



FALL 2024

# Caring for Friends

A Caring Community Filled with Caring People

## Chairman's Message

DEAR VALUED VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS

### **Celebrate 50 years of Caring & Help Support the Next 50!**

50 years ago Rita Ungaro-Schiavone made one meal for one homebound senior at our kitchen table. Rita knew that there were many Hidden-Hungry individuals unseen, in every neighborhood, rich and poor, in the Delaware valley. So Rita asked her friends, and neighbors to help find, cook meals for and deliver meals to our neighbors and friends in need. One simple act of kindness was supported by a few friends to form a Caring Community called Aid for Friends (now Caring for Friends). This organic neighbor to neighbor movement spread over time and distance to become the largest volunteer organization and the largest home meal program for seniors, the 5-county Greater Philadelphia.

There have been 50 years of caring, cooking, and visiting by over 100,000 volunteers from generations of families, faith and community groups, schools and scouts, and thousands of businesses have provided both "Food and Friendship" to hundreds of thousands of our friends in need. Because of Caring for Friends Volunteers and Donors, the seniors and homebound we served were changed and food insecurity and loneliness were no longer an issue.

In the beginning Aid for Friends was blessed to have attracted so many individuals, families, and organizations, who founded grew and sustained Caring for Friends to this day. It is quite an accomplishment to grow and sustain a volunteer charity organization for 50 years and we all should Celebrate-Together as One Caring for Friends Community. Since our community is so large in size and geography we are having two 50th anniversary events to celebrate.

The first is our 50th anniversary Party at Parx October 16, 2024. Parx Casino has been a Caring Community Partner for a number of years now. They have hosted our Volunteer Awards Breakfast for the past 2 years and have been our partner, and Title Sponsor of our Thanks-Giving Project that delivers over 20,000 Thanksgiving turkey dinner meals to our seniors across the region. To celebrate our 50th anniversary, Parx has generously donated use of their Beer Garden facility along with entertainment by Joe Conklin. The cost is \$75 for buffet dinner, beer and wine, as well as entertainment. It will be a fun evening for a good cause. **Please register online at [https://onecau.se/\\_623ek1](https://onecau.se/_623ek1)**

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**Volunteering  
TOGETHER**

**Giving  
TOGETHER**

**Caring  
TOGETHER**

*63% of senior households are forced to choose between food and medical care. They need us now more than ever!*

## **50th Anniversary Gala** Celebrate 50 Years of Caring for Friends

**Wednesday, Nov 13 - 6:30pm**

Join us for this 50th Anniversary Gala Event. Enjoy an evening of great food, connecting with old friends and new, and hearing about our plans for the next 50 years.



Event to be hosted by the Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova. Seating is limited. RSVP today. [https://onecau.se/\\_623b61](https://onecau.se/_623b61)



CARING FOR FRIENDS  
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Next is our Caring for Friends 50th Anniversary Gala will held November 13, 2024 at Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova. Located just off the blue route Overbrook hosts our Napa Supports Caring for Friends Wine Maker Dinners & Tasting events. The chefs and the staff always provide an exceptional food and wine experience. This is our first Gala since 2019 due to Covid so please help us restart this FUNdraising event for a good cause. **Please register online at [https://onecau.se/\\_623b61](https://onecau.se/_623b61).**

### **Making Caring for Friends Sustainable Today and For the Next 50 Years**

Every year since 1974, Caring for Friends has relied on financial support primarily from our Volunteers and Donors from within our community. It has always been a struggle to feed so many with so little. Our small Volunteer Support Staff is very dedicated and steps up time and again to get the job done. While we have been successful in receiving grants in past years for capital expenditures most of our need is for unrestricted funds to pay for packaging, utilities, gas, repairs, staff, and insurance. It has been very difficult since Covid drained our reserves to meet the needs of the community. Donations are always negatively impacted by summer, the economy, the stock market, and inflation. We need you now more than ever.

Our 50th Anniversary Goal is to make Caring for Friends financially sustainable today and then for the next 50 years. Please support our mission, our volunteers and our friends in need. Consider a one time 50th anniversary donation of \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000+ or and consider making it a monthly recurring donation to support throughout the year. There are tax advantages for donating appreciated stock, appreciated property, and appreciated wines, spirits, and collectables. Finally, please consider Caring for Friends in your Estate Planning and Will. You can designate your donation to remember a loved one or honor someone who supported you along the way. Donating as a family is a wonderful way to pass on our values to the next generation.

I want to thank everyone who is, or has been, a part of our Caring Community by volunteering and donating to Aid for Friends now Caring for Friends. Rita believed the more people involved in Caring the better our world would be. She knew that she could do little alone and that to meet the needs of the community would take a large Caring Community. Rita believed that "No one should be hungry or alone in a world of Caring People" Thank you for being Caring People.

Vince Schiavone, CEO (and Rita's son)

50th Anniversary sponsorship packages are available. Please contact Marti Berk for all donation opportunities or event questions at [mberk@caringforfriends.org](mailto:mberk@caringforfriends.org) or 267-874-2391.



## *The Blue Crew Makes 2600 Sandwiches* **Independence Blue Cross**

IBX has been a volunteer and donation partner with Caring for Friends for a while now. The Blue Crew concluded their Community Service Project with Caring for Friends this year. In September, hundreds of IBX employees, from across their many departments, came to the cafeteria in their beautiful building to make sandwiches.

What made this a remarkable event is that, not only did they produce thousands of sandwiches, but they also provided all the materials needed. Each staff member arrived with at least two loaves of bread. Throughout the party-like atmosphere, music was played, laughter rang out and the work got done. Many stayed past their allotted time slot. Participants were touched by stories of those who would be receiving their food items. Several expressed interest in coming up to the Northeast and participating on a hands-on volunteer shift in the kitchen.

The President and CEO Gregory Deavens made a cameo at the event to thank his employees and great Caring for Friends. In the end, a monetary donation was also made.

Is this something your company would be interested in doing? Reach out to Marti Berk at [mberk@caringforfriends.org](mailto:mberk@caringforfriends.org) to discuss a plan of support.



## Stories of Our Past

### It All Began with Minnie & Rita



50 years ago Rita met Minnie. Minnie lived a life of quiet desperation in her home in Frankfurt. She was blind and in a wheelchair and could not shop or cook. She was poor and could not afford to keep her heat on and kept it dangerously low. She was trying to support herself, her troubled daughter on her Medicare supplement. Like many seniors in her situation she chose to forgo her medicine and ate very little. When Rita visited her, her refrigerator was empty, her cupboards were bare, her place was cold and filthy.

Rita decided that she just met a new friend and was going to take care of her now, because no one else would. She went to the store, bought food, cleaned and cooked for Minnie, and then came home to her family. That night she started a family mission. Our family ate together every night (Rita was the mother of Vincent and Steven Schiavone). Each night as we sat down, there was an aluminum tray at the table. She explained that she met a new friend named Minnie. She was hungry and alone, with no one to take care of her, and not enough money to take care of herself. She explained that every night we're going to have a tray at our table, and we're going to feed Minnie. I'm going to put it in the freezer, and once a week I'm going to visit her, bring her food, and be her friend.

*Our Caring for Friends community of volunteers and supporters, have since taken care of tens of thousands of Minnies. We have made millions of meals in homes and in our caring kitchen and most importantly, we've become a source of hope, community and love for so many of our seniors, disabled and veterans who are hungry and alone.*

## Stories of Our Present

### The Herrin Family

"Caring for Friends came into my father's life after my mother passed away at the end of 2016. He found himself alone in Pennsylvania as I reside in Florida. Soon after my mother passed away my father set out to seek some help for himself and stumbled upon Caring for Friends. Initially when he told me about the service that was provided I was grateful that he would get some relief with meals for a little while after my mother's passing. What I did not expect was the longevity of the help that my father would receive in the years to follow.



Gary Ingersol was the the volunteer that began the food deliveries to my father and was someone who grew to be a friend to my father and cared for him more than just doing a drop off service of food. What Gary provided my father in addition to food, was companionship, kindness and someone to talk to. My father was isolated and very lonely (and refused to leave Philly move to Florida to be near my family). Over the years my father would mention Gary's visits and expressed appreciation of the service that Caring for Friends provided. He described the soups and the meals that supplemented his grocery shopping. The deliveries not only provided hot meals but also helped his budget, as he lived on only Social Security.

Gary continued delivering food until around 2021, when my father became too ill to remain in his home and entered assisted living. I even had the pleasure of meeting Gary and his wife when they attended my father's funeral in May of 2022. Overall, I cannot express enough the gratitude that I feel towards Caring for Friends and Gary's kindness. This organization will always hold a special place in my heart for the comfort that the food deliveries gave my ailing father." --Michelle Herrin



## Volunteer Danny Drake

Danny is special volunteer at Caring for Friends. He began work with us in January of 2024. He was searching online for food pantries after retiring early due to MS. What he found was Caring for Friends. Once at the office he noticed the many volunteers and inquired about getting involved. He spoke of his computer experience and the rest is history. Since January, Danny has been volunteering in the office several days a week. He was looking for a food pantry and instead found a family. The friendships with staff and volunteers alike have kept this man active, busy and with a feeling of accomplishment. Retirement can make for a long day for those used to being busy. Volunteering has made his days feel full.

*New Partner...A Mission with a Large Heart.*

## St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Deep in the heart of Frankford is a church called St. Mark's. This facility operates despite all the challenges thrown at it. The roof leaks, several areas are not usable due to disrepair and lack of funds to fix them. The official ministry is gone. Yet, this church continues to support its community the best it can.

St Marks houses a food pantry, a clothing closet, back pack drive for school, showers for homeless in need and various counseling services. It's patrons are homeless or in deep poverty. Most importantly, it provides twice weekly hot lunches.

At the heart of this mission is Cristina Mancini. Cristina's joy is infectious and she has created a home atmosphere for those without one. She called Caring for Friends one Monday after losing the food provider for her Wednesday meals. After hearing her story it became apparent that we would become partners immediately. Each Wednesday, Caring for Friends provides pans of hot food to be served to those in need. Participants are served, at tables, a balanced hot meal and are given "to go" boxes for use later.

Caring for Friends has been working with Rep. Joe Hohenstein to find additional ways to help this struggling group with the mission of feeding and clothing those in need. Watch for updates.



## One Big Caring Community

## Volunteers Make it Possible

Drivers, Warehouse, Office, Kitchen...Individuals, Corporate, Schools, Off-site



Caring for Friends is powered by volunteers. With a small paid staff, volunteers are vital to the operation of this organization. They are the heartbeat, providing the food and friendship to those in need.

Volunteers come in all forms. Individuals looking to make a difference in their community and fill their day with something meaningful. Schools looking for community service projects and a way to give back. Faith-based groups wishing to create experiences in their own facilities produce meals and snack bags to distribute, Corporations looking for team building opportunities and non-profits to support.



**Will you join us and support with dollars or time?**

## Financial Support for Caring for Friends.

### Ways to Give **EASIER THAN EVER.**

Donating to your favorite charity has never been easier. At Caring for Friends we want to make the process seamless.

Recurring giving is the best way to support us. Chose from weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly giving all in a system that you set up online. By providing consistent donations to Caring for Friends you ensure that we are sustainable for the future.

Of course one-time annual giving is also an option for individuals and corporations alike. 95%+ of every gift goes directly back into mission so you are assured that your money is being used to help those in need.

Ask your employer if they have a match giving program or a company foundation. Many larger organizations will match the giving of their employees. This is an excellent way for you to both increase your donation and introduce your company to your favorite charity.

Sponsor an event. Throughout the year we have events. Becoming a sponsor is a great way to support Caring for Friends while getting some logo recognition for your company.

Planned giving, tributes and bequests are another way to support us. Remembering Caring for Friends in a will or honoring a special occasion with a donation in honor of someone is an excellent way to show your support.

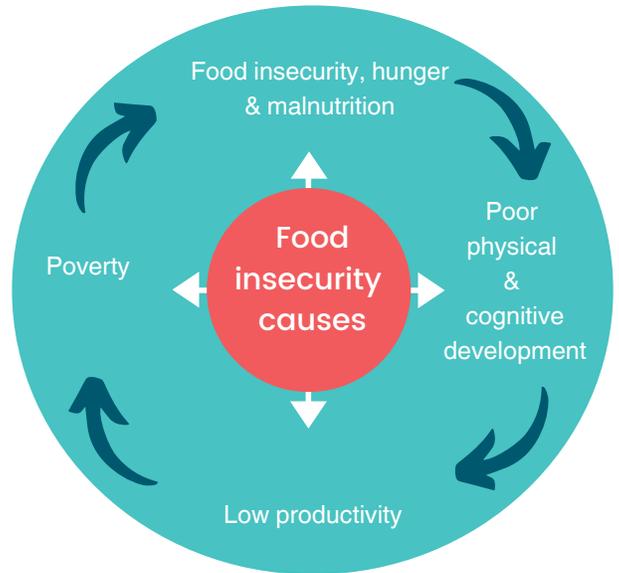


### Corporate Partner Spotlight

## T-Mobile

T-Mobile Northeast Phila Regional volunteers at Caring for Friends. It is a team building exercise as well as a way to give back to the community. In August 2024, they arrived for their volunteer shift with a check to donate. As a group, the stores voted to support Caring for Friends financially as well as through volunteer hours. A huge THANK YOU!

## Why Caring for Friends?



### Elected Official Partnership

## State Rep. Regina Young

PA State Representative Regina Young and her team recently hosted an event in a park in Southwest Philadelphia. The gathering, including music, was designed to provide information to families in the neighborhood about services available to them.

Backpacks for school were given to all children. A delicious BBQ with Tastycakes for dessert were provided by Caring for Friends.

Discussions are in the works with Rep Young's team to provide more food services and possibly community freezers for senior housing facilities in this area.

Do you have connections with your area elected official? Contact Marti Berk at [mberk@caringsforfriends.org](mailto:mberk@caringsforfriends.org) or call 267-874-2391 to make an introduction and help us to expand our reach into the community.

Elected Official Partnership  
**Rep. Amen Brown**



Representative Amen Brown's team introduced us to Riverside Presbyterian Apartments. This senior living building is located on N. 23rd Street and was looking for a food partner for their programs. Caring for Friends joined the Rep. Brown's interns in serving a hot lunch during a bingo event. Along with the meal we brought fresh fruits and veggies to hand out. Eating healthy with fresh produce is often a luxury low income individuals cannot afford. The seniors living in this building are living on very fixed incomes and the meal and activity provided offered a welcome break in their day. Caring for Friends looks to partner with elected officials all over the 5-county area to provide food and friendship.



CARING FOR FRIENDS  
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**Connect with Caring with Friends Today**

215-464-2224 ~ info@caringforfriends.org

- Vincent Schiavone, CEO, vince@caringforfriends.org
- Eric Gantz, COO, eric.gantz@caringforfriends.org
- Steven Schiavone, Managing Director, steve@caringforfriends.org
- Marti Berk, Director of Development, mberk@caringforfriends.org
- Hannah Leifheit, Volunteers, volunteer@caringforfriends.org
- Neci Devore, Homebound Meals, neci.devore@caringforfriends.org

Support For Our Future  
**Sustainable Giving**

Make a tax-deductible recurring gift to help us to continue to support the community with food and friendship.

**What does my donation buy?**



**\$500**  
 makes it possible to deliver food to over 2500 seniors



**\$250**  
 fills freezers with 150 ready-to-heat senior meals



**\$150**  
 buys one week of groceries for 50 families



**\$75**  
 buys snack bags for 200 kids

----- Cut Here and Mail In -----

**PLEASE DONATE TODAY!**

At this urgent time, your tax deductible donation helps provide meals and friendly visits to isolated seniors, homebound client friends, and other individuals in the 5-county Phila region.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

First/Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Cash     Check     Credit Card

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Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (3 digits on back) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500          | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250          | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annually  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____ |                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One-Time  |   |                                |



Scan QR code for easy online donations.

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