder Road Seniors

Pres. Barbara Williams, 518-314-9385

**Business Meeting:** Second Wednesday @ 10am



Peter G. Crummey  
Town Supervisor

## TOWN OF COLONIE

### Office of the Supervisor

Memorial Town Hall  
534 New Loudon Road  
Latham, New York 12110

Phone (518) 783-2728 Fax (518) 782-2360

[www.colonie.org/supervisor](http://www.colonie.org/supervisor)

*Equal Opportunity Employer*



### Supervisor Crummey's Colonie Connection

As we head into November, I look forward to the opportunities and holidays that lie ahead. As trees continue to drop their leaves, our Town's leaf and brush collection remains in full swing. For more information, please visit <https://www.colonie.org/departments/envservices/leaf-yard-waste>. In addition to our ongoing Town services, we will celebrate Thanksgiving at the end of the month and I trust you will be able to share this special time of year with your loved ones.

I hope this occasion will bring rest and relaxation for all!!

By the way, have you signed up for Stay Connected to receive other notices of activities in our Town?

Please visit <https://www.colonie.org/stayconnected/>

I would like to congratulate our *Celebrate a Senior* Honoree Bruce Mendini and extend my gratitude for his service to our country. Bruce's steadfast commitment in giving back reflects his unwavering dedication and compassion for our Veterans.

Don't forget to submit nominations, including a photograph, to [blanchardc@colonie.org](mailto:blanchardc@colonie.org) for our next Town of Colonie *Celebrate a Senior* segment.

I am always here if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call my office.



## Celebrate a Senior Spotlight

Bruce Mendini grew up in northern Michigan. He was the third of ten children born to his German Swedish mother and Austrian father. In 1964, Bruce and two of his brothers were drafted to serve for our country in Vietnam. Bruce served in the United States Air Force from 1964 until 1968. He was stationed in Texas, Colorado, Florida, Arizona and Okinawa. He worked in the maintenance of missile guidance systems, requiring top-secret clearance. He attained the rank of Sergeant when he was discharged. After serving in our US Air Force, Bruce obtained a position with UNIVAC (Universal Numeric Integrating Automatic Calculator), and was sent to Ilion, NY to train for his career. This is where he was invited on a blind, double date where he was introduced to a young teacher named, Jackie. They enjoyed a jazz combo with Gap Mangione and talked until the sun came up. One year later, Bruce and Jackie were married.

Bruce and Jackie raised their three children in the Town of Colonie: Ellen, Kathy and David. Bruce's position with UNIVAC involved being on-call 24/7 during his 15 years with them. During retirement years, both Bruce and Jackie have enjoyed their memberships with the Thunder Road Senior Club. They are the proud grandparents of seven grandchildren, ranging in age from 5 to 24 years.

In 2019, Sergeant Mendini was honored as "Veteran of the Day" at a patriotic ceremony which took place at Disney World! After assisting in lowering the American flag, Bruce proudly carried it down Main Street. Bruce paid the honor forward by serving as President of Capital District Patriot Flight, Inc. He had taken the trip with a friend years before and was impressed by the number of volunteers, dedication, and donations put forth to make it happen. Bruce is still a supporter of the organization today, informing and encouraging others to learn more about the wonderful service they offer to our Veterans.

Patriot Flight is the official representative of the *National Honor Flight Network* for seven counties in the Capital District. They are a nonprofit 501 (C3) corporation that is run fully by volunteers who operate under *Patriot Flight, Inc.* Their mission is to enable all US Veterans to visit the memorials in Washington DC which are dedicated in their honor. The day commences at 6:00 am (06:00) and concludes at about 10:30 pm (22:30). Although this may sound like a long day, there are no sleepers on the way home! Veterans who served our country at different times share their stories with one another throughout their day and night.

Patriot Flight staff and volunteers play a large role in this whole experience: seeing the group off complete with speakers and Color Guard ceremony, and then greeting them again at the Albany airport upon their return. Professional photographers travel with the group throughout the day, providing with an 8x10 framed group photo for every Veteran, and posting photos for their families on Facebook. Each Veteran also receives a Mission booklet encompassing their trip and listing the sponsors who made it possible.

If you would like to donate or learn more about supporting the Capital District Patriot Flight, Inc. or submit an application for their next flight this coming spring, please visit [www.patriotflight.org](http://www.patriotflight.org) or find them on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/patriotflightinc>.

### **Donations in support of Patriot Flight can be sent to:**

Patriot Flight, Inc.  
PO Box 13776  
Albany, NY 12212-13776

