

THE SENIOR STARTER

OCTOBER 2023



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

Greetings!

Thank you to all who attended our recent Wellness & Caregiver Fair at the Crossings. We had a great turnout! Our vendors appreciated the turnout and the enthusiasm of our attendees. They shared that people came prepared with excellent questions and a thirst for knowledge on their programs and services.

October is Fire Prevention month. The goal of this prevention program is to raise fire safety awareness and help protect homes and people from the danger of fires. I have gotten in the habit of changing out my smoke detector batteries in the fall and spring, with the changing of the clocks. If you need new smoke detectors, we have information enclosed on how to obtain them free from the Red Cross.

This month begins the Medicare Open Enrollment Period. You should have received your Annual Notice of Change from your Medicare health insurance provider. Please review this document for any upcoming changes to your plan for 2024. You have between October 15th and December 7th to make plan changes for an effective date of January 1, 2024. Please consider reaching out to our trained staff for assistance navigating your Medicare questions. No question is too small!

Sincerely,
Angelina
Angelina J. Searles
Director

REMINDER:
**MEDICARE ANNUAL
ENROLLMENT PERIOD**
OCTOBER 15 - DECEMBER 7



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

Newsletter Editor
Carrie Blanchard

Colonie Library Classes & Events

Tuesday, October 10 • 6-7:15pm
Houseplant Swap

Wednesday, October 11 • 6-8pm
Film Noir Comedies - "Beat the Devil"

Wednesday, October 11 • 6:30-7:30pm
Monthly Personal Investment Group

Thursday, October 12 • 10:30am-12:30pm
Mystery Book Group

Thursday, October 12 • 1-3pm
Cutting the Cord: Alternative to standard TV svcs

Friday, October 13 • 12pm-3pm
Insurance Annual Notice of Changes for 2024

Sunday, October 15 • 1-2:30pm
Stay and Stitch - bring your own project & chat!

Tuesday, October 17 • 6:30pm-7:45pm
All About Japanese Matcha

Wednesday, October 18 • 12-2pm
Seminar To Assist Area Seniors

Monday, October 23 • 2-4:30pm
Free Movie Monday - "Zombieland: Double Tap"

Registration is required! Visit here to register:

<https://www.colonielibrary.org/events/>

****The library is collecting food items
for local food banks from
Oct. 1 - Oct. 27****



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 2nd 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



StateWide's Medicare Corner

Don't Say "Yes"

Social Engineering is the use of deception to manipulate individuals into divulging confidential/personal information that may be used for fraudulent purposes. Scammers are using Social Engineering tactics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Chatbots, and Robocalls to commit Medicare Fraud. They will use tactics like phishing or baiting to pose as healthcare providers or Medicare to reach out to a potential victim and request their personal/financial information. The scammers may offer free or discounted new products to appeal to the potential victims' curiosity. They often prey on fear to exploit the potential victim if they display hesitancy to comply with the scammers' request by threatening to stop their Medicare coverage or Social Security benefits.

Fraudsters use social engineering with the goal of obtaining a persons' personal health and/or identifying information to file fraudulent insurance claims, receive medical services, or obtain prescription drugs. Scammers will use Robocalls and Chatbots to make unsolicited calls to potential victims and ask general 'yes' or 'no' questions such as "Do you have Medicare?" or "Is your first name Joseph?". This is in attempt to record a "Yes" that they use to authorize fraudulent products or services to Medicare. These tactics impact an individual's medical identity and can be very dangerous.

What can you do to protect yourself?

- Screen calls to answer numbers you recognize and utilize voicemail to limit contact with Chatbots & Robocalls.
- Educate yourself! Stay informed about common healthcare scams.
- Report suspicious activity! Call NYS SMP Helpline @ 800-333-4374.

The SMP program educates Medicare beneficiaries on how to protect themselves from fraud and abuse and is the go-to when people suspect they've been billed incorrectly or have been victim to a scam.



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



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SNAP Update: Benefits Scams

SNAP Benefits Stolen Through Electronic Theft Are Now Eligible for Replacement

In the past we have written about being alert about phishing and skimming scams on your benefits cards. SNAP households can now submit claims to request the replacement of SNAP benefits stolen between 10/1/22- 8/21/23 and/or Cash Assistance benefits stolen between 1/1/22 - 8/21/23 through EBT card skimming and phishing scams. **The deadline to apply for reimbursement is October 31, 2023.**

The US Dept of Agriculture, Food & Nutrition Service permits states to use SNAP funds to issue replacement benefits to households who had a scam-related electronic benefit theft of SNAP benefits from **October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2024.**

Similarly, the NYS Office Temporary & Disability Assistance enacted a law that permits the issuance of replacement benefits for households who had a scam-related electronic benefit theft of Cash Assistance benefits on or after **January 1, 2022.**

Additionally, benefits stolen **on or after August 22, 2023 must be reported within 30 days of the date the household becomes aware of the theft to be eligible for replacement.**

To learn more about how to file a SNAP and Cash Assistance benefit replacement request, click here: <https://hungersolutionsny.org/snap-benefits-stolen-through-electronic-theft-are-now-eligible-for-replacement/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=cad7a398-667f-4952-865e-79fa9ac54d11>

OR

Call our office to meet with one of our Caseworkers at 518-459-5051, ext. 2.



FREE COVID-19 Tests

The U.S. Government Is Offering Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests

Starting on September 25, 2023, every U.S. household may place an order to receive 4 **free** COVID-19 rapid tests delivered directly to your home. To place your order, visit <https://www.covid.gov/tests> or call 1-800-232-0233

N95 Masks Available

Albany County has provided us with disposable N95 particulate respirator face masks. These are available for pick-up to any TOC resident who needs them. Come by our office during regular business hours, M-F, 8:30am - 4:30pm.



As the Seasons Change.....

Did you know that about 10 million Americans experience seasonal mood changes, commonly known as **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**? This is a form of depression that usually affects people living primarily in northern climates from mid to late fall through the early days of spring. The lowest rates of SAD are in Florida, Hawaii, New Mexico and Texas. People with **SAD** develop symptoms during the short dark days starting in the fall or when deprived of light. Symptoms of **SAD** can include: weight gain, difficulty waking up on schedule, daytime fatigue, depression/sadness, loss of motivation and increase in anxiety. Consult with a medical professional to confirm the diagnosis which includes taking a complete history, including current symptoms.

There are several options that you can try to help alleviate the symptoms you may experience:

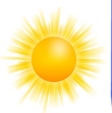
- Light therapy - There are many light box devices on the market today that can replace the lack of sunlight and there are no UV rays to worry about. The light helps to improve energy & mood levels!
- Find a mental health professional who specializes in Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) who can provide coping skills to ward off sad mood, low motivation, anxiety and other symptoms.
- Vitamin D plays an important role in overall well-being and mood. A decrease in Vitamin D levels during northern winters may be responsible for seasonal mood changes linked to development of depression.
- Limiting technology at least one hour before bedtime. Light exposure from computers, tablets or smartphones can make it difficult to fall asleep.
- Starting a low dose antidepressant. Talk with your health care provider or mental health professional about whether an antidepressant would be beneficial.
- Walk outdoors for 30 minutes a day. It's been known that healthy eating and exercise have positive effects on our mood and lessen body aches and pains.
- Have a regular sleep/wake pattern.
- If you have the opportunity, get away to a warmer climate for a break from the northern winters.

There is no root cause of **SAD** other than reduced sunlight and shorter days which has been linked to chemical changes in the brain. Educate yourself about **SAD**. Consider how your activities contribute to **SAD** symptoms. Seek out pleasant activities to help your mood.

Norman E. Rosenthal, MD has written several books about SAD called 'Winter Blues' (2013; 4th Ed.)

Submitted by:

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Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

Working smoke alarms can cut the risk of death from home fires in half. That's why the American Red Cross is installing **FREE** smoke alarms in our community. For more information or to schedule a **FREE Smoke Alarm Install** please contact *Eastern New York Preparedness Team* at (518) 694-5121 or preparedness.eny@redcross.org



American Red Cross
of Northeastern New York



Boomers & Seniors Expo

Capital Region providers and businesses offering their unique products and services to a multitude of area Boomers & Seniors, caregivers, veterans, family members and professionals in a friendly relaxed atmosphere.

Save the Date!! Come by and say hi to us!



At
COLONIE CENTER
Wolf Road, Albany, NY

JB Enterprises is proud to announce our collaboration with Colonie Center to host a Health and Wellness Fair!

October 21, 2023

10:00am – 4:00pm

Drop Box - Unwanted Medications

The Town of Colonie partnered with Med-Project, as part of New York's Drug Take Back Program. Med-Project installed a drop-box for unwanted or expired medications in the lobby of the Colonie Police Department, at 312 Wolf Road.

This drop-box is accessible 24/7, and is free of charge.

Safe and secure disposal of medications is a better alternative than flushing into water systems, putting into household garbage, or leaving in your home where they could be accessible to others.

More information about this program can be found at <https://med-project.org/>, including what medications can be deposited and what is prohibited.



Caregivers Corner

The Parkinson's Foundation offers free, self-paced online courses created for anyone caring for someone living with Parkinson's. It is called *Care Partner Program: Building a Care Partnership*. Every course offers flexible programming with videos, journal prompts and opportunities to hear from care partners about the topics most important to you, including mood, cognition, caregiver burnout, and more.

To learn more or to register, click the link below:

<https://education.parkinson.org/community-education/carepartner#group-tabs-node-course-default1>



Albany County Healthy Homes

THE HEALTHY HOMES PROGRAM for residents in Albany County

FREE health safety survey, education, resources and referrals.

FREE safety and cleaning products may include:

- Home Safety Products such as smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers
- Child Safety Products such as cabinet locks, shock stoppers, door knob covers, and corner protectors
- Asthma Control items in conjunction with Asthma Education Program, such as allergen barrier mattress and pillow covers
- Cleaning Supplies such as a wipes, baking soda and vinegar
- Safety Products such as flashlights and nightlights
- Pest management products to control mice

To Schedule a Healthy Home Visit: Call: 518-765-3512 Email: dfp46@cornell.edu



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. Edward Johnson, 518-314-9385

Business Meeting: First Tuesday @ 10am



Peter G. Crummey
Town Supervisor

TOWN OF COLONIE

Office of the Supervisor

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534 New Loudon Road
Latham, New York 12110

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www.colonie.org/supervisor

Equal Opportunity Employer



Supervisor Crummey's Colonie Connection

Heading into October, I am excited for the opportunities Fall will bring to our Town including the beautiful colors and cooler temperatures. As temperatures permit, we will continue to advance our Town's infrastructure, road restoration and quality of life. Additionally, as we go into Fall and trees drop their leaves, we will continue to provide leaf and brush collection. For more information, please visit <https://www.colonie.org/departments/envservices/leaf-yard-waste>. 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 Grace Hotaling. Originally from the City of Albany, Grace moved here to Colonie when she was 11 years old. Growing up in the formerly rural area of Wolf Road, Grace attended Colonie Central High School and graduated in 1964. After graduating, Grace would enter a career in fashion, eventually managing two stores (*Stylish Women and Catherine Stout*) at Westgate Plaza. Later, Grace would provide financial and other advice through her business, InfoSearch. Today, Grace is a proud mother of her two sons, Ronnie and Michael, and enjoys watching her grandchildren, Veronica and Ryan, compete in sports.

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



Celebrate a Senior Spotlight

Grace Hotaling was 11 years old when she moved from the bustle of Albany to the quiet Village of Colonie, along with her parents and two younger sisters, Candi and Lynda. This was prior to the Northway's construction and shopping malls; Wolf Road was farmland with unpaved roads and there was a Girl Scout camp nearby. At first, young Grace had trouble sleeping with the lack of city sounds to lull her to sleep. Fortunately, she was able to go and visit with her aunt for weekend overnights which allowed her to capture all the sights and sounds of city life she missed. Eventually she adapted to her new surroundings in Colonie. Their class of 1964 was one of the last graduating classes of *Colonie Central* holding their ceremony in the auditorium.

Grace balanced work and play as wonderfully as her parents did. Let's start with play. At the age of 18, Grace began bowling in a weekly league at *Sunset Bowling Alley* with her mother, Grace. This fun league, with themes such as "hat night" was a part of Grace's weekly routine for over 20 years. Grace later had weekly fun with friends playing cards and sharing laughs.

Grace's career began in downtown Albany. Grace first worked for *Flah's* where she started as a stock-girl and was taught sales skills by women who had a strong competitive edge for their commissions. When asked, Grace recalled downtown's Thursday nights as being full of fashion and well attended. When *Colonie Center* opened, Grace worked as a store manager at *Flah's*, with a shorter commute. Grace's work history includes *Sterling Wintrop* and managing two stores at Westgate Plaza (*Sylsh Women and Catherine Stout*). Later, she moved to a career in legal and finance, starting at a business called *InfoSearch*, where she performed legal and financial services that involved celebrities such as Jackie Onassis, Cher and LL Cool J--to name a few.

Following her retirement, Grace was introduced to the TOC Senior Resources Department by tagging along with her friend Judy to meet Angelina Searles. She shares that it has been a pleasure learning about the various resources the TOC has to offer seniors and encourages others to learn about them.

Grace is the proud mother of her two sons, Ronnie (Beth) and Michael (Kim). Her smile becomes even brighter when she tells you she is the grandmother of Veronica (12) and Ryan (10). Veronica and Ryan have played softball, baseball, flag football, soccer, golf, basketball and volleyball. Her sons and grandchildren all excel in sports and Grace has been a strong fan over the years. Veronica's softball team, *The Colonie Raiders of South Colonie*, had a team shirt made up for Grace that reads: **TEAM GRANDMA** and is signed by the entire team!

