

AWARDEE:

Brian Danforth **Otsego County**



Brian Danforth has been an active member of his community since moving to Unadilla, NY in 1988, soon after marrying his wife, Prudence. The couple have two children, Drew and Patricia, and have been active members of the community.

The Danforths are members of the Unadilla First Presbyterian Church, where Danforth served as both a deacon and an elder. He is a founding member of the Unadilla Historical Association, a board member of the Unadilla Community Foundation, and a past member of the Unadilla Rotary Club. In 2023, he began serving on the Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District Board and in 2024 began serving as the Division IV Representative for the New York Association of Conservation Districts.

Danforth's greatest passion, however, is scouting. He joined the Boy Scouts as a child in Lancaster, PA and earned his Eagle Scout rank in 1977. After moving to Unadilla, he moved up the ranks with his son Drew, serving as den leader, cubmaster, scoutmaster, and his current role as pack committee chairman of Troop 1s. In his role, he has led scouts on many adventures in the Catskills and Adirondacks and along the Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers.

What Danforth is most known for is his willingness to help whenever asked. You can often find him helping a neighbor, whether it's driving someone to a doctor's appointment, shoveling snow, moving furniture or lending a hand with a building project.

Danforth said, "I like to lead by example. If other people see the joy you have in providing service to others, I hope they might be inspired to pitch in and help others in some way. Volunteering is a great way to meet other people, make new friends and make a positive impact in the community."



Kathy Hochul, Governor
Greg Olsen, Director



AWARDEE:

Pat & Walter (“Jim”) Hogan

Otsego County

Pat and Jim Hogan live in Cooperstown, NY and are the proud parents of twin adult sons with Down syndrome, Chris and Tom. Both Jim and Pat have made lasting contributions to their community.

In 2024, Otsego County Office for the Aging partnered with Otsego County Council of Senior Citizens to create a Men’s Shed, an international program designed to reduce social isolation and increase connections among older men. After hearing about the initiative, Jim and Pat immediately offered up the use of their two-car garage and workshop to host the Men’s Shed. Jim was actively involved in helping to develop the program, meeting regularly with staff and other volunteers to develop program guidelines and acquire the necessary woodworking tools for participants.

In February 2025, Jim and Pat opened their garage to the first group of men. Now, every Tuesday morning, gentlemen are seen conversing with a cup of coffee, eating Pat’s homemade sweet treats, using their woodworking talents on community projects, and learning new skills. Jim’s warmth and encouragement have created a safe, pressure-free social environment that has led to significant changes in the well-being of the men who participate.

Pat not only encourages and supports the efforts of the Men’s Shed by baking delicious treats and helping Jim with administrative tasks, but she also volunteers her time and talents at Connections, a two-day-per-week senior socialization program in Cooperstown, completely run by volunteers. Pat is also instrumental in planning the annual Otsego County Senior Picnic.

“The residents of Otsego County, from day one, welcomed our Down Syndrome twins with open arms and, after 25 years, there’s no signs of letting go,” the Hogans say. “How do you pay back those who have been so special to our family? Volunteering in the Connections program has helped us pay back this debt.”



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