



Thrive



Training and **Helpful Resources** for Increasing **Volunteer Engagement**

Newsletter of Chemung Volunteer Action Corps

January-March 2026

2026 Brings New Opportunities

The new year has begun and the CVAC program has some exciting plans in the works! The new Chemung County Volunteer Opportunity Guide is now available on the CCE Chemung website to view, print or share. This comprehensive listing of organizations and volunteer roles can be a great tool for finding the right fit for you. Check it out here: <https://chemung.cce.cornell.edu/community-and-economic-vitality>. We'll be sharing fewer volunteer opportunity listings in this newsletter, shifting our focus to promoting new or seasonal opportunities as well as information to help you strengthen your volunteer skills and connect with community education programs.

This year, we will partner with community organizations to offer topical workshops for volunteers, helping us to work and grow together as a community. Watch the CCE Chemung newsletter or Facebook page for announcements and registration information.

Jackie Spencer
Community and Economic Vitality
Resource Educator
Cornell Cooperative Extension of
Chemung County

Subscribe to the Thrive Newsletter

Are you engaged in volunteerism in Chemung County? Would you like to be involved? Sign up for the quarterly Thrive newsletter by email or regular mail. Each issue contains helpful information for personal development, tips for strengthening your skills as a volunteer, and information about volunteer opportunities and related programming available in the community.

Sign up is free, quick & easy!

Register online at <https://tinyurl.com/2j8eyhtr>, email jackiespencer@cornell.edu, or call (607) 734-4453 ext. 216



Upcoming Community Programs

AARP Tax Preparation: Available by appointment only at 256 Walnut Street in Elmira. Call 607-735-2424 to make an appointment beginning Jan. 5th, 11 am to 4 pm..

AARP Smart Drivers Courses Scheduled: Feb. 16th & 17th, 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm; March 9th and 10th, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm; April 6 & 7, 1;30 pm to 4:30 pm. Steele Memorial Library. Call 607-732-2576 for registration and pricing information.

Clear the Clutter Workshop Series: Learn strategies for downsizing your possessions and organizing your space while creating a personal plan to reduce your household clutter. Thursdays, Feb. 12 thru March 5th, 11 am to 12:30 pm, CCE Chemung, 425 Pennsylvania Ave, Room 110, Elmira or join via zoom. Please sign up by Feb. 9th using the link below or by calling 607-734-4453 ext. 216

https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/CTC2026_207

2026 Distinguished Volunteers Nominations due Feb. 6: Contact Chemung County Dept. of Aging and Long Term Care or visit chemungcountyny.gov to obtain a nomination form. Distinguished Volunteers of the Year Awards will be presented to Chemung County residents, age 60 or older, for ongoing devotion of time and talent to make a great impact on others, without pay or compensation. Nominees may volunteer in a variety of areas or just one. All qualified nominees will be recognized and honored during the Older American's Month Celebration in May.

Volunteer Opportunities

Check out the NEW Chemung Volunteer Opportunity Guide for a comprehensive listing of organizations that utilize volunteers in Chemung County.



CVAC Sewers and Knitters craft handmade items for local organizations in their spare time. Projects include Books at Birth bags, adult clothing protectors, lap quilts or blankets, fidget mats, pet mats, hats, and more. If you like to sew, knit or crochet and are in need of projects please contact jackiespencer@cornell.edu to learn more.

New or Seasonal Volunteer Opportunities can be submitted to jackiespencer@cornell.edu by March 10th to be included in the April-May issue.

THE BRIGHT SIDE

Winter Well

This season can feel gloomy with short days, cold weather, and bare trees. A perspective shift can help us make the most of our time to support our well-being over the winter months. Think of this season as nature's way of permitting rest and rejuvenation. Sleep a little longer. Move a little slower. Take time to savor a good meal, read a good book, or plan your next project. Modern life can feel busy and hurried. Winter gives us an opportunity to slow down. Explore this topic more by reading *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* written by Katherine May.

Chicken Chowder for Two

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup diced or grated carrot
- 2 ½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup diced potato (fresh or frozen)
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (4 ounces) cooked and diced chicken
- 1 Tablespoon all purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon red wine vinegar (optional)
- Black pepper to taste (optional)



Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Makes: 2 Servings

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Rinse or scrub fresh vegetables under running water before preparing.
3. In a medium saucepan, sauté onion and carrot on medium heat until softened, about 3 minutes.
4. Add broth, potatoe, thyme, garlic powder and salt. Birng to a gentle boil and simmer until the potatoes are soft, 15 to 20 minutes.
5. While potatoes are cooking, stir flour and milk together in a small dish.
6. Add chicken to the saucepan and stir 1 to 2 minutes until heated through.
7. Slowly add milk mixture and stir as the soup thickens. Boil gently for 2 to 3 minutes.
8. Before serving, add vinegar and pepper, if desired
9. Refridgerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Find more recipes @ [foodhero.org/monthly](https://www.foodhero.org/monthly)

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CCE Community & Economic Vitality Program Advisory Committee

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Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world. Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for providing equal program and employment opportunities in accordance with applicable laws.

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