



WINTER 2026

Caring for Friends

A Stark Reminder of Why Your Support Matters

Chairman's Message

DEAR VALUED VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS

Our founder, Rita, often spoke about quiet desperation. She was describing the homebound seniors living silently behind closed doors, disabled, alone, and often unseen. No food in the refrigerator. No family stopping by. Not enough money to cover rent, medicine, and electricity at the same time.

This February, we lost Mary.

Mary lived alone in a deteriorating house in West Philadelphia. Elderly and frail, she moved carefully with the help of a cane. For years, she relied on Caring for Friends; for the meals you cooked, the food and funds you donated, and the fresh produce delivered through our partners just a block from her home. The volunteers standing on the corner next to an empty lot every week, in all seasons, offering food, friendship, and reliable care are a lifeline for seniors like Mary.

On one of the coldest days in February, when the temperature dropped to seven degrees, Mary did not come for her food. She did not answer her door. When police conducted a wellness check, they found her curled on the floor with her cane beside her. There was no heat in the house. We do not know how long she had been there.

Mary's death is heartbreaking. It is also a stark reminder of how fragile life can be for the seniors we serve. Many are forced to choose between utilities and prescriptions, between groceries and rent. For some, there is simply not enough to make ends meet.

The comfort and care we provide is not abstract. Mary lived longer because of you. She had nutritious, homecooked meals. She had fresh food. She had people who knew her name. She had dignity. She was not forgotten.

Caring for Friends bridges the care and support gap for vulnerable neighbors who don't have enough. Please continue your support for all the Marys in our community. What you give is often the difference between being forgotten and being cared for.

With gratitude,

Vince Schiavone, Chair & CEO
Caring for Friends



Join Our Caring Community

Together We Are Caring for Friends!

Save the Date

2026 Wine Dinner
Overbrook Golf Club
April 18, 2026



Scan QR code for tickets, sponsorships and more info

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

Parx Casino
April 23, 2026
9:00 am - noon



CARING FOR FRIENDS
12271 Townsend Rd, Philadelphia PA 19154
Contact Marti Berk at mberk@caringforfriends.org or 267-874-2391
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Volunteer Spotlights

The Knight Family



Rita Doehne Knight was among the first group of Caring for Friends volunteers in the 1970s, recruited by our own Rita Ungaro-Schiavone through St. Jerome's and St. Dominic's Catholic churches in Northeast Philadelphia. Rita regularly made meals for our homebound seniors for decades, up until 2014 when she stepped away to care for her ailing husband. Recently, her son Jim has followed in her footsteps, inspired to action by the recent delay in and reductions to SNAP benefits. Jim rallied over 30 of his neighbors to come together and make meals for us to distribute, which he brought to our warehouse (pictured, left). Jim credits his mother for setting an example of service and says that her generosity and compassion is the legacy she's leaving for subsequent generations of the Knight Family. This is evident in the photo on the right, which features three generations of the Knight family volunteering! Rita has started making meals again and is pictured with her son Jim Sr., his children Jim Jr. and Melanie, and Melanie's husband Hayden.

St. Katherine of Sienna Roman Catholic Church



The trusted volunteer group from nearby St. Katherine's of Siena comes to our warehouse every Thursday morning to work on the dryline. The group first came together during the pandemic when their local city council person was doing food and meal distributions at the church. Comprised largely of retirees, the group has grown steadily over the past five years, mostly through word of mouth and "friends bringing friends." Additionally, St. Katherine's hosts a CFF freezer and also holds twice annual meal making events, bringing them to us for distribution. Dedicated, regular support like this has a huge positive impact on our ability to share food and friendship with more of our vulnerable neighbors.

Who We Serve

Bringing Holiday Cheer to Vulnerable Senior Communities



Over the winter holidays Caring for Friends shared food and friendship at a dozen different senior housing centers and homeless shelters across the city. Seniors and homebound individuals make up the majority of our recipients and these communal meals not only provided delicious food, but also created a caring, social, and interactive environment that combatted isolation and brought holiday cheer. Making sure our fixed-income senior neighbors and unhoused community members are fed and cared for during the holidays is central to our mission. Our efforts touched many parts of the city, including Germantown, Olney, Nicetown, and neighborhoods in South and West Philadelphia like Mantua and Kingsessing.

Caring for Friends and Parx Casino hold drive through food giveaway in Bucks

This winter, Caring for Friends and Parx Casino gathered at the Bristol Township Senior Center to hold a drive through holiday turkey and dry box give away. We gave out 250 turkeys that afternoon. The Bensalem Senior Center also came through to pick up boxes for their residents. Thank you to Parx for organizing the event and for being a trusted partner and supporter of our cause.



Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Activities

Our Caring Community showed up on and off site to give back



On Friday, January 16, all 1,000 students (plus teachers and administrators) at Springton Lake Middle School in Media, Pa. came together for a Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service honoring Dr. King's legacy. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students rotated through service stations around the school benefiting Caring for Friends, packing snack bags, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, assembling homebound meal kits, and preparing personal care bags for unhoused neighbors.

Principal Ryan Buterbaugh shared that service reflects the school's core values of respect and responsibility. The meals and supplies were delivered to the City of Chester and distributed by Councilwoman Tameka Williams in the community.

Springton Lake has partnered with Caring for Friends for more than a decade, and we are deeply grateful for their continued compassion and support. Special thanks to Mrs. Kylee Bucci and Mrs. Devon Hartzell for organizing this incredible effort.



Special Delivery! This local cub scout and her mom dropped off breakfast bags her troop made on their Day of Service.



A group of regular volunteers from a local TD Bank Branch spent their Day of Service in our kitchen helping Chef Larry prep protein and veggies for homebound meal kits.



These youngsters came with local non-profit D.O.P.E (Doing Our Part Eclectically) and spent time in our snack bag room. We love to see compassion on display from younger generations!

Bringing Our Caring Community to Local Schools

ASPIRA Bilingual Cyber Charter School



Following the success of the Caring for Friends stocked pantry at Memphis Academy Charter School in Port Richmond, we're in the process of installing another pantry at Cyber Hostos Pantoja (formerly ASPIRA Cyber Charter School) in Olney in collaboration with City Council member Jim Harrity and State Representative Anthony Bellmon. Caring for Friends officials, including CEO Vince Schiavone, recently conducted a site visit and plan to debut a pantry there in the spring. School pantries are force multipliers in our efforts to share food and friendship across the region. Schools are community hubs, well-fed students do better academically, and vulnerable community members near the school benefit as well.

Give a Little Love with Caring for Friends

You Can Make A Difference Through Small Acts

Caring for Friends invites you to Give a Little Love to neighbors who are homebound and alone during the hardest stretch of winter. A gift today helps deliver nourishing meals, friendly visits, and the reassurance that someone cares.

You can share your love by making a one-time gift, becoming a monthly Caring Friend, hosting a food drive with friends or colleagues, or by submitting a caring message to be delivered with a meal. Every act of generosity helps ensure no one is hungry or alone.



Financial Support for Caring for Friends

Ways to Give

Give Monthly

- Set up weekly, monthly, or yearly gifts online. Steady, sustainable support keeps our programs strong.

Make a One-Time Gift

- 95% of every dollar goes directly to feeding neighbors in need.

Double Your Impact

- Ask if your employer matches donations — many do!

Sponsor an Event

- Support our mission and showcase your organization.

Honor & Legacy Gifts

- Give in someone's honor or include Caring for Friends in your will for a lasting impact.



Our North Star

Help Us Achieve Rita's Dream



Founded more than 50 years ago by Rita Ungaro-Schiavone, Caring for Friends is a volunteer-powered organization dedicated to ensuring no one is hungry or alone. Today, we provide meals to homebound seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities, and support over 300 community pantry partners across the Philadelphia region. We strive to live up to Rita's vision in all the work we do.



Caring for Friends

No one should be hungry or alone

CARING FOR FRIENDS
12271 Townsend Rd
Philadelphia PA 19154

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West Chester, PA

Support For Our Future

Become a Recurring Donor

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

Connect with Caring for Friends Today!



215-464-2224



info@caringforfriends.org



www.caringforfriends.org

The need for meals and human connection in our community remains urgent.

Homebound seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities depend on Caring for Friends for food, friendship, and the reassurance that they are not forgotten.

Giving a little love each month makes that support steady. Your recurring gift helps ensure no neighbor is hungry or alone and strengthens our ability to serve in the year ahead.

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

Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (3 digits on back) _____

Signature _____

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



Scan QR code with your phone's camera for easy online donations.



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