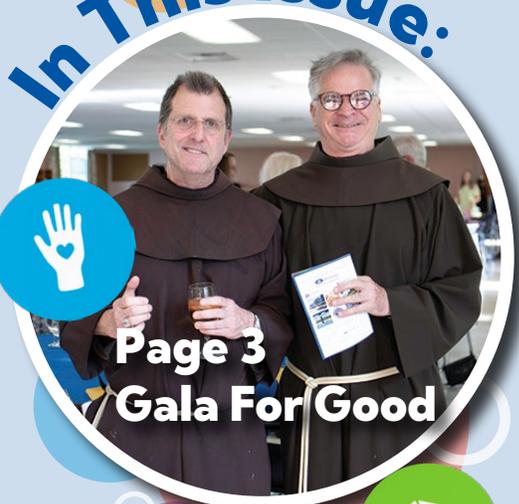


In This Issue:



Page 3
Gala For Good



Page 4
Agency News



Page 5
Summer Food

THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND

Serena House's Golden Girls: Friends Since 1984

Rose and Joan have lived in the same home for more than four decades — a quiet, steadfast friendship that has spanned 41 years and counting. Both are now 85, a rare milestone for individuals with developmental disabilities. Since 1984, the two have shared not just a house, but a life, at Serena House — the oldest and largest Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) operated by Catholic Charities Disabilities Services.



Serena House resident, Rose (left), pictured sharing a special moment with staff Barbara Jackson, has shared a special bond with longtime friend and housemate, Joan, since the residence opened in 1984.

Their bond, though not expressed verbally, is unmistakable. Like the classic television theme song from *The Golden Girls*, which begins, "Thank you for being a friend. Traveled down the road and back again," Rose and Joan have indeed traveled a long road together — and they've done so through the seasons of life.

Serena House opened its doors in 1984 and was named in honor of Sr. Serena Branson, a trailblazer who became the first woman in the United States to lead a diocesan-wide Catholic Charities agency. During her leadership at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, she expanded the agency's reach from three counties to 14 and launched critical programs that included residences for people with disabilities — like the one Rose and Joan call home.

For Rose and Joan, support provided at Serena House means helping them stay active, engaged, and connected to the world around them. "We're planning some outings — maybe even Niagara Falls," said Leasa Burch, residential program manager. "I also encourage everyone to do as much as they can on their own, to maintain their independence. We're here to help them live the fullest life possible."

Rose and Joan's story is one of longevity, companionship, and the kind of kinship that doesn't need words. Their lives, intertwined for more than 40 years, reflect the heart of what Catholic Charities stands for — dignity, compassion, and community.

HEART TO HEART WITH SISTER BETSY



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the first few months of this year, I want to begin with a heartfelt thank you. Your continued generosity and faithful support are the

foundation of everything we do at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany. Amidst much activity throughout our service area, which you will read about in this newsletter—and in the face of chaos—your commitment has remained steady, allowing us to provide essential care, compassion, and community to those most in need. You truly make our mission possible, and for that, we are deeply grateful.

While the path ahead is crooked, particularly with evolving discussions in Washington, D.C.—we plan as best we can and offer support for those who rely on us. Catholic Charities is dedicated to continuing to provide services rooted in dignity and justice, committed to ensuring that the needs of the vulnerable are not overlooked, and their voices are heard in the halls of power. Thank you for standing with us, walking alongside our neighbors, and sharing in the work of mercy, kindness, and hope.

With gratitude,

Sister Betsy Van Deusen, CSJ
CEO, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany

MEDIA MOMENTS

Appearing on WAMC Northeast Public Radio on April 7, Sr. Betsy addressed the impact of cuts on local farmers.

Sr. Betsy was spotlighted in a May 6 feature article in the Washington Post highlighting Catholic Charities' efforts to combat hunger in the face of potential federal cuts to vital food programs.

Sr. Betsy was also interviewed by two local television news outlets on May 9 about the election of Pope Leo XIV.

A number of local media outlets covered a May 12 news conference with United States Senator Chuck Schumer at our CoNSERNS-U food pantry.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA TO LAUNCH NATIONAL STORYTELLING EXHIBIT



A powerful national storytelling initiative is underway, and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany is honored to be a part of the effort. Catholic Charities USA's People of Hope: Faith-Filled Stories of Neighbors Helping Neighbors is a new multimedia exhibit that will celebrate the work of Catholic Charities staff and volunteers from across the country. Launching in spring 2026, the traveling exhibit will showcase real-life stories of compassion and faith, focusing on how these acts of service and resulting impact have profoundly affected the storytellers.

Designed to uplift and inspire, People of Hope seeks to illuminate the sacred aspects of everyday acts of charity. Catholic Charities USA collected story submissions from Catholic Charities agencies nationwide, gathering moments where staff and volunteers stepped up in extraordinary ways to serve their neighbors in need, and the immeasurable gratitude they earned for their act of kindness. From these submissions, 45 stories were selected to be professionally produced and shared across the country as part of a national campaign.

Among those to be featured is a story from Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany—one of twelve submitted. A powerful anecdote recorded by our CEO, Sr. Betsy Van Deusen, was selected to represent the Diocese in the exhibit, which is expected to draw national attention as it tours venues around the United States.

While we will share more about Sr. Betsy's moving story – a simple act of mercy that resulted in an unforgettable sacred encounter – as we get closer to the exhibit launch, this moment marks the beginning of a broader effort within our agency. In the coming months, we will be highlighting the additional stories we submitted—accounts of grace, and kindheartedness that, while not selected for the national exhibit, powerfully represent the spirit of Catholic Charities in our 14-county region.

Stay tuned as we prepare to bring these stories to life and celebrate the people in our midst who serve with dedication and quiet humility.

Gala for Good

Save the Date
 Next Year's Gala will be:
Thursday, JUNE 18, 2026

June 18, 2025
 Carondelet Hospitality Center
 Latham, NY



CELEBRATING THE GOOD WE DO Annual Gala for Good a Rousing Success

Our annual Gala for Good in June was a truly unforgettable evening, marking a special milestone as we hosted it for the first time at our future home - the Carondelet Hospitality Center in Latham.

The event was a vibrant celebration of connection, generosity, and community spirit. We were proud to honor our partners at the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region in recognition of their unwavering dedication to philanthropy and community impact. We would also like to thank all of our generous supporters, including our Presenting Sponsors, Prime Companies, and Broadview Federal Credit Union, for helping us build something truly memorable together.



AGENCY BEAT



Herkimer celebrates RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) 40th Anniversary!

Tri-County Services celebrates Sunnyside Child Development Center's 100th Anniversary!



Saratoga Office 50th Anniversary! The office location in 1975 was St. Peter's Church.

Fulton Montgomery Youth Services Substance Abuse Prevention Program receives funding from Johnstown Hospital Foundation.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



AUGUST 10
9 AM

Herkimer Golf Scramble
Pine Hills Golf Course
Frankford, NY
(Register by August 7)

AUGUST 21
4 - 7 PM

Disabilities Services
Mix & Mingle
Carondelet Hospitality Center
Latham, NY

OCTOBER 2
6 PM

Saratoga Office 50th
Anniversary Celebration
The Brookmere
Saratoga Springs, NY

NOVEMBER 6
5 - 7 PM

Fulton Montgomery
Empty Bowls Fundraiser
HFM BOCES Campus
Johnstown, NY

TRI-COUNTY SERVICES: EVERYONE DESERVES A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Catholic Charities Tri-County Services believes everyone deserves a place at the table. To that end, nearly 100 compassionate supporters gathered at the Carondelet Hospitality Center in Latham in early May for the annual **A Place at the Table** fundraising breakfast.

Thanks to the tremendous generosity of attendees, funds were raised to support vital agency services, including food programs, soup kitchens, community navigation services, and other programs that help those in need.



HERKIMER HOSTS TRAINING CENTER GRAND OPENING

Catholic Charities of Herkimer County officially opened the doors to its new Herkimer training center in May. The facility, which will enhance the agency's capacity to serve the community, features two spacious training rooms, youth activity rooms, and private gathering areas. The agency presently offers more than 50 training programs addressing a wide range of topics, including prevention, recovery, mental health, wellness, domestic violence, and substance abuse.



DELAWARE OTSEGO SCHOHARIE OPENS NEW OFFICE IN RICHMONDVILLE

A bright, spacious facility in Richmondville is the new Schoharie County home for Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties. The new space is designed to expand vital services for individuals and families in the region. The location features private offices for client consultations, a food pantry, welcoming activity rooms, and an on-site thrift shop. A grand opening event, including building tours, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony, was held on June 9.



For More Agency News—
Sign up for our Monthly Email Newsletter!
<https://bit.ly/monthinreviewemail>



HUNGER DOESN'T TAKE A SUMMER BREAK

When the School Bells Stop Ringing, Hunger Shouldn't Begin



Camp Scully summer campers enjoy friendship and play on a hot summer day.

For many low-income families, summer brings added stress. During the school year, children often receive free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch—but when school lets out, that safety net disappears. Suddenly, families must stretch already-tight budgets even further to keep their children nourished.

At Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, we believe no child should go hungry just because school is out of session. That's when we step in to fill the summer food gap.

In Oneonta, through our Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie County agency, volunteers distribute healthy grab-and-go lunches, funded through the Summer Food Service Program, to local children at two locations throughout July and August. Each meal offered by the Summer Food Service Program consists of a sandwich, vegetable, fruit, and milk. Last year, the program provided 2,400 meals.

We ensure kids in our summer camp programs—at Sunnyside Child Development Center in Troy, and Camp Scully on Snyder's Lake in Wynantskill—receive the nutritious meals they need to grow, play, and thrive all summer long. Last summer, the two programs provided meals to 678 children.

Catholic Charities also operates Nutrition Outreach and Education Programs (NOEP) in eight counties throughout the Diocese. Staff help individuals and families apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) also known as food stamps. Families receiving SNAP will receive an additional \$120 per child between the ages of six and 16 to compensate for the lack of school meals through the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Program. Catholic Charities NOEP staff is at the ready to help families apply both for regular SNAP benefits, as well as enhanced summer benefits for school-aged children. In addition to serving 740 children, the program helped 1,517 adults and 785 seniors in 2024.

Families enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program – such as the one operated by our Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties agency – can benefit from farmers' market coupons provided by each WIC program to enhance their access to healthy, fresh, and nutritious food. In 2024, the program supported 1,548 children and 1,868 adults.

Hunger doesn't take a summer break – and neither do we. With your support, Catholic Charities and our partners are working hard to make sure every child has access to the nourishment they need to thrive. Together, we're building stronger, more caring communities.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES EXTENDS SUMMER FOOD AID BEYOND CHILDREN

While children benefit from Catholic Charities' summer meals, several seasonal programs also support other community members. Two key initiatives focus on fresh, local food access through farmers' markets:

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program – Low-income seniors aged 60 and older receive \$25 in coupons to spend on fresh produce at participating farmers' markets.

Double Up Food Bucks – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients can double their benefits when buying fresh food at select farmers' markets and stores.

These programs help ensure everyone—from children to seniors—has access to healthy, nutritious food all summer long.



BREW HOPE. POUR LIGHT.

Imagine what a simple cup of coffee could do.

Can giving up one cup of coffee a week really make a difference?

Yes, it absolutely can!

It's a convenient, budget-friendly way to make a lasting impact—without stretching your wallet.

By setting aside just \$5 a month—the cost of a daily coffee—you're making a simple, thoughtful choice that brings hope to those in need. Your monthly gift to Catholic Charities provides steady, reliable support that helps individuals and families move from crisis to stability.

It may not seem like much on its own, but over time, your consistent giving becomes part of something powerful. Combined with the support of others, \$5 a month, that's only \$60 a year, becomes meals for the hungry, shelter for the vulnerable, and tools for people working to rebuild their lives.

That one cup, one small act, becomes a **BIG** difference when it adds up to \$60 a year.

It's more than skipping a coffee...

It's a cup of hope poured into someone's life.

One Coffee.



Reach out to our dedicated team for any inquiries, assistance, or information you need.

DONATE TODAY!



(518) 453-6650

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Albany, NY 12203

www.ccrda.org

DONATE

Scan the QR code above to donate. Your generosity fuels life-changing programs. A donation can provide critical support during difficult times.

PLANNED GIVING

Create a legacy of compassion by including us in your Estate Planning. You can ensure your values live on.

VOLUNTEER

Be the heart of our mission by sharing your time and talents. Your support will make a lasting difference to those in need.

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SCAN ME!

