

CLIFTON

Free, Please Take One



CITY RESOURCES
PARKS & PASTIMES
FOSTER-TO-ADOPT
CLIFTON'S CULTURES





A group of five women living at Senior Horizons at Clifton, 714 Clifton Ave., make the most of their close-knit circle. It began when CHS 1968 grads Barbara Baker and Joyce Smith wanted to get some fresh air during the coronavirus pandemic.

"[The whole place] was locked down, so ... Joyce and I started sitting outside on the benches," said Baker. "Then we got [lawn chairs] and people came to sit and join us."

Five of the residents now have a group and enjoy chatting about everything. The group consists of Baker, Smith, Chris Liszner, Angie Mone, and Christine Guglielmino. What began as a time to socialize — often attracting more residents — recently turned into an adventure.

Baker, Smith, Liszner, and Guglielmino took a week-long cruise this past April to Florida and the Bahamas with Royal Caribbean.

"It was so fun," said Smith, with a bright smile.

Now that it's safer, the women often meet in the common room on the ground floor. They're able to avoid the heat and also greet other residents who stick their head in as they collect their mail.

Which was exactly what four did on a Wednesday night last month while we discussed why they like Clifton. Unfortunately, due to a family event, Guglielmino was unable to join us that evening.

Barbara (Klapmust) Baker

As a lifelong resident, Baker moved to the senior complex in 2019.

The former Mustang said that now as a senior citizen, she sees more offered from Clifton than ever before for that population. Picnics are one aspect, but all of the efforts made by the Clifton Health Department are appreciated.

"They came here a lot during COVID for testing," said Baker. "They did a general health check as well for blood pressure, vascular testing on the legs, and a bone density scan."



At Senior Horizons, from left, Joyce Smith, Chris Liszner, Angie Mone, and Barbara Baker.

Baker expressed additional gratitude for Kim Castellano and the Power of One, Inc. for visiting the complex once per month and bringing food during the pandemic. Since life has re-opened, it means that Baker can enjoy the things that she's always liked about Clifton.

"They [continue to] have the concerts in the parks, and now we're getting bocce ball right up the street and pickleball," said Baker. "All of our parks are beautiful. They upgraded them a lot."

Access to stores and highways are major benefits, as well as a nearby train station and favorite restaurants like the Allwood Diner.

Baker doesn't lose sight of how happy she is in the complex, either.

"They just installed cameras here," she said. "It's a good, safe place."

Joyce (Vivinetto) Smith

Although Smith graduated from CHS the same year as Baker, they did not know each other until after moving to the complex in the same year.

Smith left Clifton for a period of time before returning to the city permanently in 1983. She has two daughters, Niccole Zaretski and Jackie Smith. Zaretski is a nurse at School 11 and Jackie is a fourth-grade teacher at School 12. The Clifton Public Schools is one thing that Smith admires about her city.

"Clifton has not cut any of its Fine Arts, sports, or music programs," she said. "Unfortunately, we have



seen [those cuts happen] in some other towns.”

Smith added that she admires how the school district offers support for students in need.

“They are looked out for and taken care of.”

Like Baker, Smith appreciates the Health Department’s active role. She noted one recent visit to discuss mental health and the ways that you can observe things in yourself and other people.

Individually, Smith said the group of friends take it upon themselves to organize Bingo twice per month. It existed years ago, but it’s back and they would love for more people to get involved. “It’s open to everyone in the building,” encouraged Smith.



The Gonzalez family, from left, Marvin, grandma Elizabeth, Jacob, Jerry, and Vanessa.

Chris Liszner

Regarding Liszner, there’s a general consensus, stated first by Baker: “She is Miss Clifton.”

Smith agreed, adding that Liszner gives a lot of herself to the city. It’s a no-brainer for Liszner — her family and a desire to stay close to the city’s traditions have kept her engaged and involved.

“Probably the diversity,” said Liszner (CHS 1961) about why she remained local. “Growing up in Passaic, it was kind of a melting pot with a mixture of immigrants coming in and we’re that now in Clifton, and it’s nice. There is a lot of diversity in [this] building.”

Liszner has lived in Clifton for over 60 years and moved to the senior complex two years ago. A few favorite restaurants include Bruno’s Pizza, 1006 US-46, and Love of Grub, 606 Van Houten Ave. She mentioned how Chef Tracey at Love of Grub has helped support the city.

“During COVID,” recalled Liszner, “she kept her place stocked with bread, milk, and vegetables in case people couldn’t get to the store, and she delivered it.”

In earlier years, Liszner got involved with the PTA, as well as the Junior Women’s Club. She is a long-time supporter of the Community Band and Mustang Marching Band, and applauded Board of Education commissioners for not only maintaining a good budget but getting the referendum passed in recent years.

Veteran services like Clifton Cares, which she heads up with Dona Crum; the Avenue of Flags, and the American Legion are ones that Liszner holds closest to her heart.

“Anything to do with veterans, because my dad was a veteran,” she said. “[Clifton] continues the tradition of being one of the only towns with a Veterans Day Parade and putting up all the flags.”

Angie Mone

Everyone plays their role in keeping Clifton a nice place to live, but Mone gives credit to perhaps an unsung group of people.

“The homeowners,” she said, garnering unanimous agreement from her friends. “They maintain their homes very well in comparison to other neighboring cities.”

Mone grew up in Passaic and moved to Clifton over 30 years ago. This month, she has marked 19 years of living in the complex as one of the original residents. Around the city, Mone has liked the street fairs and support provided by the Clifton Senior Center.

The transportation service for seniors who need to visit doctors became essential after each of the complex’s residents lost their cars to Hurricane Ida. Mone still uses the senior transportation and pointed out that such a service doesn’t exist in neighboring towns.

“We also have paid fire and police forces,” she