

THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING

AND NOW FOR A LITTLE MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT



CCL chefs display their delicious desserts. You could say they *bake it happen!*

Fostering an atmosphere where meaningful engagement can thrive is the greatest gift we can give to the people we serve. We strive every day, in all we do, to keep those gifts coming. Here's how.

Community Connections Life set up a platform for cooking shows on *Zoom* during the height of the pandemic, and they have proven a great way for individuals to engage. Jennifer F. hosts "Jen's Café and Low-Carb Kitchen" cooking show. She texts us daily with ideas, recipes, and photos of her dishes. She recently visited her sister in California, took over her kitchen, set up her smartphone, and made an Italian chicken pasta salad and a fruit salad with pineapple dip.

Gino L., "*Gino's Good Eats*," streamed his cooking shows from his parent's superb kitchen in

Florida during the pandemic. He'd end his show by sinking his teeth into his masterpiece amid a chorus of hungry moans and groans. Kate W. said just recently how much she loved serving the coffee and entrees at our St. Patrick's Day party, and she keeps getting better at it. Anthony J. hosts all of our parties in A-list fashion, and delights in welcoming newcomers with a quick smile and a quicker wit. Tom G. and Mousy L run the coffee shop at CLC's Mount Kisco headquarters, flawlessly and now effortlessly.

The Baking Studio sees our bakers storm into our commercial kitchen, stuffing arms into chef's coats, donning hats and gloves and taking down bowls and measuring cups every morning. Staff Yvette presents today's menu of pastries, cookies, and cakes. Jon "Fish" H., Lynn P., Angela P., Bill H., Eric E.,

Manny M., and Gino all suit up and show up and, well, they *take the cake*.

Another of our efforts is *Smart Tank*, an idea based on the television show *Shark Tank*. Teams and individuals present their concepts to a panel led by CLC's Dr. Delores Lulgjuray. This is after months of research gathering the price of components needed to bring their product to market. For example, how much will it cost to make a candle? The *GET LIT* candle team of Crystal C., Alma R., Jackie N. and Noreen K. is exploring. How inexpensive can the jewelry team sell each necklace and bracelet, and still have money left over to buy more beads and charms? Phoebe M., Sonia S., Joyce K., Yvette E., Jen S. and others are examining this.

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Mousey engaged in tomato chopping.

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOINS CLC TEAM

Jessica Joseph-Thomas joined CLC in January as Executive Director, where she will oversee our 40 residential facilities. She has 20 plus years of experience paired with an unparalleled passion for the non-profit industry. John Porcella, who has been CLC's Executive Director for many years, is now CLC Group's CEO.

Jessica comments, "I am looking to navigate the latest challenges which CLC, together with other non-profit organizations in developmental disabilities and autism, face with New York State. Over the past several years, NYS has begun transitioning Office of

People with Developmental Disabilities-OPWDD direct funding into a managed care approach. It remains to be seen how the Governor and Legislature will address the pressure of a growing population and current waiting list for services in this community." She continues, "Covid-19 has meant severe difficulties for the employees of CLC and the people it serves."

Jessica has a bachelor's degree from SUNY Purchase and master's degree from Columbia University. Her career path includes, Residential Services Director at Jawonio, Inc., in



New City. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director of Operations and Services at M & K Health Care Services in Middletown, NY. She has worked in the developmental disabilities field since 1998.

THE BUSINESS TRIP

AKA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT



After each visit, we discuss what we've learned at dinner and recall our experiences at breakfast. It's a special opportunity to commune with others and create a sense of inclusion and acceptance in a very powerful way...shared experience.

Funding is provided by *Community Connections Life*, so these trips do not cost CCL members a thing, except a little spending money for a t-shirt. Trips are accompanied by afternoons at the beach, BBQs at parks and walks through beautiful towns like Mystic, CT.

On one trip we drove to Provincetown and were trained in the art of the pour over coffee. Like any memorable business trip, it was dotted with fun in the sun and great dinners.

We toured candle shops for our "Get Lit" program, stopped at cafés, flower shops, farmers' markets and country stores, all to incorporate, to learn and to absorb that which we see is succeeding; in other words Research and Development. If you hear our guys saying they're going on an R & D trip or business trip, you'll now know what that means.

The *Community Connections Life* business trips originated several years ago as an idea by Dr. Delores Lulgjuray (aka Dr. D.) to provide our members access to other coffee shops run with the assistance of adults with developmental disabilities. We started with visits to *Puzzles* in Schenectady, *BeanZ & Co.* in Avon CT, and *The Riverside Cafe*, Sandwich MA.

It soon expanded to visiting *Cape Abilities Farmers Market* in Dennis MA and coffee shops of all kinds from Cape Cod's Provincetown to Saratoga, NY.

Our latest outing took Eric E., Anthony H., Andrew H. and Lynn P. to Hudson, NY and the *Hudson Roastery*, where our own coffee aficionado, Anthony, proclaimed they brew "really good coffee, better than Starbucks!"

We later strolled the main street of Catskill and detoured into a record shop, which led to a business proposal for Anthony. Having more CDs and DVDs than the record shop had albums, we suggested he set up a stand at our *Pelham Café and Markets* to sell his wares. He leaped at the idea, dollar signs in his eyes. Soon staff had loaded up seven boxes, three rows deep.

Another upstate destination was Tannersville. There we studied home-made jams and jellies, while Eric focused on locally made hot sauces. Lynn scrutinized honey jars as Dr. D. considered cool labels and packaging ideas for *Patsy's Pickles*.

The combination of visiting new places, learning innovative ways, creating fresh experiences, broadening our business acumen, and deepening the connection among our team, is what the business trips are all about.

J. Mungovan

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Thomas Edison once said "There's no shortage of things to work on around here." Nothing could be more accurate or more true.

We're now entering into the third full year of the pandemic. We have actually been able to adapt to it a little bit better each time we need to solve a new problem, or move records in preparation for a meeting or regulatory visit.

Zoom has become a driving force for nearly everything we do, observe or produce. We were able to have nearly 100% of our staff and consumers vaccinated as requested. We arranged to hold vaccination clinics right here at 135. When someone was found to be positive, the required procedures were routinely implemented. Some of the fears and alarms were mitigated.

When I last wrote, I commented that our parking lot here at 135, was quite empty, owing largely to the fact that nearly all of our case conferences and reviews were now held on location and operated by *Zoom*. We enjoyed a couple of months when our gasoline bills for the houses and apartments were manageable. And then came the war...

The fuel savings suddenly evaporated. The price of gasoline reached unprecedented highs. It became difficult for some of our staff to come into work at the new prices. The fuel prices now reached rudely into the pockets of nearly every facet of the global economy. It is going to take a long time for the prices to stabilize and then return to the pre-war prices – if it ever gets down there again.

Yet, it never fails to amaze me how our staff is able to pull together and get things done, despite all the obstacles the world is throwing at them. *Hidden Treasures* had its first program a few weeks ago. Everyone was simply having a great time with

their artwork or their music or dance. Two parents have since called my office to make sure their charge was properly registered for the season! Another group of our consumers also got to experience the massive delays at the airports in Florida. They saw it as an adventure.

Good News! OPWDD has announced the implementation of the *Employee Incentive Payments* program. This is a series of payments made only to the direct care staff based upon four criteria, Service Pay, Vaccination Pay, Longevity Pay and Retention Pay. Right now, it is being checked for

"...it never fails to amaze me how our staff is able to pull together and get things done, despite all the obstacles the world is throwing at them."

eligibility and can begin distribution as soon as the details are verified. My understanding of this program is that it will provide a meaningful financial boost to our direct care staff in a fashion, which will proportionately reinforce the work of the most senior employees.

Finally, I'm happy to announce that CLC will begin the transition to electronic record keeping for both the



main files and the pharmacy records as well. We'll begin this project almost immediately by setting up a number of pilot plans before jumping into the entire project.

So, there is a bit of good news running through all of CLC. We've already made adjustments to accommodate our programs and we'll probably need to make many more. Let's keep our sense of humor with us as we go through these changes and now, more than ever before, let's pray for an end to the madness which is occurring right now overseas.

Be well,

John Porcella

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ENTER THE LINK BELOW AND CLICK. AMAZON WILL DONATE 0.5% OF ELIGIBLE PURCHASES TO CLC.

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(YOU MUST DO THIS EACH TIME YOU SHOP)

[HTTPS://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/CH/13-3563609](https://smile.amazon.com/CH/13-3563609)

Cookin' Good with Jenny



We are happy to present the fourth installment in a series of cooking and home articles by Jenny M. A CLC'er for nearly 30 years, she prepares specialties two or three times a week.

Clip and save this recipe from Jenny!

Jenny's Ham Steak with Vegetables & Potatoes

A perfect spring supper!

Pre-heat oven to 350F Serves 3 people

Ingredients:

- 1 large ham steak
- 2-4 stalks of celery, chopped
- 1 large can of whole potatoes, quartered
- 5 mushrooms, sliced
- 2 red & yellow peppers, chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 1-2 shallots chopped
- 1 tomato chopped

Place ham in casserole dish and bake until fully cooked (see package instructions.)

In a large fry pan sprayed with cooking spray, sauté vegetables on low to medium heat until just soft. Add a few spoons of water if dry. Salt & pepper to taste.

Serve ham and vegetables together. You can add a green salad tossed with vinegar and a little lemon juice and olive oil. Enjoy!



CALLING ALL COOKS!

We invite all CLC chefs, cooks, bakers and foodies to submit your recipes to be featured in this newsletter. Please email recipe, a few sentences about yourself and any photos (optional) to

Deb Descloux,
swissx@optonline.net

(Open to all CLC individuals, staff, family and friends)

POSTPONED
TO NOVEMBER 2022

17th Annual

GREENTREE
COUNTRY CLUB
NEW ROCHELLE, NY

CLC Foundation

Gala



HI, I'M PHOEBE!

AS TOLD TO CLC STAFF



Phoebe on Martha's Vineyard.

Hi, I'm Phoebe M. I live in an apartment on Barker Street in Mount Kisco, NY. I have one roommate and I am part of the CLC family.

Here's a sample of my typical day. I wake up at 5:20AM, take my shower, make breakfast (often Cheerios, but sometimes pancakes, waffles or eggs)

and then I make a yummy sandwich for my lunch - cheese, please! I walk over to another Barker Street apartment (we call it *Headquarters*) and catch my ride to program.

I love my program because I do so many different things. Lately, I've been making necklaces and bracelets for the *Smart Tank* project (see *Meaningful Engagement* and *The Business Trip* articles in this newsletter for details). We want to sell our jewelry this spring and summer on the patio at *The Pelham Café and Markets*. Maybe we'll start a successful new business!

Sometimes, I go to the recording studio with staffer Dave C. We all call him *Maestro*. I'm a *Minette* in the *Eenie Meenie Miney MOJO Band*. We make up our own songs and love to sing them. Music with David is great because he likes Jazz. My father liked Jazz and that's my favorite, too.

When I get home from program, I like to go back up to *Headquarters*. Sometimes I watch soap operas with the gang; we have so much fun! However, my favorite place in the whole world is *Martha's Vineyard*. I used to go to my

father's parent's house when I was a kid. I remember vacationing there with my sisters, Lisa and Chrissy. We'd bring the dogs and I'd walk them with my mom. Great memories.

I visit there now every summer to be with my friends. We float on the floaties and swim! I also vacation at Rehoboth & Bethany Beaches in Delaware and Ocean City, Maryland! I had a great time shopping on the boardwalks. I went away with friends for Thanksgiving and visited *Plymouth Rock* and the *Mayflower*. I had the best Thanksgiving meal ever.

Something you may not know is that I enjoy baseball; I love the *New York Mets*. My father liked the *Boston Red Sox*, although he sometimes rooted for the Mets, too.

I like watching comedy films, but I really adore movies about animals. *Born Free* is my favorite. I've a fondness for lions, so I guess that's why. I also watch the animal channels; they relax me and make me laugh. My birthday is coming up on May 9th. I hope I get a lot of presents!

WHAT'S UP AT WINSLOW? *Rebecca Bonomo*

Participants in the Winslow Adult Day Program have been attending dance and music classes at the Warwick Performing Arts Center. It has a focus on movement and musical theater, and the guys love it! We have a really good time learning choreography and singing, as well as movement activities and easy obstacle courses.

The Wednesday class is taught by Jessica McRoberts, a former Broadway performer and Rockette. She is currently directing the town's spring showcase, *Matilda*. Jessica is pictured at right teaching our group the choreography to *A Good Man Charlie Brown*. Participants are ready for spring and getting all of our gardening started. The group just finished painting and planting our first round of pots!

About the Winslow Adult Day Program

Winslow's Adult Day Program, located in Warwick, NY, offers a place for participants to experience a variety of activities that enhance their quality of life and provides them a therapeutic outlet. Through equine- and animal-assisted services such as unmounted horsemanship and caring for goats and chickens, participants learn the importance of building a bond with their animals. This helps to build sequencing skills, learning to care for others, and development of verbal and non-verbal skills. Winslow is an agency of CLC Foundation.



HIDDEN TREASURES

Hidden Treasures is back in full swing for in-person programming and all seems right in the world again! Welcome Larry and Kevin, who recently joined as art instructors. *Hidden Treasures* is an arts education program for people with special needs.



Spring craft!



Hidden Treasures Annual Show

Tuesday,
May 24, 2022

Fox Lane High School
Bedford, NY

6 pm Art Show (Lobby)

7 pm Talent Show
(Auditorium)

Ticket to be sold at
the door \$10

You Oughta Be in Pictures!

Would you like to be in this newsletter? Or, would you like to nominate someone... your son, your daughter, family member, friend, staff?



It's easy! Just send an email with his/her name and email/phone number (or, manager's info) to Deb Descloux at the email address below. We'll take care of the rest!
swissx@optonline.net

THE OPEN DOOR

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Email us your CLC photos & news!

Special thanks & photo credit:

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AND NOW FOR A LITTLE MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

How much will *Winslow Farm's* hydroponics produce cost to bring to the patio stands at *The Pelham Café and Markets*? Senior staff Les F. is working diligently with this group to prepare their pitch, which Michael W. intends to film. Staffers Les, Dave, Yvette, Christine and Latasha provide the supportive assistance and gentle teaching that are at the core of growth.

Emily P. is so excited about her *Smart Tank* idea, *Emily's Flowers*; her enthusiasm has spread like petals on the wind. So much so that Aseel, Lisa and others want to join and design flower arrangements to make the dream succeed. *Patsy's*

pectin and scoping out vessels in order to prepare for their sojourn into the *Smart Tank*.

Tommy and Ellen C., Joe P., Eric E. and Tammy L. have pirate hats at the ready with homemade and purchased swords at their sides. All are ready for dress rehearsal for the play *Pirates of Scar Island*.



Joe P., with staffer David, at right, recording for CCL's Christmas Carol Contest.



Ellen, Patty and Troy finding joy in the kitchen.

Pickles is no different. Patsy and Lois G. have researched three pickling recipes and looked up the various prices of pickling cucumbers and jars to prepare their presentation. With the imminent addition of the *Pound Ridge Cottage and Gardens* location, the jams and jellies team will be honing their skills, pricing

them smarter, hence the name, *Smart Tank*.

We haven't even mentioned the video gaming round robins, the line dancing, *Zumba*, art easels, and singing contests on Fun Friday. And we have the lunch bunch, where six clients go out to lunch with staff once a week. There

are also the outdoor activities, bowling, beaches and BBQs, once again at our fingertips. The list goes on, as there is no end to the creativity that meaningful engagement inspires.

This sense of inclusion and acceptance, and the belief in their abilities, is fertile ground for meaningful engagement. This has proven to foster growth, self-esteem and feelings of success. It's the reason we're all here, and CLC is great at it.

Nurturing an atmosphere where meaningful engagement can thrive is truly the greatest gift we can give to our clients. It's the greatest gift we can give to ourselves. What can be more meaningful than that?

Follow us on Instagram!
[@CommunityConnections_Life](https://www.instagram.com/CommunityConnections_Life)

And don't forget this Instagram page
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J. Mungovan

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NEWS & EVENTS FROM CLC FOUNDATION

Denyele Urciuoli

TRUSTS 101

This feature informs and educates consumers and their families about CLC Pooled Supplemental Needs Trusts.

In 1996, CLC Foundation, Inc. was one of the first non-profits in New York State to establish a Pooled Supplemental Needs Trust with the help of Community Living Corporation, Inc. Today, the Trusts are among the oldest and largest in New York State.

What happens upon the death of a beneficiary? According to federal law, a pooled trust terminates upon the death of the beneficiary. Any funds remaining in the trust at that time must be paid back to New York State for Medicaid services provided in an amount equal to any lien OR retained by the trust to further its mission. Each beneficiary elects an option when completing the joinder agreement. Over the past thirty years, CLC Foundation has used the remainder trust to fund social activities and new programs all directly benefiting Community Living Corporation residents.

EVENT: CLC Foundation will be hosting a Zoom event called “Trust 101: Introduction to CLC’s Pooled Trust program” on Wednesday, June 8th @ 2pm. This event will be for clients, staff and families to learn more about the trust program and have the opportunity to ask questions directly to our team. Zoom Meeting ID: 890 9091 1879 Passcode: CLCF

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