The Baden-Powell Council, Boy Scouts of America has announced that New York Pizzeria owners Frank and Betsey Baio are this year’s recipients of the 2020 Distinguished Citizens of the Year award for Chenango County.

Frank and Betsey Baio will be honored at a dinner to be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 3rd, 2020, at the Canasawacta Country Club in Norwich. Selection was made for the award by a committee of local citizens which includes past recipients and is co-chaired by Neil Bartle and Mark Golden. Last year’s recipient was Mark Golden.

This is the 35th Annual Distinguished Citizen of the Year dinner benefiting the local Scouting program. Each year the Scouts recognize a local community leader for their outstanding contribution to the betterment of the community and service to their fellow citizens.

Frank and Betsey Baio, owners of New York Pizzeria, have been blessed to share their family and their lives with the people they have served since New York Pizzeria’s opening in 1982. Frank arrived in America from Sicily in 1972, working as a baker in New Jersey, but happened to discover in New Berlin, New York the perfect opportunity to open a pizzeria. Although he had actually planned to return to Sicily eventually, everything changed when he met Betsey! He and Betsey were married, started a family, built a house, worked and struggled together through the years, putting down deep roots in the community they called home ever since.

Both Frank and Betsey were honored as Citizen of the Year in New Berlin in recognition of the work they have done to strengthen their community. In the early years when their children were young, they were involved in the pre-school, PTO, soccer camps, Chenango Chargers, Youth Days, as well as Cub Scouts and Brownies.

Through the years, they have given time out of their busy lives to serve on various boards and committees including Commerce Chenango, the RC Smith Foundation, CMH Auxiliary, Hospice, Helping Hands of New Berlin, St. Theresa’s and Rosa Mystica. They have given support to local fire departments and auxiliaries, sports teams, Rotary Clubs and churches. In recognition of her years of dedicated service to the wider community, Betsey received the Volunteer of the Year Award for Chenango County in 2010.

Through their life’s work in New York Pizzeria, the Biaos are grateful to have been part of so many celebrations and gatherings through the years. Living within a community encompasses the fulness of life, in its joys as well as its sorrows. In giving of themselves to their community, rejoicing with those who rejoice, mourning with those who mourn, their lives have been abundantly blessed.

Reservations for the event may be made by contacting the Baden-Powell Council service center at 607-648-7888 or toll free at 1-877-674-8876 and asking for information on the Chenango Distinguished Citizens Award Dinner. Reservations can also be made at [www.bpcouncil.org/chenangodcad](http://www.bpcouncil.org/chenangodcad) . Seating is limited, so please send in your reservation early!

The Baden-Powell Council, Boy Scouts of America served over 600 youth members within Chenango district in 2019. Locally, the Boy Scout program does not receive government funding.  The yearly cost to the Council for each youth in the program is $180.  Scout leaders hope to raise $21,650

of the current year’s budget from this dinner to support local Scouts. Frank & Betsey encourage the citizens of Chenango County to join them in their efforts to support the local scouts.