

# Fall = New Beginnings

By Jenna Caputo

Many people view fall as a time of endings—the end of summer, the shedding of dead leaves, the long sleep of winter, the end of another year. Granted, most people enjoy fall activities—playing in the leaves, drinking fresh cider, apple picking, pumpkin patches, hayrides, cider doughnuts, Halloween—but they dread the day that last leaf falls and winter officially begins.

However, I've always looked at fall as a time of new beginnings. I don't see "death," I see the preparation of life. It's a time to reflect and make needed changes; to recharge and renew your mind, body, and spirit; and to take charge of your goals for your life and/or business. It's a time to give thanks and be grateful for everything you have and your accomplishments, and a time to think about what you want to achieve in the fast-approaching new year. It is the rest (not death) before the new growth.

I know January is the usual time to make new year's resolutions, but to me, fall has always seemed like the real start of the new year. Maybe it comes from all those years of being in school and everything starting in September—I don't know. But whatever it is, fall is the new beginning for me.

As I prepare for the Thanksgiving reflections at the end of this season, I've realized that I once again have much to be thankful for this year. I was lucky enough to have great things happen both personally and professionally. There are some new, promising opportunities lurking on the horizon for this coming year that I am also looking forward to. I get another wonderful year on this Earth to make my own little mark any way I can, and I am so grateful.

So as the season turns from fall to winter, I'm not going to mourn the end of summer, flowers, good weather, sunshine. I'm going to rejoice in the chance for another new beginning and continue to walk confidently down this road of life and enjoy every moment of my journey—leaves or no leaves. I will cherish each detail the season offers and take full advantage of this period of rest, while everything around me renews and recharges—myself included. I will come out revitalized and ready to rock this year even better than last!

So let that last leaf fall—It's not just an end. It's a fresh start. A new beginning. Another bend in the road that offers a different view and new adventures. My journey awaits!

## COMMUNITY

# TOWN OF CLIFTON PARK 2023 COMMUNITY ACTION FUND APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Contributed By Jean Spiegel

On February 4, 2019, Town Supervisor Phil Barrett announced the establishment of a Community Action Fund. The Fund provides an opportunity for community non-profit organizations to apply for funding to support programs and projects that would result in a tangible benefit to Clifton Park and its residents. Financial support of the Community Action Fund is generated by the donation of bottles and cans that can be redeemed for a deposit. No Town funds are used to support the program.

Town Supervisor Barrett noticed a large quantity of redeemable bottles and cans in the recycling bins at the Town Transfer Station. The goal was to provide a donation option for people adjacent to the recycling bins. The donations would allow the Town to capture revenue from the redeemable bottles and cans. The funds could then be used to support community organizations and strengthen the Town's social infrastructure.

A committee consisting of Supervisor Barrett, Councilwoman Walowit, and several community representatives was established to make a series of recommendations for the establishment

of an application process and criteria. The committee met in the spring of 2019 and formalized the application process, establishing that applications would be due September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, organizations serving Clifton Park residents could apply, and requests would be limited to a maximum of \$1,000.

The 2023 application is available at [www.cliftonpark.org](http://www.cliftonpark.org), on the Town Supervisor's page for qualifying organizations who would like to apply for a grant through the program and the details of the program have not changed. Since the inception of the program, over \$51,000 has been awarded to dozens of organizations serving the residents of Clifton Park. The program has been very successful due to the generous donations of bottles and cans by many residents throughout the year.

"The Community Action Fund has exceeded my expectations for delivering assistance to community non-profit organizations serving Clifton Park residents every day," said Town Supervisor Phil Barrett. "Thank you to everyone who has donated bottles and cans to the program, resulting in over \$51,000 being invested in our community."