Anthony Commissio
Title: President, Tuxego
Age: 45
Passion outside work: Helping others. This is the busiest time of the year for Anthony Commissio, owner of Tuxego, a formal-wear rental store in Latham. After all, it's prom and wedding season, and Commissio almost never has free time. He says his days are long and the work is nonstop.

But if you want to know the other side of Commissio, it's really about giving the little time that he does have to others. And he's done it his whole career.

A devout Catholic who is a parishioner of St. John The Evangelist church in Schenectady, Commissio joined the Knights of Columbus in 1989, two years after graduating from Siena College.

Commissio is well known for being a founding member and emcee for the Columbus Parade and Italian Festival of the City of Albany, which was started in 1992.

But his charitable work has been most deeply impacted by a near tragedy that happened when his wife gave birth to triplets in 2002. His infant son, Tony, had to be placed on life support and spent six months in the neonatal intensive care unit at Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center.

Tony is doing fine now, but those were difficult times for the Commissio family. Commissio and Tuxego have donated countless hours and dollars to Children's Hospital, and Commissio and his family appeared several times on the Children's Miracle Network Telethon to appeal for people to donate. Every year, Commissio goes back to the NICU at Albany Med to update a photo of his children in a collage that hangs on the wall that also shows when the three were born. Commissio says it’s meant as a sign of hope for parents who sit by their children in the hospital, waiting for them to get better. The Commissios now have four healthy children.

"What I wanted to do is show other parents that life existed. I decided I wanted to let people know that people do survive this," Commissio said.

Commissio's parents, Italian immigrants, ran Cosimo's Restaurant on Western Avenue while he was growing up. But after graduating from Siena with a history degree, Commissio started working in the formal-wear business for John Mearon, whom he calls a dear friend and mentor.

"He just gave me the opportunity," Commissio said. "He's helped many people. He's mentored many people."

Commissio is also giving back to the business community, and after more than a year of preparation launched the Society of Wedding and Event Planning Professionals of New York
in April.

Quote: "I always pay tribute to every doctor and every nurse that took care of (my son Tony). They saved his life."

-- Larry Rulison