

New York State Office for the Aging

Senior Citizen's Day Recognition

We would like to thank you for submitting nominations for the 2021 New York State Office for the Aging Senior Citizen's Day Recognition Event. The Office for Aging Senior Advisory Council recognizes **Terry Barber and Joan Fuller Degener, both from Fort Ann.**

Congratulations Joan Fuller Degener!



Joan Fuller Degener grew up on a dairy farm in the beautiful valley of Welch Hollow, Fort Ann New York. She was the daughter of Marion

Rathbun Fuller and Samuel Fuller. Joan had two sisters, Jean and Helen, and one brother Harold. Also, a daughter Michelle, son David, and special granddaughter Shaye. Joan graduated from Fort Ann Central School in 1963, and then pursued a teaching degree at Adirondack Community College, Castleton State and graduate work at Plattsburgh State. She enjoyed 34 years of teaching elementary students! Joan now lives in a house her husband, Edward, and she built in West Fort Ann. This home is nestled in the woods, surrounded with beauty and wildlife. Joan married Edward Degener, June 1996, Edward passed away suddenly August 2019.

Joan has been volunteering for 30 years in many different ways. She is a founding member of the Fort Ann Historical Society. Joan helped to research and write "Fort Ann: 300 Years Of History," especially the section on Welch Hollow, her birthplace. She is an active member of the

Queen Anne Senior Citizens, and often takes trips with the "Traveling Cardinals." For The Old Stone House Library, Joan instituted the weekly play and learn program for pre-schoolers. Also, leads programs for elementary students at Fort Ann Central to introduce them to the library. A fun and happy time is the monthly craft projects she organizes for senior citizens. For many years Joan was a volunteer leader for Girl Scout Troop 3267. The highlight of being an assistant leader was guiding Shaye, her granddaughter, to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award! Shaye is the first girl in Fort Ann to earn this prestigious award. To achieve this award Shaye organized and helped build a pavilion with an informational case at the West Fort Ann United Methodist Church. Joan volunteered for six years at Haynes House Of Hope, in Granville, a home for hospice patients. She gave patients emotional and physical support. Joan is a charter member and first president of the West Fort Ann Fire Company Ladies' Auxiliary.

Joan is very active in the West Fort Ann United Methodist Church and volunteers wherever she is needed: working on fundraising dinners, teaching Sunday School in the Summer months, leading the Nurture and Outreach program, working with the youth group, helping to provide needy families with Easter, Thanks-

giving and Christmas dinners, organizing Operation Santa Claus gift-giving, and managing the cookie walk. Joan collects items and donates baskets for the annual Wait House fundraiser in Glens Falls. She also collects, as well as donates items to the Cornerstone Food Pantry for needy families in Fort Ann.

The one thing she is extremely proud of is being an advocate/guardian for two handicapped sisters from her childhood, who had no family to take care of them when they got older. She had grown up with the girls and promised their Mother she would take care of the sisters. Both ladies are now deceased.

When Joan was asked, what advice she had for other New Yorkers about volunteering she stated, "Volunteering is a way to show your love, hope, and how much you care about helping others! Staying positive, being creative and having fun will make your volunteering enjoyable and interesting!"



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021