



**ONEIDA COUNTY  
OFFICE FOR THE AGING & CONTINUING CARE**

120 Airline Street-Suite 201 Oriskany, NY 13424  
Phone (315) 798-5456 Fax (315) 768-3658  
E-mail. ofa@ocgov.net

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.  
County Executive

MICHAEL J ROMANO  
Director

**Office for the Aging/Continuing Care 2019 Older Americans Award Recipients**

May is Older American Month. Every year Oneida County OFA/CC hosts an award ceremony honoring Oneida Counties' Senior Citizens and the selected honorees representing Oneida County. Oneida County OFA/CC is pleased to announce this year's award recipients for those citizens who best exemplify this year's theme for Older Americans Month. An event will be scheduled in May to celebrate the well-deserving honorees and to recognize the value and contributions of all older Oneida County citizens.

This year's theme is Connect, Create, and Contribute which encourages older adults and their communities to connect with friends, family, and services that support participation, create by engaging in activities that promote learning, health, and personal enrichment, and contribute time, talent, and life experience to benefit others.

The categories for 2019 are "Outstanding Contribution by an Organization" and "Contributions by Older Individual(s) in connecting, creating, and contributing."

**2019 Oneida County Older American Awards Outstanding Contribution by an Organization: Rome Wesleyan Community Church**

The Rome Wesleyan Community Church serves the community we live in through connection, creation, and contribution in many ways. Even though it is a small organization with very limited financial resources the Church prospers due to the enormous and enormous volunteer resources within their congregation. The many outstanding supports they have provided to the local community is the reason they are this year's honorees in the Organizational category.

In the last year Rome Wesleyan Community Church relocated to a better location in the inner city to better serve the community. This move provided a large parking lot, children's outdoor play area, and a multi-functional basement area equipped with classrooms, kitchen, and dining area. The kitchen and dining area allow church volunteers to provide a soup kitchen serving lunch and breakfast on weekends to over 200 clients. In April they will start serving bag lunches to the community on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Family dinners along with

passing out gifts on holidays are also provided with extended hours to serve families and older community residents.

Rome Wesleyan Church also opens on a weekly basis in the evening for other activities, all staffed by volunteers and overseen by the congregation's Senior Pastor, the Reverend Arthur Atkinsons, Sr. One of the most notable supports to the community is a Cancer Support Group. The next activity for the Church will be starting a Woman's Shelter in Rome for women coming out of drug rehabilitation, so they can re-enter the community as the valued citizens they are.

Every activity and support offered by the Rome Wesleyan Church is outstanding offering connections to the community through creativity and commitment. It is for this reason Rome Wesleyan Church is the organizational honoree for 2019.

**2019 Oneida County Older American Awards Outstanding Contribution by Individual(s): Carole and Ed Grove**

Together Carole and Ed Grove have worked hard to serve the Oneida County community and to change people's lives through the organization they founded and continue to support enthusiastically.

Carole is a founding member of the Non-Profit organization Your Neighbors, Inc. The program was started 38 years ago. At that time her efforts were supported by her husband Ed to get the program up and running. She served as the Food Coordinator since the inception of the program continuing in this role today. She served in the past and serves currently as a Board Member as well as in the past as Board President.

Carole personally visits with each new client with tireless dedication and passion to help others. She works with the Board of Directors, the volunteers, and the older consumers to which the program serves. Carol was recognized by the New York State Assembly February 25, 1987 in a formal citation as "giving exemplary service to the community through voluntary programs, one which is worthy of the esteem of both Community and the great State of New York" by Ralph Eannace, Jr. Member of the Assembly. She was also given the 2015 Caregiver of the Year award by the Greater Mohawk Valley Community & Elder Wellness Council Inc.

In 1991 Ed joined the Board of Directors and served for 6 years. After his term ended, he continued as a non-board financial officer for several years. In 2004, Ed oversaw the receipt of the Robert Wood Johnson grant of \$35,000 with careful oversight and commitment. He became further involved with fundraising for Your Neighbor's Inc. after this experience.

Together Ed and Carole have taken charge of the Annual Garage Sale for the last 20 years and led the annual Chicken BBQ. Ed raises the donations for the chicken and supplies while Carole coordinates with the volunteers to deliver and serve the meals.

The creative problem solving by Ed and Carole Grove to meet the needs of their older consumers including connecting volunteers, Board Members, and the clients served is the reason they are the 2019 honorees in the Individual Award Category. Our community is made better by the caring and commitment of this couple.

The honorees will be joined by several other individuals and organizations, which have been nominated to be honored at the 2019 Oneida County Older Americans Awards Luncheon on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Harts Hill Inn. For more information about Older Americans Awards, contact Oneida County Office for the Aging/Continuing Care at 315-798-5456