

THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING

JOHN SIGNORELLI RETIRES FROM CLC FOUNDATION By Roger Cooper

Effective December 31, 2016, John Signorelli is retiring from his several decades of making "The CLC Group" of companies what they are today. I say "retired," but I should have said "a little retired" as I have asked him, and he has agreed, to remain involved in a consultant capacity, helping with certain projects throughout the CLC Group.

Nearly 30 years ago, John and a group of concerned parents took over the private organization Mezoff Associates, which was about to go out of business leaving homeless the 14 or so developmentally disabled residents. This group, with John

as the Executive Director, formed the CLC Corporation and took on the responsibility of caring for these individuals in one rented house and three rented apartments.

Over the years it has developed not only the residential program with 40 owned residences serving 150 people, but then proceeded to develop subsidiaries. John Porcella was hired as his Deputy and I was named Chairman, and it has been a joy to have worked closely ever since.

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HOLIDAY PARTY 2016!

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. We think these are worth millions! The first of December was a busy day at CLC. Or should we say a party day? The Employee Recognition luncheon, held at Mt. Kisco's La Camelia Restaurant, marked 20-year milestones for Kristin Kiney, Diane Lippert and Allison McKay; Lilian Okello celebrated 15 years. Congratulations to everyone.

Later that day, the CLC holiday party kicked off the season at Villa Barone in Mahopac with a great DJ and plenty of merrymaking. In the CLC tradition, raffle prizes were given out including Target, Kohls, Amazon, Best Buy and gas gift cards. Happy holidays to all. It was a very good night!

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CLC FOUNDATION NEWS

On behalf of everyone at CLC Foundation, please accept our best wishes for the happiest of holiday seasons. In this last issue of the *Open Door* newsletter for 2016, we have three important announcements to make.

First, on December 31, 2016 I will be retiring from CLC Foundation as Executive Director. Looking back on my 27 years of working at CLC and CLC Foundation, I am amazed at how quickly the time has gone and how good I feel about all that we have accomplished at CLC, CLC Foundation, Winslow, WFD and CLC Transportation.

In 1989, when Roger Cooper, John Porcella and I launched CLC, none of us could have predicted how successful we would be at improving the quality of life of the consumers whom we all care so much. I can honestly say that over the course of my 54-year career working with the developmentally disabled, this has been the most rewarding part of my professional life. And for all of you who I had the pleasure of working with, I can say that you have enriched my life in immeasurable ways and for that I will be forever be grateful.

I am also happy to report that I will not be leaving all together. Roger Cooper has asked me to stay on as a consultant for WFD, CLC and CLC Foundation. I will also remain an advisor for the CLC Pooled Trust.

Concerning the future, I am so pleased to announce that Kaitlyn Blanchard has been appointed by the Foundation Board of Directors to be my successor as Executive Director. Kaitlyn is someone I have known for over 10 years and have also had the pleasure of working with in 2016 as the Associate Executive Director of CLC Foundation.

For those of you who have not yet met or worked with Kaitlyn, I can tell you without reservation that she is a first class person and talent, who is ideally suited to lead the Foundation in the important years ahead. Kaitlyn is not only highly intelligent, but she also has a passion for helping those who are disabled and less fortunate.

When asked about her new position she was quoted as saying, "I am humbled by this opportunity to serve the disabled community. CLC Foundation has a very bright future and I look forward to contributing to that in this new role."

Kaitlyn first started as an intern at CLC Foundation over 10 years ago. She went on to graduate from The George Washington University earning a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

During her undergraduate studies she worked in the financial department at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Upon graduation, Kaitlyn attended the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and received her Juris Doctorate with a concentration in taxation.

She interned for the Hon. Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr., Westchester County Surrogate and with the office of Counsel to the Public Administrator. She then gained experience as an attorney focusing her practice in the areas of trust and estate

litigation, estate planning, probate, administration, accounting, tax and guardianships.

Prior to law school, Kaitlyn founded an educational non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the personal and professional development of women. In law school, she served as an advocate for victims of domestic violence and volunteered to prepare tax returns for low-income families.

In 2016, Kaitlyn served as Associate Executive Director of CLC Foundation. In that role, she helped lead the organization by improving trust administration and working on initiatives to enhance the quality of life of beneficiaries.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that Jennifer Eisman is returning to CLC Foundation as a Trust Officer for the CLC Pooled Trust. Many of you already know Jen Eisman. She is a Social Worker and was one of first employees at CLC.

She then served as an administrator at CLC Foundation, where she was instrumental in bringing *Hidden Treasures* back to the Foundation. She previously served as a CLC Board Member.

More recently, Jen has worked as a high level administrator for Jewish Philanthropies and now, after much pleading by me, she is looking forward to a new challenge and will be joining the Foundation team in January 2016.

Wishing you all the happiest of holiday seasons.

John Signorelli

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Holiday Party

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION



Executive Director John Porcella with Lilian Okello, Kristin Kiney and Allison McKay at their milestone anniversary luncheon, held at La Camelia Restaurant.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John Signorelli formally announced his retirement as Executive Director of the CLC Foundation effective the first of the new year. It seems hard to believe he has served CLC in any number of roles for the better part of thirty years.

I first met and began working with John in 1978 at the former Rhinebeck Country School. He was the Executive Director, I was the rookie Clinical Director - with the ink still wet on my diploma. I watched and assisted John in transforming a tired and understaffed residential school of 30 students into an innovative program serving special needs students on three separate campuses.

It was there that we launched the first residential program in New York State for children with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Six of the original students are here today as adults at CLC.

When John first took over the financially defunct Mezzoff program around 1988, it had approximately 20 clients in one house and a gaggle of small apartments. Today CLC owns eight houses and 32 apartments, all directed at assisting our consumers in becoming independent, functional, and valued members of the larger Westchester community.

Today the CLC Foundation manages trusts exceeding thirty million dollars and is operated by a superlative staff who truly understand our clients and work tirelessly to improve their lives.

Right now we are about to finish the construction on the 135 Radio Circle Drive building, which will be the anchor for the CLC family of businesses, all with a common goal of providing excellence in service. The *Hidden Treasures* program, as well as the CLC Choral Group both flourished with John's encouragement and tutelage.

It has been said that you will never work a day in your life if you love what you do. It is abundantly clear that John loved his work. He made it seem easy.

Please join me in thanking John for his many, many years of service. His mark is seen all across this agency and with the thousands of individuals and families that have benefitted from his efforts over the years.

Happy New Year!

John Porcella

Easy \$\$\$

Please do your Amazon shopping through smile.amazon.com and help support CLC! Amazon will donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. All you have to do is enter and click on the link below and a portion of your Amazon purchases will support CLC!

Each subsequent time you enter Amazon, make sure you go to smile.amazon.com first (or re-click on the link below), and your purchases will automatically support CLC! No effort required! Please feel free to pass this information on to your family and friends! <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-3563609>

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JOHN SIGNORELLI RETIRES FROM CLC FOUNDATION

The first of these partnerships was CLC Transportation with Jeff Biever, then the CLC Foundation. After a brief time away, developing Vernon Downs, John returned to head up the CLC Foundation, which was just a shell with a handful of Supplemental Needs Trusts (SNT).

A separate Board was formed and John, once again, took a tiny organization and made it into one of the major players in the SNT business. The failing *Hidden Treasures Corporation* was expanded, making it a great success, as well.

John was then instrumental in overseeing the merger with Winslow Therapeutic Riding, and was the driving force in helping Westchester Foundation for the Disabled in the acquisition

and remodeling of the building at 135 Radio Circle Drive. He also serves on the Board of Advocates for the Disabled, Inc.

As can be seen, John has been part of all of the "CLC Group" and his indefatigable labor, dedication (often without pay) and care for the individuals we serve is one of overwhelming success. We owe a deep and never-ending gratitude to John and his wife Peg (who also worked tirelessly for CLC), together with the team, for their making CLC into the premier multifaceted organization it is today. A great big thank you.

Roger Cooper
Chairman CLC & CLCF

GETTING REEL WITH STEPHEN

My name is Stephen M. and I live in Mount Kisco. One of my favorite things to do on weekends is go to live shows and to the movies. I would like to share my personal reviews in this new feature, Getting Reel with Stephen.

Movie, PG-13
Girl on the Train
★ ★ ★

The movie *Girl on the Train* was excellent. The story revolved around a woman named Rachel. Every day, she took the same train to work. During her ride she would spend her time looking out the window.

Rachel was fascinated with one family who she would see on their porch as the train passed. She became obsessed with this family and always looked out the window to see what they were up to.



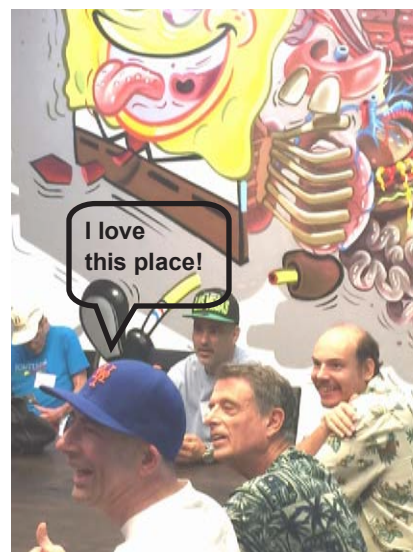
One day, something really horrible happened to the family. Rachel was questioned by the police and she became an immediate suspect. Overall, the movie was suspenseful and exciting. If you saw the movie, what did you think of it?

Off Broadway Show
Men of Tortuga
Written by: Jason Wells
Produced by: Roger Cooper

Recently, CLC Corp. President Roger Cooper invited my housemates and I to see a play he produced titled, *Men of Tortuga*. It was a wonderful show that involved talented actors completing a business transaction... a business transaction of MURDER!

It reminded me of a cop murder mystery play. The theater was small, which allowed for an intimate setting and experience. I loved the show and encourage all to see it!

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'



Tom gives a thumbs up to the Nickelodeon Animation Studios tour!



CLCers didn't just dream of California, they vacationed there in summer 2016. One of the travelers, Tom Gologly (at left in blue cap), co-conspired with his brother and his niece, who works at Nickelodeon Animation Studios, to give the group a private tour! How cool is that?!



The view from CLCers' Malibu beach house.

A salute to Tom Gologly,
His brother Neil and Kelly, Tom's niece,
For our private Nickelodeon Studio Tour
Each cartoon a Masterpiece.
The Hoover Dam, Universal, Vegas or Mickey Mouse
It really all comes down to our Malibu beach house.
Anonymous

HOW THE WEST WAS FUN!

The West was a lot of fun at Kitchawan House on September 24 when they threw an end of summer bash, western style. Wanted were consumers and staff from Kitchawan, Seth Canyon, Bedford Manor, Peekskill, Highland, Barker Street, Todd Road and Curry Street. So everyone donned their best bandana and moseyed on over for an afternoon of games, food and fun. Krissy K. from Todd Road won the dance contest and two-stepped away with a t-shirt.

The *chuck wagon* offered hot dogs, burgers, vegetable platter and BBQ ribs, with Spanish rice and peas and empanadas made by CLC staffer Ana. Every cowboy and cowgirl had a sweet tooth, so s'mores on a stick, sugar-free cakes, pops, fruit salad and fruit sangria filled up the buffet. What a bonanza!



CLCers JOIN REVELERS AT IRISH FEST

By Irene Quill

Jimmy enjoyed the Irish food, dancers and lively music, especially the bagpipers!



Peekskill's Irish Festival, held Saturday, September 24 at Riverfront Green Park, was a rousing success. Just ask a group of CLCers from London Road and Peekskill apartments who joined over 3,000 people for a day of everything Irish. According to the organizers, the annual festival "celebrates the positive values of the rich Irish American culture and heritage alive in the Hudson Valley today."

GONE PICKIN' By Nicole Wright

During a brisk fall day in October, consumers from Highland went apple picking at Stuart Farms in Yorktown Heights. Although the apples were slim picking, we all enjoyed ourselves, and even managed to find a few juicy apples that seemed to be waiting just for us! After picking apples, we enjoyed some fresh apple cider donuts and warm tea! It was a perfect day!



Anna and Susan find the first apples

Susan checks out a piece of history (Who remembers what this is?)

Anna, Kate, Susan and Robert hop on an old tractor



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Please share your comments, stories, ideas and photos by emailing them to swissx@optonline.net

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CIAO, ITALIA!

*In the spirit of Ovid
and the meter of Dr. Seuss
We shall reveal our metamorphosis
Letting this poem loose*

*From departing on Al Italia to renting our luxury van
We set out on a journey across this foreign land
We headed first to Rome, light headed and giddy
Traipsing through the ancient rubble in the ancient city*

*The Colosseum and Pantheon, metropolitan mountains
Enthralled us like the man who splashed in the Trevi Fountain.
The pasta was delightful, the gelato was the most
Then we drove the winding roads down to the Amalfi Coast.*

*Our castle a Jesuit Monastery, in Sant' Agnello
Found us calling to each other Bella! Bello!
We drove the winding cliff side, Tyrrhenian Sea below
Through the many shades of blue, ah, Positano*

*We shopped the narrow streets, happy, laughingly,
And then boarded a ferry boat, to the bustling Amalfi
From the ruins at Pompeii and the cavernous streets of Naples
The country unfolded before us, like a character in fables*

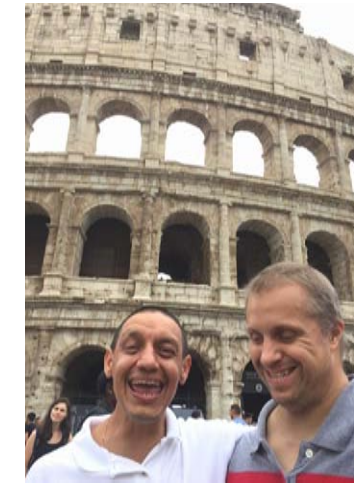
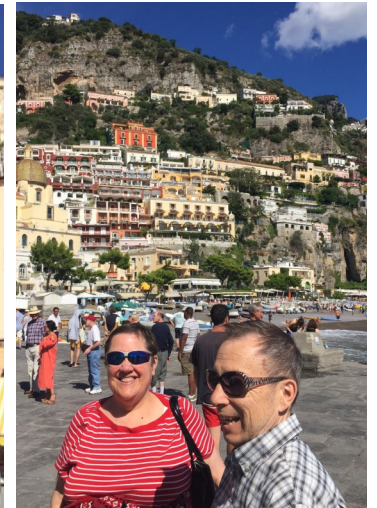
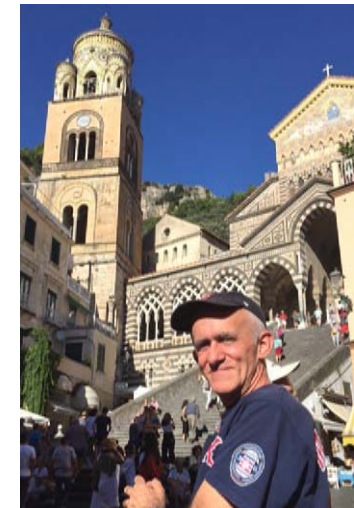
*We lunched in Salerno, a veritable potpourri
Then hit up ol' Paestum, built in 600 B.C.
But that wasn't enough for us, we had to go back and see
The miles of sandy beach, down to Sant' Marie*

*We crossed into Calabria, and back we came with smiles
Ask any one of us, we drove a thousand miles
The people we met, the images, all things sensory
Will forever be glued to our hearts, as one great memory*

*Grazie mille, Italy, a thousand thanks for now
Arrivederci beloved friend, now we can say, ciao!*



A group of CLCers and staff from Creative Escapes visited Italy this past summer. They immortalized their journey in Iambic Pentameter (sorta).



Community Living Corp.
135 Radio Circle Drive
Mount Kisco, NY 10549

RECOGNIZING OUR BEST & BRIGHTEST

By Irene Quill

Every year around this time we celebrate our Direct Care Staff and thank them for their dedication and the outstanding work they do with CLC consumers. In the CLC tradition, we ask our office employees to bring in something to add to our table of goodies. As always, they did not disappoint.

The buffet included scrumptious cakes and brownies, crisp apples and dip, veggie platters, cookies, donuts, candies, and juices. Besides the spread of sweets, gift cards and a day off were given to lucky winners.

We have some camera shy winners, but two of whom I spoke with said that they enjoyed shopping with their *Target*

and *Amazon* gift cards. As luck would have it, Ana H. was in the building and I asked her what she did on her day off. She told me that she and her son went apple picking in Warwick, NY; a special day, indeed.

Gift card winners: Rene Santiago, Taylor Akerson, Temeka Lawson, Yuribel Luna and Anyi Guillen. Day off winners: Ana Hiraldo, Nikolai Shevelchinsky, Gjuela Trashani, Ryan McPartlan and Scotty Woolfolk.

Thank you again to our best and brightest!

Special thanks to our contributors to this issue:
 Patrice T., Nicole W. and Anna H.

CLC Corp. Board of Directors

Roger J. Cooper, President; Priscilla Orr, Vice Chair
 Sandra Dammann, R.N., Secretary; Robert Brody, Treasurer;
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—
 John E. Porcella, Ph.D., Executive Director