

# THE SENIOR STARTER

JULY 2024

THE PLACE TO START FOR SERVICES

BY THE

**TOWN OF COLONIE  
SENIOR RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**



## Greetings!

In this month's newsletter, we provide some reminders about staying safe in the heat and being aware of the air quality before heading out to complete tasks. The latter is a new concept for most of us, but it's helpful to know, especially for those who suffer from respiratory disorders.

There's been much publicized recently about the effects of socialization and loneliness on our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. According to the CDC, social isolation has been associated with about a 50% increased risk of dementia and other serious medical conditions. What's interesting to note is, loneliness, or feelings of being alone, may often be present in individuals regardless of the amount of social contact. The Albany County Department for Aging has animatronic pets available to eligible older adults to help combat loneliness. Look for details in this month's newsletter.

One of the ways to decrease social isolation is to join one of our six town-funded Senior Clubs. It may seem scary at first, but consider attending a monthly meeting to check out a particular club. If you're a little shy and need some coaxing, give us a call and we can walk you through the process.

Best wishes for a wonderful summer!

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

## Air Quality Awareness

Last year, communities were impacted by wildfire smoke, heightening the importance of being air quality aware.

Daily air quality forecasts from the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will keep you updated on ozone and particulate matter levels.

Governor Hochul and NYS DEC are urging New Yorkers to stay informed about air quality during the summer.

### AQI Health Guidelines:

- 0-50: Good
- 51-100: Moderate
- 101-150: Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
- 151-200: Unhealthy
- 201-300: Very Unhealthy
- 301-500: Hazardous

The NYS DEC website: [https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/cfm/extapps/aqi/aqi\\_forecast.cfm](https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/cfm/extapps/aqi/aqi_forecast.cfm) or call New York State Air Quality Hotline: (800) 535-1345.

The government website to enter your zip code and check the air quality in our area is:

<https://www.airnow.gov/>



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



## STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

**Angelina Searles, Director**  
[searlesa@colonie.org](mailto:searlesa@colonie.org)  
518-459-5531

**Carrie Blanchard, Specialist II**  
[blanchardc@colonie.org](mailto:blanchardc@colonie.org)  
518-459-3977

**Katie Connelly, Caseworker**  
[connellyk@colonie.org](mailto:connellyk@colonie.org)  
518-459-3259

**Sue Conlon, Caseworker**  
[conlons@colonie.org](mailto:conlons@colonie.org)  
518-867-3931

**Chris Molinari, Specialist**  
[molinari@colonie.org](mailto:molinari@colonie.org)  
518-459-2516

## Monthly Veteran's Assistance

A representative from the NYS Department of Veterans' Services will be available to assist veterans and/or spouses with any questions/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**

**FreshConnect Checks Program is available to veterans, service members and their immediate family members at Division of Veterans' Services offices on a first come, first served basis. Checks are used to purchase fresh foods or SNAP eligible items at farmers' markets or farm stands in New York State. For information on where to obtain the checks, call NYS Veterans' Services 518-447-7710.**

## StateWide's Medicare Corner

### *Pharmacy & Prescription Drug Fraud*

Prescription drug fraud is a consistent trend in Medicare. Criminals continue to exploit Medicare Part D due to the lucrative nature of prescription drug diversion and pharmacy scams. There are many types of prescription drug schemes, but pharmacy fraud primarily occurs when Medicare is billed for a medication that was not received or a beneficiary is intentionally given a different medication than what was prescribed.

Report potential pharmacy fraud, prescription drug abuse, or errors if you see charges for:

- Prescription drugs (including refills) that were never picked up, delivered, or even prescribed.
- Prescription drugs (occasionally controlled substances such as opioids) that were prescribed by a health care provider you have never seen.
- Amounts beyond the quantity you were prescribed.
- A different prescription drug (often a more expensive drug) than the one you were originally prescribed or a drug that is not approved by the FDA.

Additional examples of pharmacy fraud are:

- A pharmacy intentionally provided you less medication than you were prescribed.
- A pharmacy issued you expired drugs.
- A pharmacy provided and billed for an expensive compounded medication, when a traditional or less expensive prescription was ordered by your provider.

Prevention begins with each beneficiary. Report any findings to the NY SMP and help in the fight against Medicare Fraud. They can help with questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud or abuse. Call the NYS SMP Helpline at 800-333-4374.



**STATE 50<sup>th</sup> WIDE**  
ANNIVERSARY  
1972-2022

**New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc**  
275 State Street, Albany, NY 12210 • 800-333-4374 • Fax 518-436-7642  
[www.nysenior.org](http://www.nysenior.org)

## Colonie Library Classes & Events

**Saturday, July 6 • 11am-12pm**  
Sahaja Meditation

**Monday, July 8 • 10:30am-12pm**  
Mystery Book Club

**Monday, July 8 • 2:00-4:30pm**  
Adult Movie Monday: "Argylle"

**Wednesday, July 10 • 6:30-7:30pm**  
Monthly Personal Investment Group

**Thursday, July 11 • 6:00-8:00pm**  
Humphrey Bogart's The Big Sleep (1944)

**Tuesday, July 16 • 6:00-7:30pm**  
Stay and Make: Painting a Pottery Plate

**Sunday, July 21 • 8:30-9:30pm**  
Full Moon Walk @ Crossings Park

**Registration is required!**

**Visit here to register:**

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



### Cool down with frozen treats!

Watermelon sticks are easy and sanitary finger foods to prepare  
watermelon stick "popsicles" are a refreshing treat!



extra refreshing  
when frozen!

frozen watermelon bites

frozen fruit popsicles



Hannaford's registered dietitians offer free nutrition education in-store and online. They can give you the information you need to make the healthy lifestyle changes you want.

For free nutritional advice, you can contact Fran Weiss at: 518-482-1085 or [Frances.Weiss@hannaford.com](mailto:Frances.Weiss@hannaford.com)



## Get Summer Ready! w/TOC Parks & Rec

The Town of Colonie Parks and Recreation has launched a new online registration package that will streamline rentals and entries into our parks. The online portal (*Webtrac*) can be used to enroll in activities, reserve rental spaces, obtain pool passes and much more. All reservations must be done through the on-line portal. This means that everything can be done without having to come into the office and payment is made through the systems with a credit card.

For Town of Colonie residents, a KEY FOB will need to be used to allow you free admission to the Mohawk River Park and allow you to enjoy the resident rates at our fabulous pool complex.

### How to Obtain a Key FOB:

- ◇ You must come into the Parks and Recreation office to have your picture taken.
- ◇ The key fob will be no cost to you.
- ◇ You will need to bring proof of residency with you along with your picture ID.

Acceptable forms of ID are: Utility bill, Income Tax form, Property Tax bill, or your original rent/lease agreement.

**Unfortunately, the Senior Resources Dept. will no longer be issuing the senior citizen pool passes. You must go in person to the Parks and Rec office.**

### Parks and Recreation Office Located at:

71 Schermerhorn Road  
Cohoes, NY 12047

<https://www.colonie.org/departments/parksandrec/online-portal>



**STAY SAFE IN THE HEAT**  
WEATHER.GOV/NYC

- H2O TO GO**  
take a bottle of cold water with you.
- PETS**  
watch out for hot pavement & provide plenty of water.
- ENJOY**  
cold foods & fruits are more refreshing & contain more water.
- BE COOL**  
make use of fans or air-conditioners to stay cool.
- OUTDOORS**  
limit strenuous outdoor activities.
- WEAR**  
light-colored, loose fitting clothing.
- SHADE**  
wear a hat, or use an umbrella.
- AVOID**  
alcohol, coffee, tea and salty foods can make dehydration worse.

## National Cheer Up the Lonely Day - July 11, 2024

Albany County Department for Aging continues to make animatronic pets eligible to senior citizens in an effort to help combat loneliness. There are robotic cats, robotic dogs and recently added, robotic birds.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about these companions, visit: <https://aging.nv.gov/nvsofa-animatronic-pet-initiative>.

Interested in seeing if you or a loved one would qualify for one of these companions? Call the *Albany County Department for Aging* to be screened over the phone for eligibility: **518-447-7198**



### Social isolation and loneliness in older adults

Social isolation refers to a lack of connections to family, friends, or community, which can lead to loneliness, or feelings of being alone regardless of the amount of social contact.

Older adults are at increased risk of loneliness due to loss of loved ones, disability or worsening quality of life, or lack of access to transportation.



Loneliness can increase risk of heart disease, dementia, stroke, anxiety, and depression.

Social connectedness can increase longevity and improve emotional and physical health.

#### Ways to increase social connectedness:

- Regularly scheduled time with friends and family
- Group programs at libraries or senior centers
- Online spaces, lectures, or faith-based groups
- Group exercise classes
- Volunteering with local organizations
- Support groups for navigating loss or grief



Older adults can also talk with their clinician about specific concerns of social isolation and loneliness to get connected to community resources.

## Planning for Possible Health Care Needs

Many people say they will get around to it but few actually do. It is important to plan out your health care wishes in advance in case you may not be able to do so in a time of crisis or medical event. It is important to begin to have the conversation now so you can feel more secure for your future.

Health care planning documents, advance directives, explain how you want your medical decisions to be made when you're too ill to speak for yourself. There are some State rules that need to be followed when creating and finalizing these documents. It is important to complete these documents through a creditable source, like an elder law attorney, to ensure they are completed correctly.

It is important to discuss your future care documents with family members, health care providers and any other trusted person. You will want to give your providers a copy of your documents and bring them to the hospital each time you are admitted. Below are the documents you can decide to put together:

- **Health Care Proxy:** Appoints a person you know as your proxy, or representative, and allows them to express your health care wishes for you if you are unable to do so for yourself.
- **Living Will:** This lists out the type of medical care you would want in specific circumstances.
- **Advance Directive:** This can be a combination of both a living will and health care proxy.
- **Power of Attorney:** Appoints a person you trust as your agent to make property, financial, and other legal decisions for you, and is usually prepared by a lawyer.

Links to state-specific forms can be found on the websites of various organizations such as the American Bar Association, AARP and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

**Reminder:** An attorney from *Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY* comes to our office once a month to assist senior citizens. For more information or to make an appointment, call us at 518-459-5051, ext 2.

# Senior Clubs of Colonie

## Christ Our Light Seniors

Pres. Karen Coyne, 518-366-6536

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

## Colonie Senior Citizens Club

Pres. Kathy Ingalls, 518-482-5049

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

## Lisha Kill Seniors Citizens Club

Pres. Linda Koenigsreuter, 518-456-3027

**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. Esther Cioffi, 518-314-9385

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



## 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*



Peter G. Crummey  
Town Supervisor

## Supervisor Crummey's Colonie Connection

Going into July, we will continue to enjoy all the opportunities and celebrations summer brings for us. To celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup>, I will be reading the Declaration of Independence at the Loudon Green. This will be my 20<sup>th</sup> year of doing so and I hope you all can join me! Refreshments will be served. Additionally, our concerts in the Crossings series continues every Thursday, except July 4<sup>th</sup>, until August 29<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00pm.

Visit <https://www.colonie.org/departments/parksandrec/> for more information.

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 Cheryl Pashkevich. Cheryl had a successful career in the insurance industry with Travelers Railroad Retirement, and later, public service with the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance. Today, Cheryl is known in her neighborhood for her friendliness and compassion, making her a friendly face in the community.

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.

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



## Celebrate a Senior Spotlight

Kind hearted Cheryl Pashkevich grew up being the oldest of four. She always enjoyed helping others, sharing her love and assistance within her family. Cheryl helped her mother care for her grandmother before Cheryl became her mother's caregiver. She was a caregiver to her uncles and later to her father. Her siblings, Karen, Mark and Tom all reside locally. Cheryl enjoys being her brothers' big sister by checking in on them and visiting regularly.

Cheryl had a successful career in the insurance industry with Travelers Railroad Retirement for 13 years. Her position involved both processing claims and putting them on microfilm for the records. Cheryl also applied her skills to the NYS Taxation and Finance Department by performing seasonal work in the tax season.

Cheryl had always wanted to help others, but shared that she found this difficult as she was very bashful and had struggled to reach out to people outside of her family. But as she experienced life's challenges and noted what she could endure, Cheryl slowly and steadily broke out of her cocoon!

Cheryl put forth her efforts to initiate conversations with co-workers, neighbors and people in her daily life. This had been a burdensome task for her to take on, but one that she was determined to achieve, and succeeded in, on many levels. Cheryl is now known as a helpful neighbor in her community, assisting others with errands and daily tasks when in need. She goes out of her way to introduce herself to new neighbors, making them feel welcomed. Cheryl greets people in passing, brightening their days, and even endows people with unexpected gifts. Recently, a bank teller, whom Cheryl sees regularly, was given an outfit for her soon-to-be newborn!

Cheryl enjoys crocheting, coloring, crafting and collecting both farm themed and teddy bear décor. She shares her talents with her neighbors and friends and notes that her décor brings a happy ambiance to her home.

I asked Cheryl to offer her advice to other people who are looking to become more involved in their communities and she strongly stated these encouraging words with a smile, "Push yourself to believe that you can; don't stay in your rut. It gets easier once you can break through, release, and have faith in God."

