



ArchivesSpace

Quirini, Helen; Papers

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M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
Title:	Helen Quirini Papers
ID:	apap102
Date [inclusive]:	1898-2010
Physical Description:	50.89 cubic ft.
Physical Location:	The materials are located onsite in the department.
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	This collection documents the life, work and activism of Helen Quirini of Schenectady, New York. The collection represents Quirini's numerous activities and interests including her early work owning a local market with her brother, her 39 year employment for General Electric, her activism in unions during her employment and retirement, as well as her charitable activities where she pursued civil, housing, pension, women's and senior citizen's rights.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Helen Quirini Papers 1898-2010 (APAP-102).
M. E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries,
University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the Quirini Papers).

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Biographical Sketch

Helen Quirini (1920-2010) was a lifelong resident of Schenectady, New York. She was known for her dedication to numerous causes, such as organized labor, the YWCA of Schenectady, gender and racial equality, social welfare, and local activism. Although Quirini focused primarily on the Capital Region, she also worked for statewide and national causes. She advocated the repeal of the Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988 and participated in the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. During her 39

year employment at General Electric (GE) and her 30 year retirement, Quirini advocated for the better treatment of employees and retirees by the management of GE.

Born March 9, 1920 to Marie Ogonowski and Frank K. Quirini, Helen Quirini was the youngest of four children and attended Mont Pleasant High School. On April 1, 1941, at the age of 21, Quirini began working for GE's Schenectady plant doing piece work in the factory. The United States' entrance into World War II interrupted her initial plan to save money in order to attend college. Quirini decided to work at GE throughout the war as a service to her country. By 1945 she had established a pattern of union leadership and community activism that continued for the rest of her life.

At General Electric she joined the Athletic Board, advocated for equal treatment for female employees and organized drives for the local Red Cross. She joined a union, Local 301, which was first affiliated with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE) and later, beginning in 1954, with the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (IUE). Quirini held many executive leadership positions with Local 301, served on numerous labor committees, was a union shop steward and regularly attended union conferences and conventions. Quirini was a vocal force for employee rights, both in boardroom meetings with GE executives and during strikes, protests and work stoppages. In 1953 Quirini mobilized mass protests to advocate for equal pay for women workers at GE. She walked picket lines in all types of weather in support of union solidarity. While employed at GE and as a member of Local 301, Quirini achieved a number of firsts. In 1953, she became the first woman elected chairperson of the special UE-GE Conference Board Meeting, held that year in Chicago. Quirini also was the first woman and hourly representative elected chairperson of the GE Employees Share Fund in 1975.

Quirini was accused of Communist Party affiliation during the McCarthy era because of her union advocacy. She received a subpoena and testified in a pre-hearing that she was not a proponent of Communism, but sought equal rights for all individuals. She testified that she had attended a Communist meeting, and even mentioned seeing "company men" from General Electric there. The case against her was dropped. Quirini filed a Freedom of Information Act request decades later to review the documents held by the FBI from the McCarthy era. Redacted copies of the completed request are available in Series 2.

After her retirement from General Electric in 1980, Quirini became well known for her attempts to win greater benefits for GE retirees through advocacy, shareholder proposals and her annual speech at the GE shareholders meeting. Always wearing a bright T-shirt with the words "GE Brings Good Things to Retirees, Please" Quirini, along with other retirees and their supporters, frequently picketed at General Electric in Schenectady and at the annual shareholder meetings. She served as president of Local 301 Retirees Council and co-founded the GE Retirees Justice Fund. Her highly visible role at shareholder meetings brought her to the attention of Jack Welch, the chairman and CEO of General Electric from 1981-2001. Local playwright Gail George wrote a one-woman play about Quirini's relationship with Welch entitled *Helen and Jack*.

During her employment for GE, Quirini volunteered for non-union related causes. She joined the YWCA of Schenectady in 1943 and eventually became its president. Through her United Way work with Local 301, she began working with the Refreshing Springs Child Day Care alongside her friend Reverend Georgetta Dix in 1970, where her varied executive duties lasted until 1987.

Quirini continued her activism during her retirement by volunteering for the rights and benefits of seniors and community causes in Schenectady County. She was a member or director of a wide variety

of civic and labor organizations, including: the American Association of Retired Persons Chapter 490, Better Neighborhoods Inc., Citizens for Preservation and Revitalization, Human Services Planning Council's Aging Committee, IUE Local 301 Retirees Council, New York State Wide Senior Action Council, Schenectady Council of Senior Citizens, Schenectady County Committee on Health Care Issues, Schenectady County Council of Child Day Care Centers, and Schenectady County Human Rights Commission.

Quirini also was the recipient of many awards. She received the United Way Joseph A. Beirne Award, the YWCA of Schenectady Jefferson Award and the General Electric Gerald L. Phillippe Award. She also received the Patroon award, the highest honor given by the City of Schenectady. Series 1 contains many more awards and related material.

Selections from *Helen Quirini and General Electric: A Personal Memoir of World War II* are made available online through the University at Albany Department of History's History and Media Initiatives website and a copy of the full memoir is found in Series 1.

Quirini also appeared in other publications about unions, women and community activists. Her work for GE retirees garnered her and the pension cause coverage in major newspapers and magazines across the country. In the 1990s, the Schenectady General Electric in the 20th Century Project extensively interviewed Quirini and different periods of her life are documented in articles and student research papers, many of which are available in the collection.

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Scope and Contents

This collection documents the life, work and activism of Helen Quirini of Schenectady, New York. The collection represents Quirini's numerous activities and interests including her early work owning a local market with her brother, her 39 year employment for General Electric, her activism in unions during her employment and retirement, as well as her charitable activities where she pursued civil, housing, pension, women's and senior citizen's rights.

The M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives received this collection through multiple donations. Helen Quirini donated material over approximately 10 years and her nephew Rudy Quirini donated the final materials following Helen Quirini's death in 2010. Many of the papers lacked original order and therefore archivists needed to impose order throughout the collection. Archivists created the series structure to represent Quirini's personal life, employment, labor union work and activism. She held many executive board positions after her retirement and remained an active volunteer and labor rights activist until her death. There is occasional overlap between topics and series such as senior citizens (Series 6, Subseries 5) and pension rights (found in General Electric Series 5).

Quirini spent nearly her entire life in Schenectady, New York. This collection offers a perspective into industrial work during World War II and the life of a female union activist in the mid-20th Century through photographs, diary entries, labor union literature, grievance reports Quirini filed and labor union convention materials. The collection documents the workings of various local organizations through

meeting minutes, budgets, correspondence, publications, by-laws, treasurer's reports and other internal documents. Quirini also worked for local chapters of larger organizations. Quirini was active in her local community and corresponded with State and National legislators about a variety of topics, including day care services, labor unions, local government, Schenectady County development, senior citizens' issues and more.

Quirini maintained extensive subject files with clippings, articles, photographs and reports. Also available are collections of publications and newsletters from relevant organizations, such as UE and IUE publications and the New York State Wide Senior Action Council's newsletter.

The audiovisual portion of this collection includes audio and video cassettes, DVDs, CDs, reel-to-reel tapes, 8mm film and 45 RPM record singles.

Please note that not all dates are inclusive.

Related collections in the Department of Special Collections and Archives include the records of IUE-CWA Local 301 (APAP-023), Ralph Boyd Papers (APAP-165, Helen Quirini's friend and fellow advocate for the rights of GE Retirees), Associated Industries of New York State, Inc. (APAP-043), and the New York State Wide Senior Action Council (APAP-111). Issues of the newspapers of Local 301 are available in microfilm, paper, and electronic format in the records of IUE-CWA Local 301 (APAP-023) including special Local 301 publications from the 1966 and 1969 strikes.

Quirini deposited various materials at other repositories including the: Schenectady Public Library (material related to Georgetta Dix) and the NYU Tamiment Libraries and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives. Her nephew Rudolph Quirini also donated materials to the Grems-Doolittle Library at the Schenectady County Historical Society.

Reproductions of items from this collection are available in the exhibit Documenting Labor Inside and Out: Labor History in New York State's Capital District.

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Arrangement of the Collection

The collection is organized into the following series:

- 1 **Series 1 - Biographical, 1940-2010, Undated**
- 2 **Series 2 - Work, Union and Politics, 1933-2007, Undated**
- 3 **Series 3 - Women and Work, 1942-2009, Undated**
- 4 **Series 4 - Labor Newspapers, 1917-1987**
- 5 **Series 5 - General Electric, 1918-2010, Undated**
- 6 **Series 6 - Community Activism, 1898-2010, Undated**
- 7 Subseries 1 - Human Rights, 1952-2005, Undated
- 8 Subseries 2 - YWCA, 1898-2009, Undated
- 9 Subseries 3 - Day Care, 1953-2005, Undated

- 10 Subseries 4 - Schenectady County Development and Consumerism, 1969-2007, Undated
- 11 Subseries 5 - Senior Citizens, 1972-2010, Undated
- 12 Subseries 6 - Human Services, 1970-2009, Undated
- 13 Subseries 7 - United Way, 1963-2008, Undated
- 14 Subseries 8 - Health Care, 1969-2009, Undated

All series, including the subseries in series six, are arranged alphabetically except for series four, Labor Newspapers, which is arranged chronologically by publication.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

Revision Description

This collection was further processed and the arrangement further updated by Katie Quinn and Brian Keough This collection was further processed and the arrangement further updated by Joshua Hauck Whealton This collection was further processed and the arrangement further updated by Devin Lander This collection was further processed and the arrangement further updated by Samuel Braden, Jodi Boyle, Katherine Demetri and Kathleen Broeder Development of an EAD finding aid by Melissa McMullen. Encoded in EAD by Melissa McMullen 2004 March 2005 December 2007 June 2012 October 2013 2013

Processing Information

Initially processed in 2001 by Katie Quinn and Brian Keough. The collection was revised in 2004; revised in 2005 by Joshua Hauck-Whealton; revised in 2007 by Devin Lander; and revised in 2012-2013 by Samuel Braden, Jodi Boyle, Katherine Demetri, Melissa, McMullen, and Kathleen Broeder.

Access

Access to this record group is unrestricted with the exception of a small number of select folders marked below.

Copyright

The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming with the laws of copyright. Whenever possible, the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives will provide information about copyright owners and other restrictions, but the legal determination ultimately

rests with the researcher. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

Acquisition Information

All items in this manuscript group were donated to the University Libraries, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, by Helen Quirini in conjunction with the University at Albany, SUNY Department of History's Schenectady General Electric in the Twentieth Century Project in November 1999. Additional accessions of records were received from Quirini in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006. After Quirini's death in 2010 her nephew, Rudolph Quirini, donated additional materials.

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Related Materials

Separated Materials

Archivists transferred two monographs *Proceedings: Sixth Annual Convention of the International Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers- CIO* and *Proceedings: Seventh Annual Convention of the International Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers- CIO* to the book division of Special Collections. The catalog records for the monograph will be included in the University Library Catalog.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Women
- Social Activists and Public Advocates
- Senior Citizens
- Schenectady, New York
- Medicine and Health Care
- Labor
- African Americans and Civil Rights Organizations
- Women in community organization--United States
- Community organization--New York (State) --Schenectady
- Pensions--Cost-of-living adjustments--United States
- Retirees--New York (State)--Finance, Personal

- Labor union locals--New York (State)
- Labor union meetings--New York (State)
- Labor union members--New York (State)
- Labor unions--Recognition--New York (State)
- Labor unions and communism--New York (State)
- Women labor union members--New York (State)
- Strikes and lockouts--New York (State)
- Older people--New York (State)
- Memorabilia
- Photographs
- Testimonies
- Speeches
- Serials (publications)
- Financial Records
- Histories
- Diaries
- Awards
- Contracts
- Audiocassettes
- Videocassettes
- Quirini, Helen--1920-2010
- Welch, Jack, 1935-
- United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America
- International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine, and Furniture Workers
- Coalition of Labor Union Women (U.S.)
- Labor Union Democracy--United States
- New York State-wide Senior Action Council
- Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
- New York (State--Public Service Commission)

Collection Inventory

Biographical, 1940-2010Undated

Physical Description: 5.2 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents

This series includes material about Helen Quirini's life and achievements. This series has correspondence, awards and certificates, newspaper articles by and about Quirini and her activism, letters of recommendation, theses, interview transcripts, diaries of her time on the shop floor at General Electric, her memoir, photographs, ephemera and more. This series covers the entirety of Quirini's life and work starting with the Brother Sister Cash Market where she worked with her brother in the late 1930s and early 1940s, her 39 years working at General Electric

and then her post-retirement activism. The original order, titling and folder contents were preserved wherever possible. Quirini received a variety of national awards including the Beirne Award from the United Way and the Phillippe Award from General Electric. She also received local accolades such as the Patroon award in her hometown of Schenectady, New York. Included in the award folders are nomination materials, letters of recommendation, resumes, related materials and the awards themselves. This series contains extensive correspondence regarding Quirini's personal life, employment, activism and fundraising. There also are many VHS cassettes of Schenectady City Council meetings which Quirini attended as a citizen. Series 1 covers her activism, awards and achievements as both the subject and author of newspaper articles. Several students also corresponded with Quirini and wrote about her in papers and masters theses. Scholarly publications which predominantly feature Quirini are located in this series. Please see Series 2 and Series 3 for other scholarly writings about unions in general, Local 301 or General Electric.

Title/Description	Instances	
Andy William, Undated	Reel 1	
Assorted Material Written by Helen Quirini, 1944-1975Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 1
Awards and Certificates, 1945-2008	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 2
Awards- Assorted Letters of Recommendation and Clippings, 1972-1973197519771987Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 3
Awards- Honors and Related Correspondence, 1971-2005	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 4
Awards- Letter of Recommendation, Certificates and Accolades, 19451988Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 5
Awards- Materials Related to Nomination and Acceptance, 1948-1990Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 6
Awards- Notification Material, 1970-2006Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 7
Bat-time to 20, Art Linkletter, Kids, Quartet Old Songs, Undated	Reel 2	
Bennington Center, Mary Stephanie Hart, 1998 August 23	Video-Tape 1	
Bennington Center, Quirini Talks, 1998 August 22	Video-Tape 2	
Beirne Award, 1970-1978198019872005-2007Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 8
Beirne Award, 1976-1978Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 9
Beirne Award, 1977-1978Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 10
Beirne Community Service Award, 1987	Video-Tape 3	
Beirne Award-Contents of Scrapbook, 19771978Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 11
Beirne Award-Correspondence, 1973-19771977-1978Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 12
Bierne Award Coverage in <i>IUE News</i> , 1978	Oversized 3	Folder 1

Beirne Award, Dinner at Hunts, Detroit, 1978	Film 2	
Beirne Award-Related Publicity and Notification, Acceptance Speech, Photos, 1977-19781987Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 13
Bill May, Undated	Film 1	
Bloom Where You are Planted, Undated	Cassette 1	
Boat Trip with Rhoda, 20042005	DVD 1	
Bob's Pics, 2005	CD 1	
Boyd, Ralph-Correspondence, 200420062008-2009	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 14
Bread and Roses Certificate, 1987	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 15
Brother and Sister Cash Market, 1940	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 16
Brother and Sister Cash Market Advertisements, 1940	Oversized 1	Folder 1
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Catholic Charities of Schenectady County - Award and Silent Auction Event, 2008Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 17
Central Labor Council Award, 1990	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 18
Certificates, 1974-2009Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 19
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City Council Meeting, 1998 August 25	Video-Tape 4	
City Council Meeting, 1998 November 16	Video-Tape 5	
City Council Meeting, 1998 November 23	Video-Tape 6	
City Council Meeting, 1998 December 28	Video-Tape 7	
City Council Meeting, 1999 November 09-1999 November 10	Video-Tape 8	
City Council Meeting, 1999 March 09	Video-Tape 9	
City Council Meeting, 1999 April 12	Video-Tape 10	
City Council Meeting, 1999 July 12	Video-Tape 11	
City Council Meeting, 1999 July 26	Video-Tape 12	
City Council Meeting, 1999 August 09		

	Video-Tape 13	
City Council Meeting, 1999 October 25	Video-Tape 14	
City Council Meeting, 1999 December 13	Video-Tape 15	
City Council Meeting, 2000 April 24	Video-Tape 16	
City Council Meeting, 2000 June 13	Video-Tape 17	
City Council Meeting, 2000 July 10	Video-Tape 18	
City Council Meeting, 2000 July	Video-Tape 19	
City Council Meeting, 2000 August 14	Video-Tape 20	
City Council Meeting, 2000 August 28	Video-Tape 21	
City Council Meeting, 2000 November 14	Video-Tape 22	
City Council Meeting, 2002 February 11	Video-Tape 23	
City Council Meeting, 2004 February 23	Video-Tape 24	
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Clippings about Helen Quirini, 1946-2009Undated	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 21
Clippings about the Quirini Family, 1953196719691975Undated	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 22
Clippings by and about Helen Quirini, 1975-1976198119871990-19972003-2005	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 23
Clippings-Congressional Record Article, 1970 May	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 24
Clippings-Regarding Awards and Honors, 19681974-19781990Undated	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 25
Clippings about World War II, Helen Quirini and GE, 1944-1945		

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Community Activism-Lists of Accomplishments, Correspondence including Letter of Recommendation and Congratulations, Clippings, 1967-2009Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 27
Correspondence, Incoming, 1945-2007Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 28
Correspondence, Incoming, 1954-1998Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 29
Correspondence, Outgoing, 19441954-1959197419781999	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 30
Correspondence Regarding the Achievements of Helen Quirini, 1971-197419841988Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 31
Correspondence with State and National Legislatures, 1983-19901992-1993Undated	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 32
County Meeting, 1999 August 01	Video-Tape 27	
County Meeting, 1999 November 09	Video-Tape 28	
County Meeting, 2000 February 14	Video-Tape 29	
County Meeting, 2000 March 14	Video-Tape 30	
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County Meeting, 2006 December	Video-Tape 32	
Credit Union Records, ca. 1960s	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 33
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Diaries-Shop Floor, 1946-1947	Box 1 (1-Biographical)	Folder 36
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Excerpts from Regional Conference, Undated	Reel 5	
Executive Sessions of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on the Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations, Volumes 1-5, 1953	CD 2	
Evelyn Birthday, 1960		

	Reel 6	
Frank Ducci, 1999	Video-Tape 34	
Friedan, Betty-Obituary, 2006	Box 1 (1- Biographical)	Folder 37
General Correspondence, 1954-198119831995-1996Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 1
Girzone, Joseph-Memorial Booklet and Clippings, 1973-2002Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 2
Goodbye to Hank, Undated	DVD 2	
Grad RSDC, Undated	Film 3	
Graduation Certificate, 1945 June 25	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 3
Helen, A Lifetime of Deeds, Undated	CD 3	
Helen Party, 1980 May 17	Cassette 2	
<i>Helen Quirini and General Electric: A Personal Memoir of World War II</i> , 19912001Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 4-5
Helen Quirini Autobiography, Conversations in Car, Lisa Kanneberg, 1991	Cassette 3	
Helen Qurini Interview, Channel 17, 1994 September	Video-Tape 35	
Helen Quirini Interview by Lisa Kanneberg, 1991 February 01	Cassette 4-5	
Helen Quirini Interview by Lisa Kanneberg, 1991 February 02	Cassette 6	
Helen Quirini Interview by Lisa Kanneberg, 1991 February 03	Cassette 7	
Helen Quirini Interview by Lisa Kanneberg, 1991 December 06	Cassette 8-9	
Helen Qurini, James Carrey, Gerald Zahavi, and Elizabeth Griffin, 1992 February 27	Cassette 10	
History 101 Class, Zahavi/SUNYA, 2004 November 08	Video-Tape 36	
History 101 Presentation Images, 2004 November 08	CD 4	
Homefront and Warfront, Remembering WWII, Undated	Video-Tape 37	
Honors-Letters in Support of, Lists of Activities and Awards, etc., 1967-2006	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 6
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Interview with Quirini on WWII, Undated	DVD 3	
Interview Helen Qurini, WWII Civilian, Latham Armory, 2004 August	Video-Tape 38	

Interview with Helen Qurini on WWII, Latham Armory, 2004 August 31	DVD 4	
Interview with Professor Gerald Zahavi in History 101 at SUNY Albany, 2004Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 7
Interview with Professor Gerald Zahavi: Unedited Transcript, Drafts, 19821991	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 8
Jefferson Award, 19701981-1982Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 9
Johnson, Karen-Mayor of Schenectady, 1978-2010Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 10
Kannenberg, Lisa <i>From World War to Cold War: Women Electrical Workers and their Union, 1940-1955</i>	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 11
Kannenberg, Lisa <i>The Paradoxical Impact of the Cold War on Women's Trade Union Activism: The IUE Experience, 19911993</i>	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 12
Kannenberg, Lisa, Thesis with Chapters about Helen Quirini, 1990-19912007Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 13
Kannenberg, Lisa <i>"To Bloom where you are Planted": The Working Class Feminism of Helen Quirini, 1990-1992Undated</i>	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 14
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League of Women Voters- Membership Information, Bulletins, Correspondence, 2003-20052008-2009Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 16
League of Women Voters- Susan B. Anthony Award, 2003Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 17
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Moynihan, Daniel Patrick- Correspondence, 1982-19871990	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 18
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My Interview, WWII, Undated	Video-Tape 39	
My Movie Dream, Qurini Family, Undated	Video-Tape 40	
News Parade, Castle Films, Undated	Film 6	
Nomination for Human Rights Award, Undated	Box 2 (1- Biographical)	Folder 19
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Phillipe Award, 1971-1977Undated	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 21
Phillipe Award- Letters of Support, 1972-1975Undated	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 22
Phillipe Award Submission Album, 1975	Oversized 2	Folder 1
Photographs of Helen Quirini and Assorted Others, 1954Undated	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 23
Postcards Depicting Upstate N.Y. and the General Electric Building in Schenectady, Undated	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 24
Quirini all 8s, Undated	Film 7	
Red, Ricky, and Mike, Undated	Reel 8	
Reiki Certifications and Correspondence, 1994199619992001Undated	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 25
Retirement Party, 2008 October 02	DVD 5	
Rozendaal, Kay-News Clippings, Correspondence, Memorial Booklet, 1991-19922002	Box 2 (1-Biographical)	Folder 26
Rudy Grad, My Topper Boat, Karl-Snooky Betty, Undated	Film 8	
Russel Sage, Miller and Quirini Discuss WWII, 1992 September 16	Cassette 12	
Sadie Fernandez, 1998 January 22	Cassette 13	
Schenectady Today, 1998 October 01	Video-Tape 42	
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Schenectady Today, 2008 March 20	DVD 7	
Schenectady Today, 2008 October 08	DVD 8	
Schenectady Today, 2010 March 11	DVD 9	
Schenectady Today, 2009 December 30	DVD 10	
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Sears, Ben-"The Schenectady Switch" Chapter Regarding GE, Correspondence with Helen Quirini, 2005-2007	Box 3 (1-Biographical)	Folder 1
<i>Secret Love</i> produced by Helen Quirini, Undated	Phonograph-Record 1	
Side I, Finish 4th Meeting, Undated	Reel 12	
Skidmore, Emily <i>Making "Room for Many Worlds"</i> , 2004-2005	Box 3 (1-Biographical)	Folder 2
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Willison, Malcolm-Proofread Memoir Draft and Related Correspondence, 1995-2008	Box 3 (1-Biographical)	Folder 10
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Work, Union and Politics, 1933-2007Undated

Physical Description: 9.9 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents

This series documents Helen Quirini's extensive union activities through her membership in Local 301. When Quirini joined this local it was affiliated with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE). During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the federal government kept UE leadership and its members under surveillance because of suspected Communist ties. In his aggressive investigations of accused Communists, Senator Joseph McCarthy, chairman of the Committee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations, subpoenaed Quirini and she was one of many members of the UE to testify in a pre-hearing before Congress in February 1954. She swore under oath that she was not and had never been a member of the Communist Party. Citing these supposed Communist connections, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) expelled the UE in 1949 and replaced it with the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (IUE). During subsequent years many UE locals elected to join the IUE, including Local 301 in June 1954. This series features materials related to all of the aforementioned events, including Quirini's subpoena, anti-McCarthy literature issued by unions, Quirini's surveillance files and a significant amount of propaganda from both unions issued before Local 301's vote to join the IUE.

Quirini was very outspoken about issues affecting business and politics. During the UE/IUE switch, she was the only executive board member of Local 301 to oppose the move. A personal statement in the files explains her reasoning and disappointment with her subsequent treatment from fellow members of Local 301. Her many grievances in this series illustrate her advocacy for greater equality for women in the workplace and better working conditions for all employees. She retained many news clippings and materials discussing strikes she participated in at General Electric in the late 1960s and 1970.

Quirini served her union during both the UE and IUE periods in many capacities, the extent of which is documented in this series through correspondence, reports, financials and other Local 301 business documents, conference proceedings, contracts, election campaign materials, newspaper clippings, photographs and notes. She held elected positions in Local 301 from the 1940s through the 1970s. Quirini was first elected secretary in 1947, and later served as treasurer and a shop steward. Her committee work included service on the social action, education and human relations committees. She attended union meetings and conferences and played for Local 301 women's basketball and championship softball teams when a young woman.

In addition to her direct union involvement, Quirini engaged in several related projects. As an active and then a retired member of Local 301, she was a delegate to the Schenectady Area Central Labor Council and attended meetings. In addition to meeting minutes, reports and correspondence, there are papers documenting the education

program about labor for Schenectady public schools that Quirini created as chair of the Council's education committee, in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

As a labor representative, Quirini also served on the Schenectady Private Industry Council (PIC), part of the Capital Area PIC and was active from 1981 through 1993. The related files in this series record the organization's duties under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982. The organization tried to implement JTPA through coordination and planning with business (small, large, minority), labor, and other concerned groups and ultimately provide employment and training for displaced or underprivileged job seekers and research and job-ready employees to private industry. PIC files include the internal documents of the Capital Region and Schenectady County PIC, such as meeting minutes, proposals, memorandums and correspondence, as well as documents relating directly to the JTPA legislation.

Researchers also will find general labor literature from the AFL-CIO, UE, IUE and other organizations in the series.

Please see Series 3 for more specific information on women's rights and representation in the workplace and the union and Series 5 for materials detailing Quirini's ongoing efforts to secure better rights and cost-of-living allowances for GE retirees, including those from Local 301. Researchers also should consult the finding aid for Local 301's records, APAP-023.

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Women and Work, 1942-2009Undated

Physical Description: 2.9 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents

This series deals with the specific issue of women's rights and representation in the workplace and union. It contains significant materials, including correspondence, agendas, resolutions and news clippings, about UE and IUE women's conferences (both national and regional), educational programs and committees. Helen Quirini attended and spoke at many of these events and her handwritten notes are often included among the materials. Subject files discuss such topics as equal pay for equal work, automation, pay rates and the Equal Rights Amendment. There are files with records from speaking events featuring Quirini, Quirini's notes from the shop floor on the treatment of women and her later writings about the discrimination she encountered at General Electric as a female employee. In addition, there is UE, IUE, AFL-CIO and U.S. Department of Labor literature on women workers collected by Quirini.

Quirini was active in the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). She attended its founding conference in Chicago in 1974 and many subsequent national conferences and was involved in its Capital District chapter during the 1980s. The nonpartisan CLUW brought together women from various trade unions to address shared concerns to common problems. It remains the only national organization for women workers in the United States.

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Women's Anticipated Earning Rate Case, 1947Undated	Box 3 (3-Women and Work)	Folder 11
Women's Conference, 1950	Video-Tape 63	
Women's History Month, Shirley Chisolm, 1988 March	Video-Tape 64	
Women's Rights, Women Won't Take No for an Answer, Undated	CD 9	
Women's Suffrage, Undated	Video-Tape 65	
UE Women's Leadership Roundtable, 2003 August 26	Video-Tape 66	
Young, Ruth, 19432004Undated	Box 3 (3-Women and Work)	Folder 12

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Labor Newspapers, 1917-1987Undated

Physical Description: 3.2 cubic ft. plus 9 microfilm reels

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically by publication.

Scope and Contents

This series contains both labor union and General Electric newspapers collected by Helen Quirini while employed at General Electric and during her retirement. The newspapers include publications of other local unions, regional groups and national organizations. Newspaper clippings about or mentioning Quirini as well as articles discussing key topics like the IUE/UE split, strikes and McCarthyism may be found in Series 2. Clippings about pension rights and retiree demonstrations may be found in Series 5.

Issues of UE Local 301 News and IUE Local 301 News, the newspapers of Local 301, are available in microfilm, paper and electronic format in the records of IUE Local 301, APAP-023.

Title/Description	Instances	
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1917 January-1922 March 02	Microfilm	1
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1922 January 06-1925 June 19	Microfilm	2
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1925 July 03-1928 March 16	Microfilm	3
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1928 April 06-1929 December 20	Microfilm	4
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1930 January 03-1939 December 29	Microfilm	5
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1940 January 05-1944 December 29	Microfilm	6
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1945 January 05-1950 December 29	Microfilm	7
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1951 January 05-1954 December 17	Microfilm	8
<i>General Electric Works News</i> , 1955 January 07-1960 December 22	Microfilm	9
<i>UE News, Local 201</i> , Lynn, Massachusetts, 1953	Oversized 9	Folder 1
<i>Union News; Erie</i> Erie, Pennsylvania, 1954	Oversized 9	Folder 2
<i>UE Local 107 News</i> , 1954	Oversized 9	Folder 3
<i>General Electric News</i> Schenectady, New York. Originals, 19531958-19601966-19711973-19831986-1987	Oversized 9	Folder 4
<i>District Three Leader</i> , 1968-19711973-19761978-1985	Oversized 10	Folder 1
<i>AFL-CIO News</i> , 197019751978-1982	Oversized 11	Folder 1
<i>Capitol Area Labor News</i> , 1968-197119731975	Oversized 11	Folder 2
<i>UE News (National)</i> , 1971 September 15-1971 October 18	Oversized 12	Folder 1
<i>UE News (National)</i> , 1972 June 26-1975 December 15	Oversized 13	Folder 1
<i>UE News (National)</i> , 1976 January 05-1977 December 05	Oversized 14	Folder 1
<i>UE News (National)</i> , 1978 January 09-1979 December 03	Oversized 15	Folder 1
<i>UE News (National)</i> , 1980 January 07-1982 September 13	Oversized 16	Folder 1

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General Electric, 1918-2007Undated

Physical Description: 6.88 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents

This series contains a wide variety of materials pertaining to General Electric, especially its operations in Schenectady where Helen Quirini worked from 1941 until 1980. There are files related to GE's corporate and administrative operations, such as annual reports and benefits information, materials illustrating Quirini's participation in the GE Athletic Association and her work with the Share Fund, and a scrapbook created by Quirini of the history of GE in Schenectady. Of interest to researchers may be files addressing work at GE during World War II, materials from the GE Apprentice Alumni Association and publications issued by GE.

A significant number of files discuss GE retirees and their fights to secure better pensions, especially cost-of-living allowances. As a president and member of the Local 301 Retirees Council and a founding member of the GE Retirees Justice Fund, Quirini was active and extremely outspoken for the rights of retirees during the last 30 years of her life. This series documents her efforts in this fight, including picketing at GE offices and annual meetings, organizing rallies, introducing shareholder proposals and addressing GE executives at the annual meeting, corresponding with Jack Welch and Jeffrey Immelt during their respective tenures as chairman of the board and chief executive officer of GE and conducting media outreach. As a result, she was featured in many news articles and playwright Gail George created a one woman show in 1999 about Quirini's struggles for retiree rights with GE management, entitled Helen and Jack. There are several folders about the play Helen and Jack. Correspondence documenting Quirini's friendship with George as well as video of George's performances also are in the series.

This series features correspondence, news clippings, photographs, subject files, pamphlets, pay stubs, reports, background materials, manuals, speeches, audio/video, news releases and media advisories.

Please see Series 2 and 3 for more information about Quirini's labor union experiences while working at GE.

Title/Description	Instances	
2 Day Strike over Health, 2003	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 1
13th Pension Check, 2003	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 2
40th Anniversary Celebration, Schenectady Works Apprentice Alumni Association, 1941	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 3
60th Anniversary Celebration, Schenectady GE Apprentice Alumni Association, 1973	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 4
70th Anniversary Celebration, Schenectady GE Apprentice Alumni Association, 1983	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 5
A.C. Stevens Letter re: Work Stoppage, 1956 September 20	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 6
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AFL-CIO Retirees, 1986Undated		

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Annual Meeting, Agenda, Report and Notes, 20002008	Box 1 (5- General Electric)	Folder 8
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CDC Retiree Leadership Meeting, 2007 March 15	DVD 17	
City and State Resolutions about Pensions, Layoffs and GE, 19541986-2004Undated	Box 2 (5- General Electric)	Folder 15
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Gail George Talks about Communicating through Performance Art, Undated	Video-Tape 71	
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Community Activism, 1898-2010Undated

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically within each subseries.

Scope and Contents

This series includes records collected and created by Helen Quirini that document her involvement in numerous issues and community organizations. The material in this series is divided into eight subseries and includes meeting minutes, agendas, financial information, news clippings, reports, correspondence, newsletters and other publications, notes, pamphlets, brochures, conference materials, fact sheets and photographs.

Human Rights, 1967-2005 Undated

Physical Description: 3.19 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This subseries documents Schenectady County's Human Rights Committee and its day-to-day activities, as well as learning materials developed by the group for the community. The subseries contains agendas, annual reports, minutes, news clippings, magazines, pamphlets and booklets. It features materials on the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration, the March 19th Coalition and information on other coalitions that combated racism. Included in this subseries are the 1972 Mont Pleasant High School hearings, during which Helen Quirini questioned students at her alma mater about escalating racial tension.

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YWCA, 1898-2009 Undated

Physical Description: 3.24 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

Helen Quirini joined the Schenectady YWCA in 1943 and later became one of its strongest advocates. She went on to serve on the board of directors and was elected president in 1979. This subseries contains materials illustrating the YWCA's day-to-day activities and its contributions to the community. The subseries consists of agendas, minutes, newsletters, magazines and flyers. It also features pamphlets on domestic violence, racism, feminism and equality as well as information on the YWCA-run battered women's shelter in Schenectady.

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Day Care, 1953-2005Undated

Physical Description: 2.04 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

Despite not having children of her own, Helen Quirini was very involved in Schenectady County day care. She originally represented labor on the Child Care Coordinating Council during World War II. She chaired the Schenectady County Child Care Council and was also a board member of the New York State Child Care Coordinating Council. She worked directly with day care centers such as the Christ Church Day Care center and the Refreshing Springs Day Care where she was an administrator alongside her longtime friend Reverend Georgetta Dix, who founded and ran the center.

Subseries 3 includes administrative materials like internal correspondence, budget material, clippings, frequent correspondence with the Schenectady Department of Social Services' Commissioner Richard Staszak, informational packets, proposed legislation and meeting minutes from multiple organizations, including the Schenectady Child Care Council, Schenectady Day Care Council and the Early Childhood Task Force. Budget and financing information is the primary focus of the internal documents including Title XX and other State or Federal funding institutions. Information regarding establishing or finding a day care center, funding and entitlement, event programs, transcripts of spoken testimonies and conference materials are also present in this subseries.

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Schenectady County Development and Consumerism, 1969-2007Undated

Physical Description: 1.88 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

The materials in this subseries concern housing, energy and development in Schenectady County. Some materials were gathered by Helen Quirini in response to development plans by the Metroplex Development Authority

in Schenectady County, Industrial Development Agencies (IDA) and Schenectady Economic Development Corporation (SEDC). Metroplex was created in 1998 to coordinate economic development activities. Several of Metroplex's proposals met with resistance from the public, including the proposal to tear down the Gazette Building on State and Broadway and replace it with a new Department of Transportation office building. Quirini, with others from Preserve Schenectady's Future, filed a lawsuit to save the Gazette Building. Citizens for Preservation and Revitalization (CPR) and the March 19th Coalition were organizations formed in opposition to Metroplex and its proposals. In 2002, the Glenville Energy Park was proposed and Citizens Advocating Responsible Development (CARD) petitioned against it. Quirini gathered other materials as part of activities with consumer advocacy groups. She joined Better Neighborhoods Inc. in 1971, was elected to the board in 1981 and served as president from 1984-1986. She also served on the Consumer Advisory Council of Niagara Mohawk in the late 1980s.

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Senior Citizens, 1972-2010Undated

Physical Description: 4.53 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

During her retirement, Helen Quirini was extremely active in many organizations for senior citizens on local, statewide and national levels. In addition to work on behalf of the GE Retirees, she served for many years as president of Chapter 490 (Schenectady County) of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and as

president of the Schenectady County Council of Senior Organizations. The files contain meeting minutes, events materials, financial records, correspondence, newsletters and petitions from these two groups.

Her participation in the Schenectady County Council of Senior Organizations led in 1987 to her involvement with the StateWide Senior Action Council. Quirini served as an at-large board member and later as treasurer of StateWide. She received the Rose Kryzak Advocacy Award as a leader on public policy issues, both locally and statewide. A grassroots organization composed of individual senior citizens and senior citizen clubs from across New York, StateWide is involved in legislative issues and campaigned against Medicare cuts and mandatory retirements. The group fought for pharmaceutical insurance for the elderly, assistance for seniors with utility payments and greater protection of hospital patient rights. The files reflect StateWide's advocacy activities and feature testimony, including Quirini's, before legislative panels and materials from an annual Grassroots Senior Citizens Day which encouraged seniors to come to Albany to meet with elected representatives. There also are board meeting minutes, correspondence, convention booklets and materials from Quirini's local chapter of the organization.

Quirini also joined the Public Service Commission's Albany Area Senior Citizen Advisory Council in the mid-1980s. This group advised on customer expectations and utility needs from a senior's perspective. One of key recurring issues was the increasing costs of telephone service. In 1992 this Advisory Council joined with other special needs consumer groups to form the Public Service Commission's Capital District Utility Consumer Advisory Council. Quirini remained on this newly formed Council until at least 1993. Agendas, meeting minutes, notes, correspondence and reports from Quirini's tenure on both Councils are present.

In addition to her work with area organizations, Quirini also became involved in national issues most relevant to seniors. Quirini fought for the repeal of the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988 which she argued had modest benefits and would burden elder Medicare recipients with extra costs and taxes. Quirini chaired mass informational meetings of area seniors groups to discuss the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act in 1988 and 1989. These featured state and local legislators, individual seniors and leaders of senior citizen groups as speakers. Notes, speeches, photographs and flyers from these events and general background materials about the legislation are in this series.

The IUE nominated Quirini to attend the New York State Governor's Conference on Aging in March 1995. She subsequently served as part of the New York delegation to the White House Conference on Aging held in May 1995. This series features materials from both conferences, including official reports and resolutions as well as Quirini's correspondence and notes.

Other items of interest in this series are pamphlets written by Quirini on a variety of issues affecting seniors and materials about the Social Security Notch provision which affected benefits paid to individuals, like Quirini, born between 1917 and 1921.

Please see Series 5 for materials related to Quirini's work with the GE Retirees on behalf of pension reform.

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Human Services, 1970-2009 Undated

Physical Description: 2.26 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains documents from different social service and relief organizations in Schenectady County. These include the Human Services Planning Council, the Schenectady Friends of Human Services, the Youth Employment Services Committee, and Quest. It documents their day-to-day activities as well as their contributions to the community. The subseries contains agendas, annual reports, by-laws, correspondence, financials, meeting minutes, news clippings, pamphlets, and reports. It includes information on social service, job referral in the Schenectady area, as well as each organization's efforts to help members of the Schenectady community. It also

contains information on Judy Atchinson, a prominent member of Quest who wrote consistently in her blog, which is included in the subseries. Helen Quirini was active with these organizations during her retirement and kept up-to-date with these committees until 2009.

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United Way, 1963-2008Undated

Physical Description: 1.67 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

Helen Quirini was active with the United Way for several decades, both through Local 301 and during her retirement. This subseries documents United Way's day-to-day activities and its contributions to Schenectady and nearby areas. It contains agendas, meeting minutes, allocations, financials, fund distribution materials, newsletters, magazines, flyers, and pamphlets. It also features information on the Joseph A. Beirne Community Services Award, which Quirini received in 1978. The subseries includes Quirini's handwritten notes and her personal binders. There is also information on United Way's executive committee and the group Concerned Citizens for a Fair and Inclusive United Way.

Please see Series 1 for more information on the Beirne Award and Quirini's other awards and commendations.

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Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This subseries is composed of materials produced and collected by Helen Quirini during her work with a number of organizations on the issues of health care and health care reform. It features correspondence, news clippings, publications, meeting agendas and minutes, reports and subject files. One organization documented in this subseries is the Health Systems Agency of Northeastern New York (HSA/NENY). Quirini served on its board of directors for many years beginning in the late 1970s. Established by Congress during the Gerald Ford administration, HSA/NENY was one of eight agencies in New York created to control rising health care costs. The materials for HSA/NENY were frequently shipped in bundles in preparation for upcoming meetings and much of the material in this subseries has been maintained in that order. Other organizations documented in the subseries include the Schenectady County Committee on Health Care Issues, an advocacy organization for quality regional health care, and the Health Care Action Line, a help line started to assist people with questions about health care reach trained volunteers. The Berger Commission's recommendations to reform and restructure New York's health care became legal mandates on January 1, 2007. In Schenectady, St. Clare's Hospital, Bellevue Woman's Hospital, and Ellis Hospital were restructured or merged as a result. Quirini was very active in seeking to maintain high quality care in the community.

Please see Series 6, Subseries 5 for more information about senior citizens and health care.

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