

## Seasons & Celebrations



The winter was long and cold, but we warmed our spirits with parties and holiday celebrations, ...and lots of coffee! It's been nice to enjoy the company of our long-time members and also welcome new folks. If you have a meal coupon from when you first joined, come on down! We'd love to meet you!



Thanksgiving with Frank, Lisa, Carol, Mary, Lucy, & Bobbie

*"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn."*

Hal Borland



Michelle in the St. Patrick's Day spirit!



Ken looking sharp on Halloween!

## Meal Program Recognized

January 8<sup>th</sup> marked the culmination of a yearlong effort to bring about healthy changes to the Niskayuna Senior Center meal program. About 50 seniors were in attendance this day and before lunch was served, staff was recognized by Schenectady County Department of Health for successful implementation of food procurement policies and a full re-vamp of menu offerings.

On the menu this day was tilapia wraps, low in fats and sodium and full of vegetables.



Joe Landry, Cindy Desso, and Rosemarie Mullaney

This entrée is part of a new menu that we've implemented with technical assistance from the Schenectady County Department of Health and Cornell Cooperative Extension. With help from these two agencies, we field tested several new recipes in March 2014 at a taste testing event at our Center. We served lunch to 60 seniors who gave us valuable feedback. As a result, we kept some recipes, and modified others. We have assembled a large volume of recipes which are federally

approved and work almost exclusively from this book. In addition, we have partnered with our local food markets to procure healthier substitute ingredients when a recipe calls for it.

The Niskayuna Senior Center is one of just two senior centers in New York State to have made this commitment to provide healthier lunch options. However, we hope to serve as a model to other senior centers wishing to improve their members' health. We would like to thank Glynnis Hunt, Sarah Tice, and Stephanie Wilkinson of Schenectady County Public Health Department and Megan Latza of Cornell Cooperative Extension for their partnership and help in bringing us to our goal.

As always, we welcome your suggestions and feedback to continue to best serve you.



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Newsletter by Rosemarie Mullaney

# Senior Spotlight on *Marie Male*

By Rosemarie Mullaney

If you spend your days learning to play piano, checking Facebook, writing your autobiography, and bidding on eBay...and you're 90 years old, then you must be Marie Male.

Marie is a captivating and charming woman for sure, but resilience is equally a big part of her makeup. Marie's petite, 4'11" frame and soft-featured, impish face belie a rugged inner strength that is the cornerstone of her character. Marie has lived through separation from her mother, divorce and single parenthood, has held three jobs at once, lost a daughter to cancer, broke both legs and endured painful hip and shoulder surgeries. Some may reflect on all this with bitterness; instead Marie smiles sweetly and nonchalantly proclaims, "I've had a nice life. I met a lot of nice people." Marie is a nugget of steel hidden within the petals of a rose.

Born in Canada in 1925 to an unmarried woman who was emotionally ill-equipped to care for her, Marie never knew her father. At age two, Marie was to be placed for legal adoption when caring family members took her and her beloved half-brother to Scotland to live with her maternal grandparents. The working class family, with seven children of their own, was short on money and space. Marie shared a bed with her grandmother, "Granny," in a cement house in Olde Towne, a rundown neighborhood in Stirling, Scotland. Although they didn't have abundant means, Marie remembers a happy childhood, where she felt loved and protected, living with her half-brother and many extended family members. "There were cousins all over the place!" she exclaimed. Growing up, Marie and the neighborhood girls played games in the street and on the grounds of Stirling Castle, just up the hill from her home. Marie lit up as she recalled how they'd climb the castle walls rather than use the stairs and then "Run like the hammers of Hell" from the caretaker. As a contemporary testament of her fondness for this 800 year old fortress, Marie's Facebook cover photo is that of Stirling Castle.

Marie grew up speaking broad Scottish and attended public school where she sang in a Gaelic choir and competed in Scottish country dancing. After graduating school at the standard age of 14, Marie learned English while



studying stenography at a commercial college. She later worked as a junior stenographer for a Scottish electric company but, for some time, she had been thinking about joining the army. "I knew there was something better out there," she reflected. When Granny wouldn't sign her enlistment papers, Marie convinced her uncle to sign and then joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps in 1943. Granny came around and even arranged for Marie to begin her new adventure in something other than her secondhand clothes. Donning a tailor-made, grey pinstripe suit, 17 year-old Marie boarded the overnight train to London and began her army career as a stenographer.

Life opened its doors for Marie. Although she loved her Granny, Marie was happy for the opportunities the army gave her starting with simple needs such as her army cot, the first bed she slept in alone. It was on leave on a ferry boat to Ireland that Marie met her future husband, an American fighter pilot in the US Army Air Corps, Ken Male. Their romance was a whirlwind. Within a month's time, they were planning their marriage from afar with Marie then stationed in Holland and Ken in Germany. The year was 1945 and what an exciting time of life it was! Marie vividly recalls the commotion of a particular day in autumn when, hearing an engine above, coworkers called out "Marie, Marie!" Excitedly, Marie retrieved the Army's marriage permission papers which Ken had flown and parachuted down to her. Marie was married in a rented white dress by the

burgermeister of Apeldoorn that Christmas eve. Then, in order to include all their friends, Marie and her new husband traveled by jeep in a heavy snowstorm to Germany to be married at Ken's base on Christmas day. Marie fondly recalls kneeling during the chaplain's blessing on blankets their friends at the base had carefully wrapped in parachute silk. Seventy years later, Marie still cherishes the Bible given and signed by "all the boys".

After her marriage, Marie remained in the service for a year before leaving her husband behind and setting sail on a "Grey Lady." The *Ille de France*, once a beautiful French passenger ship but by then repainted grey by the military, arrived in Halifax. Following Marie's discharge from the army, she traveled by train to New York where waiting at the station was an important stranger: her new mother-in-law. Marie moved into a big house on Troy Road in Niskayuna where her brothers-in-law and their wives lived too and was joined by Ken six months later. While her husband studied civil engineering at Union College, Marie raised their first two children on the third floor of the family home. Life was full when together, with plans from Better Homes and Gardens, the couple built their own home on Birchwood Lane. Two more children were born and Marie was quite busy with parenting. When the children grew to school age, Marie and her husband enjoyed socializing with friends while playing card games and Marie became a "Holy Roller," bowling with her league at Niskayuna Reformed Church.

Life took an unexpected turn when Marie, who was recuperating at home from a fractured back, ascertained her marriage was ending. She took on the challenge of single parenthood when her youngest daughter was just two years old. With resolve, Marie set out to keep her family going. Marie enrolled her youngest in her church's nursery school so she could take a \$1 per hour job as an aide at Rosendale School. Over the years, this one job gave way to three. Each day Marie

# Senior Housing Fair

## **NISKAYUNA SENIOR HOUSING FAIR**

**Thursday, April 23, 2015 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

**Niskayuna Senior Center-Upper Level**

*17 Participating Local Housing Communities will be present representing  
55 + communities \* Retirement living \* Assisted living \* In-home care \* Adult care homes  
Alzheimer's & dementia care \* Skilled nursing & rehab*

**Free to the public**

**Refreshments will be available**

## **Marie** *continued from page 2*

left her school job to be nanny to a family with four children, then went home to sleep a bit before she arrived for the 11 pm to 7 am shift at the Glendale Home. Marie worked until age 75 and is particularly proud to be one of the support staff that organized to petition the Niskayuna Central School District to provide benefits to teaching aides. These benefits continue today through an agreement between the school district and the Niskayuna Educational Support Personnel Association.

Marie's middle and later years were complete with happy times including friendships, grandchildren, and fulfilling employment, yet life continued to provide its challenges. Marie's much adored only brother died young and unexpectedly. Six months later brought the death of Marie's mother with funeral arrangements and the settling of her estate falling on Marie's shoulders. This difficult task, under the best of circumstances, was more so for Marie who only had sporadic contact with her mother and had never even been to her home prior to her death. Later on when Marie was 70 years old, she faced a parent's ultimate blow. Her daughter, Donna, succumbed to cancer. Marie remained strong, however, as she still had many good reasons to go on, namely her other children, grandchildren, and her work.

With her family grown, Marie was finally able to travel a bit, a pastime she thoroughly enjoyed. Together with her "Six-Pack," as they were known, she and five lady friends traveled to destinations like Italy, Hawaii, and

her favorite: Iceland. Marie made two solo trips to Scotland and also fulfilled a promise to her late father-in-law by traveling to see the Panama Canal, which he had worked to engineer. Besides the mental souvenirs, Marie relishes her tangible reminders of her travels. During a tropical trip with her youngest daughter, a Lladro



figurine in a gift shop caught Marie's eye. That purchase ignited a penchant for the Spanish-made statuettes which now adorn Marie's well-appointed apartment. Travel purchases have given way to online shopping and Marie jokes about needing to give the postman an extra gift for delivering all her eBay wins!

Although Marie's ability to travel has changed, one thing that has been consistent for nine decades is Marie's love of her family and friends. Known as "Grandma Rosie" to her great grandchildren, Marie feels fortunate to have many of her 13 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren living nearby. Just this past January, Marie celebrated a milestone birthday with a big bash including 75 friends and many family members. Guests came from as far as South Carolina, and one of the children she nannied for traveled across two states to honor this great lady.

Marie is a longtime member of the Niskayuna Senior Center where she spent many happy days playing cards with her friends and taking day trips. She misses participating but is working hard to return. Having spent the fall and winter recovering from surgery, Marie has just graduated from using a wheel chair to a walker. To the surprise of many, including her surgeon, she is growing bone and getting stronger. Marie looks forward to resuming activities at the Senior Center and is planning one final trip to her homeland this summer. In the meantime, she is using her indoor time to write her life story. Of it Marie proclaims with good Scottish humor and reference to early 20<sup>th</sup> century censorship, "It'll have to be brown-bagged and they'll ban it in Boston!"



# Senior Program Information

## **Mondays**

11:00 Zumba Gold Class

## **Tuesdays**

9:00 Senior Fitness class\*

10-12:00 Socializing, Scrabble, Cards

10:30 Line Dancing

12:00 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Socializing, Cards, BINGO

1:00 MVP Chair Yoga

4:00 Senior Fitness Class\*

## **Thursdays**

9:00 Senior Fitness class\*

10-12:00 Socializing, Scrabble, Cards

10:30 Bocce, Pickle Ball

12:00 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Socializing, Cards, BINGO

2:45-3:30 Bridge

4:00 Senior Fitness Class\*

## **Fridays**

10:00 Pickle Ball



## **Volunteer Opportunities**

- ◆ Greeter
- ◆ Sunshine & Welcome
- ◆ Public Relations
- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ Parties & Decorating



\*Denotes additional fee



## **Transportation**



Bus transportation is available for Niskayuna residents 60 years + to the Center or for medical appointments & shopping within Schenectady County

Tuesdays & Thursdays

9:00 am -2:30 pm

Cost - \$5 round trip

Call us at the Center at 372-4969 for further information.



## Ongoing Classes & Programs

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**9 am fitness:** Our senior fitness classes include a low-impact cardio segment and chair exercises (seated and standing). Work with free weights and dowels is included. Class content is focused on maintaining or increasing strength, flexibility, and balance. Proper breathing is emphasized.

**4 pm fitness:** This class offers a low-impact cardio segment and exercises to increase strength, flexibility (stretching) and balance. A relaxation component is included. Proper breathing is emphasized. Hand weights and mats for floor work are included.

**MVP Chair Yoga:** This class adapts for the chair the classical yoga poses, breathing, and meditation. Chair yoga is for anyone interested in the benefits of yoga without having to be on the floor.



*Yoga Class*

**CDPHP Zumba Gold:** This class is a dance fitness program using aerobic and dance elements specifically adapted for the older adult. The choreography often incorporates samba, salsa, mambo, and martial arts. This class is free of charge to our senior members. You do not need to be a CDPHP member to participate. *Call or stop in the Center to register.*



*Oil Painting*

**Art Classes:** We have instructor lead painting classes the last Tuesday of each month at 10 am. These classes are free to our members.



**Defensive Driving:** This six hour class is offered twice a year. Receive up to a 10% insurance discount for 3 years on your collision & liability premium. Reduce your current driving record of violations by up to four points. Refresh your driving skills and learn preventive techniques for collision avoidance. Our next classes are April 20 & 22 and October 7 & 9 .

**Computer Classes:** We offer classes in our computer lab which teach basic computer skills including how to use email and social media, how to make a document, and staying safe on the Internet. If you have a topic you'd like to see for a class, let us know!



*Art Class*

## Communication: Get Connected!

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Monthly menu/activity calendars, event and trip flyers, and newsletters are available at the Senior Center, the Town Hall, or on line at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org) Click on **Senior Programs**



We have an email group for our members to let you know about events at the Center and upcoming trips as soon as they're available. Please call us at the Center if you'd like to have us add your email address. You can also follow us on Facebook.

[www.facebook.com/NiskayunaSeniorCenter](http://www.facebook.com/NiskayunaSeniorCenter)

Be sure to "Like" us to get our announcements on your newsfeed.



## Garden Beds Donated

**C**alling all gardeners...We are the lucky recipients of the hard work of former Niskayuna High School student, Jake Rutland. In the months following Jake's graduation from high school, he was working to complete his Eagle Scout project, a project he began a half year earlier.

While Jake was still a student at Niskayuna High School, he decided on a project that would hopefully earn him the Eagle Scout Award but also benefit our senior community. He enlisted the support of his father and grandfather and set out to design and build two raised garden beds. Jake was



thoughtful in the process. In the initial stages he presented his designs to Town Supervisor, Joe Landry, and Rosemarie Mullaney, Program Coordinator. He incorporated feedback into his final design and the results are beautiful!

Jake delivered the pair of raised garden beds this past fall. We hope to use them this spring and summer to grow vegetables to supplement our meal program.

We thank you Jake and wish you all the best in your future!

Whether you've got a green thumb or are a gardening beginner, join us as we launch our new gardening club. Our first meeting is April 14th at 12:30 at the Center. Refreshments will be served. You don't have to be a senior...all are welcome! Call 372-4969 for more information.



## Trips



We are adding trips to this year's calendar as we go to print. In the works are theater, historical, dining, and shopping trips. Check the monthly calendar or contact us for details and dates.



# Niskayuna Senior Center Membership Application

With a \$10 annual membership fee, you will receive a membership card and the following:

- Newsletters mailed directly to your home
- Coupon for free lunch meal at the Senior Center for first time members
- Raffle ticket for prizes for current members with each new member referred
- Member discount pricing on trips and activities
- A free trial day at one of our 9 am or 4 pm fitness classes



Memberships run through June 30, 2016. Your membership card and coupon will be mailed directly to you. Please complete the form below and return by mail or in person with your payment (cash or checks payable to the *Town of Niskayuna*) to:

*Office of Community Programs—Attention Rosemarie Mullaney  
Niskayuna Town Hall, One Niskayuna Circle, Niskayuna, NY 12309*

Forms can also be brought to the Senior Center on Tuesdays & Thursdays between 9:00 to 3:00. Questions: Call 372-4969

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth** \_\_\_\_\_ *Optional* **Male** \_\_\_ **Female** \_\_\_

Please check:

- Renewing member*
- New member*

**Renewing members check if no changes to original application**

**Or add any changes below.**

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Interest/hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in volunteering/special skills? \_\_\_\_\_

Need transportation or other assistance? \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency contact:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

*The Niskayuna Senior Center maintains a membership directory so that members can connect with each other more easily.  
Directories are for members only. Please circle your preferences below.*

*Along with my name, please include my:*

**Telephone #   Cell #   Street address   Email address**

*OR: Please do not include me in the directory* \_\_\_\_\_

**Office use only**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check \_\_\_\_\_ Cash

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Staff \_\_\_\_\_

**NISKAYUNA SENIOR CENTER**

2682 Aqueduct Road  
Niskayuna, NY 12309



**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA**



JOE LANDRY, SUPERVISOR

**TOWN BOARD**

JULIE McDONNELL

DENISE MURPHY MCGRAW

LIZ ORZEL KASPER

JOHN DELLA RATTA

**NISKAYUNA SENIOR CENTER**

2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna NY 12309

HOURS

**TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 9 AM TO 3 PM**

For further information, please contact coordinators

ROSEMARIE MULLANEY

CINDY DESSO

Rmullaney@niskayuna.org

Cdesso@niskayuna.org

**518-372-4969**

**We're on the web!**  
**[www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org)**

**Click on the Senior  
Program link on left side**



*Our mission is to enrich the quality  
of life through recreational,  
educational, nutritional, and social  
opportunities and to support  
independence and involvement in  
our community for seniors.*