

## COLONIE

# Seniors learn financial literacy skills

**BY JILL BRYCE**  
*Gazette Reporter*

A new program was announced Thursday aimed at increasing financial literacy among senior citizens and decreasing the likelihood that the elderly will fall victim to financial abuse and fraud.

About 40 seniors were on hand at the Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc. at the Beltrone Living Center for the crash course on how to avoid financial schemes like identity theft and telemarketing fraud.

Seniors were also guided through different scenarios and advised when they should — and shouldn't — provide a Social Security number to someone who asks.

Citizens Bank is providing \$100,000 for the program and partnering with the Center for Excellence in Aging Services and the School of Social Welfare at the University at Albany in its efforts to empower seniors in the Capital Region

The program was developed in response to a growing need to give seniors tools they need to enjoy financial security even as schemes to defraud the elderly increase.

The University at Albany has put together many resources for the program that address abuse of the elderly, including pamphlets supplied by the Attorney General's office as well as other resource guides.

Colonie Senior Service Centers also unveiled the area's first permanent resource library, which is part of the program, for seniors in need of financial information.

The library is at the Colonie Senior Service Centers' main administrative building at the Beltrone Living Center on Wolf Road. It will include information on topics such as identifying consumer fraud, identity theft, and debt and credit counseling.

"Serving the largest population of seniors in the Capital Region,

we believe Colonie Senior Service Centers is an appropriate home for the area's only permanent financial literacy library," said Edward Neary, executive director of Colonie Senior Service Centers.

"We intend this resource library to be a heavily relied-upon source of knowledge and empowerment for seniors throughout the community, and are thrilled to add this facility to our comprehensive roster of programs and services for seniors," he said.

Any senior in the Capital Region can use the library.

"Citizens Bank and the University at Albany recognize the growing need for financial education of our senior population," said Robert M. Curley, president of Citizens Bank, New York.

Joint efforts are aimed at arming seniors with the information they need to quickly identify potential fraud, he said.