Chester NY Repair Café
Saturday, October 24, 2026
Final Report











CHESTER
CONSERVATION
ADVISORY COUNCIL

1786 Kings Highway • Chester, NY 10918

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Members of the Chester Conservation Advisory Council (CCAC) welcomed 113 guests to our 5th Repair Café (RC) on Saturday, October 24, 2026 at the Senior Center during the 4-hour period from 10am – 2pm.

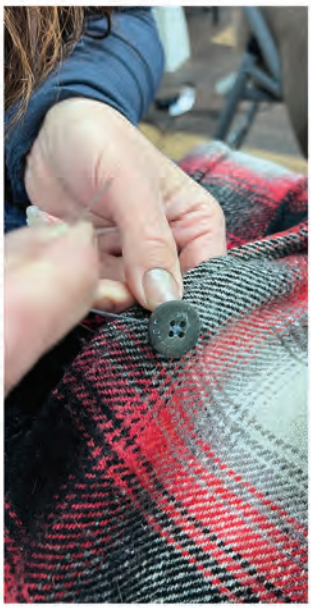
If You Plan It, They Will Come

A total of 21 volunteers, including 13 repair coaches, 5 CCAC members and 3 community residents gave their time and talents to provide what it takes to run this free repair service to our community.









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Special Thanks

We are so grateful to all our regular coaches who help us at every Repair Café. There are always last-minute changes when planning events such as this and we need to say a big thank you to several new people to our RC when a few coaches were unable to attend:

• Thank you to Bellvale community members Anna and Mike who stepped in, literally at the very last minute providing sewing and gluing repair services.

• We are grateful to new coach John who brought along his granddaughter Regina. John is a jack-of-all-trades and initially set up his work station for bike repair then joined in helping our other mechanical coaches when there was a backlog of repairs to do. Regina assisted her granddad but also "apprenticed" with our sewing repair coaches. Do we see a future repair coach in the making?

• We were happy to welcome 2 members of the Monroe Conservation Advisory Council: Fred Schuepfer. who handled our gluing station and Donna McMahon, who shared her nature books at our Information Table.

• The CCAC is grateful to Chester Supervisor Brandon Holdridge for supporting this free repair service to Chester and the surrounding communities, to Town Clerk Linda Zappala and her staff for printing and advertising and to Michele Deshler and Kristen Palmer for Senior Center venue assistance both before and after the event.

As always, the CCAC thanks other organizations that work with us at the Chester's RC:
• Chester Historical Society
• The Preservation Collective
• Warwick Repair Café coaches

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Here are the statistics for the one hundred and thirteen (113) community members requesting two hundred twenty-eight (228) repairs.

Newcomers to the Repair Café concept

At this October 2026 RC, forty-six (46) people who attended were first-timers who either never even heard of the repair café concept before this event and / or never attended one. At the previous April 2026 RC, thirty-six (36) people who attended were first-timers to ANY repair café. The CCAC and all the volunteers are proud to say we are definitely getting the word out about the importance of repairing, reusing, recycling and keeping items out of our landfills.

Types / Numbers of Repairs

The skills of our volunteer repair coaches are listed below. And support for the repair coaches that made this latest RC event another resounding success included volunteer greeters, registration, photography, creating posters and displays, engaging the public with conservation information, answering questions as well as conducting exit interviews.

Two hundred twenty-eight (228) items were brought in for repairs.
Here is the summary by category based on repair tickets statistics:



96 Sharpening jobs (Knifes / Scissors / Tool Sharpening)
18 Lamp repairs
36 Sewing repairs
27 Electrical / Mechanical repairs
30 Jewelry repairs
7 Gluing repairs
12 Computer / digital repairs
2 bicycle repairs

228
Total items brought in for repairs

Statistics on Fixed Items / Instructions on how-to fix / Consultations / Unfixable Items

Of the 228 items brought in, 200 items were successfully repaired (88%).
On another 13 items (5%), our coaches either provided instructions and / or consultations on what needed to be done for residents to fix the item(s) themselves.
These included residents needing to put in new batteries, order special parts, arrange for soldering or welding (which, due to liability issues we do not do) or simply clean the item(s) to make them functional again. The remaining 15 items (7%) were truly broken and not able to be repaired for assorted reasons including internal motor issues and damage beyond repair, among others.

Bottom line, the Chester Repair Café succeeded in repairing or consulting on repairing 213 items that will not be going into a landfill.

Towns Represented

Chester residents alone represented 40% of the attendees this time around!
Here is a breakdown in alphabetical order of the 14 towns represented at the 10/24/26 Repair Café:
Blooming Grove – 1; Campbell Hall – 1; Chester – 45; Cornwall – 4; Florida – 1;
Goshen – 7; Greenwood Lake – 1; Harriman – 3: Monroe – 23; Middletown - 1;
Rockhill – 2 - Sugarloaf – 1; Warwick – 18; Washingtonville - 5





Getting The Word Out

As organizers of this event, we like to know how or where people find out about our RC. When asked on the repair ticket how a person found out about the Chester RC, here are the specific written responses from highest to lowest:

Signs/Flyers /Road signs – (19);
Newspaper(s) – (17) as follows: Newspaper but not specified – (4); Photo News – (6); Chester Chronicle – (3); Warwick Advertiser – (3); Dirt Magazine Fall 2026 magazine article - RC sharpener Fred that talks about Chester RC– (1);

Chester Senior Center meeting or flyer – (9); Friend / Relative – (7); On-line/social media posts – (6); Facebook – (6); Chester Conservation Advisory Council – (5), Chester & Monroe Libraries (4) ; Return Customer – (4); Word of Mouth – (3); E-mail – unspecified – (3); Chester Town e-mail (3)– Monroe Town e-mail – (2); Chester& Monroe Post Offices – (2) ; Warwick Repair Café – (2); Chester Historical Society – (1); Chester Town Hall sign – (1); Monroe YMCA – (1); Joan Maxwell – (1); Orange County Office for the Aging e-mail – (1); Susannah Devine – (1); NOTE: 18 people did not indicate where they heard about our RC on their registration forms.

Unsolicited Monetary Thank-Yous

One hundred fifty-three dollars ($153.00) in unsolicited donations was given by grateful residents who were happy that the items they brought in were repaired and restored for future use. The $153.00 was turned in to Town Clerk Linda Zappala per accounting procedure.

CCAC Information Table

In addition to the repair workstations, CCAC members had an Information Table to engage the public about our current projects and future plans. Display topics included updates on the Purple Martin and Bobolink projects at Knapps View, Migratory bird information and Lights Out / Light Pollution efforts. Items for residents to take included Arbor Day posters, Monarch Town / Butterfly facts as well as "What is a Conservation Advisory Council" brochures.

Exit Interviews

In addition to the Info Table and greeting duties, CCAC member Simon also conducted 16 interviews as residents exited the Repair Cafe. He documented some of the following quotes:

"My first time here. Everything was wonderful. I needed a lamp repaired and it took less than 10 minutes!"

"I am very impressed with everything you fix here every time". Thank you!

"I love to come here. All the people are so friendly."

"My first time here. I am so happy they fixed my old radio".

"Thank you for keeping old things alive!"

Seniors are our best "cheerleaders"

Camille D of Goshen took the time to write on her registration form:
"Chester Repair Café is such a help to seniors. What a wonderful service – thank you so much".

In Conclusion

In an era often seen as a throw-away society, the Chester Repair Café promotes sustainability with the advertising motto *"Toss it? No way!"*

If you want to see first-hand an event atmosphere that combines the precision of a workshop with the warmth of a neighborhood gathering brought together by the simple idea of people helping others fix what they can rather than throw things away, come to one of our next Chester repair cafes. They take place twice a year in Spring and Autumn.

Jane Dysinger & Susannah Devine - Co-chairs - Chester Repair Café
For Chester Conservation Advisory Council