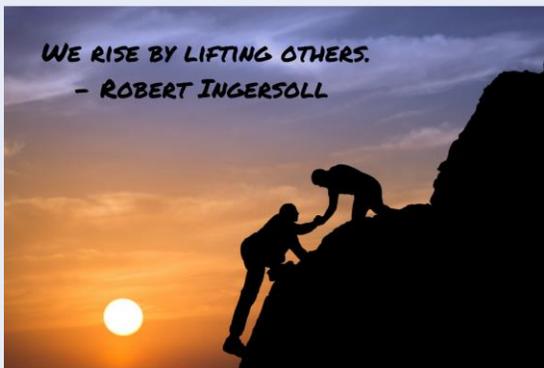


November 2021



WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS

Earlier in my career, I had the distinct pleasure of having dinner with Former First Lady Roselyn Carter. As a leading caregiving advocate, Mrs. Carter was the guest of honor at a dinner symposium on caregiving. I was assigned to “host” Mrs. Carter and was seated directly beside her. I found her to be genuine, warm, humble, and down to earth.

One of many takeaways from my evening with the Former First Lady was her often quoted belief that “There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.” The point Mrs. Carter is making is that care is a universal, shared experience. Every person—of every socioeconomic background and every race—at some point needs care. It is a fundamental human need and providing care is among our most important connections to one another.

Think of all the ways Shepherd’s Centers are caregivers. Our network offers a range of worthy programs, such as respite care, caregiver support groups of all kinds, caregiver education, and more. Our volunteers are caregivers when they drive someone to a medical appointment, drop off a meal or groceries, or make a friendly visit.

You, the local leaders of affiliates, are caregivers when you help connect someone to needed services. And you are a caregiver when you listen, support, and encourage a colleague from around the network because you understand the highs and lows of operating a Shepherd’s Center.

Recently, I read an article suggesting that the COVID-19 pandemic happened in an exact manner the need for caregiving often happens—suddenly and overnight. You go to sleep peacefully and wake up to realize your world has shut down. You scramble for a few weeks trying to keep together your work, family, and health while trying to stabilize a caregiving crisis. Over time, you cobble together some kind of caregiving routine. (I instantly related to this comparison since it was how my caregiving experience began.)

Caring for a loved one can often be profoundly fulfilling since many times individuals move closer together when challenges arise. However, it can also become overwhelming, physically and emotionally challenging, and isolating. We excel at connecting older adults to community. Caregiving at its best takes a village—family and friends, support services, Shepherd’s Centers and their volunteers, and so many more. This month, as we acknowledge and celebrate all the caregivers among us, may we be reminded that we rise when we lift others...with encouragement, understanding, positivity, laughter, and kindness. In helping others, we find that our own lives have meaning and purpose.

Sarah Cheney

CARE PLANNING

Sponsored by the **Caregiver Action Network**, National Family Caregivers Month is observed in November and is a time to celebrate the contribution of volunteer friends and family members who support a loved one.



According to AARP's 2019 *Valuing the Invaluable*, approximately 34 billion hours that caregivers contributed in 2017 were worth \$470 billion—more than total out-of-pocket spending on health care in the U.S. that year (\$366 billion) or all money spent on paid caregiving in 2016 (also \$366 billion).

Although caregiving can offer multiple rewards, Shepherd's Centers are aware of the economic hardship and emotional toll caregiving can pose. Our network provides model services and programs that lend crucial daily support for caregivers. During the latest health crisis, Adventures in Learning has even been adapted online so that family caregivers can join educational classes, social events, and exercise opportunities to remain engaged with others. Shepherd's Center volunteer drivers across the country are dispatched every day to help working family caregivers provide transportation to vital doctors' appointments.

Other signature programs include Breaktime Club, a day out respite program that provides a trusted and welcoming atmosphere for caregivers to leave their loved ones with volunteers so they can attend their own appointments, run household errands, or just take a much deserved break from their caregiving responsibilities. Caregiver support groups such as Equipping the Caregiver offers a safe place for caregivers to share their experiences, gain insight from their peers, and valuable resources to support their caregiving journey.

Check out the Caregiver Action Network [website](#) for resources. You might also want to join the #CaregiverAnd campaign to share a passion along with a caregiving role.

STANDARD OF CARE

Many Shepherd's Centers are grappling with whether to require their staff, volunteers, and participants to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccine mandates are not new. They have been instituted in the United States since 1850 to prevent smallpox transmission. With the common good in mind, is it appropriate for a Shepherd's Center to consider how their operational choices affect public health?



Recently the **Shepherd's Center of Webster-Kirkwood (MO)** and **LifeQuest of Arkansas (AR)** instituted vaccination policies, requiring all staff, volunteers, and participants to be vaccinated. Other Shepherd's Centers, including **KC Shepherd's Center (MO)** and the **Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia**, have adapted partial mandates, requiring participants gathering for group programming (e.g., Adventures in Learning), be vaccinated.

The North Carolina Center for Nonprofits recently posted a [piece outlining the pros and cons](#) of a vaccination policy. A few points affiliates may want to consider when discussing the merits of instituting a vaccine policy include:

1. Establish an ethical framework: In developing a vaccination policy, a Center may wish to prioritize the health and safety of all of those under their responsibility, with a focus on avoiding preventable harm.

2. Conduct a risk-benefit analysis: Evaluate the benefits and challenges and weigh these against your mission
3. Provide education and transparency: Educate individuals throughout the organization on the risk and benefits of vaccination versus non-vaccination. Transparently explain the process you utilized to create your policy and make an extra effort to listen to the concerns of employees who are hesitant to be vaccinated.

The National Council on Nonprofits adapted a policy shared [here](#). Shepherd's Center of Webster-Kirkwood shared their policy statement in a letter to all connected with the Center. You can [read it here](#).

Betsy Solomon did share that the response to this new practice has been quite positive. According to Betsy, they reach about 1,300 people and have had only 5 complaints. They have received several thank-you emails, and one class applauded when the policy was announced. Feedback from participants is that "Shepherd's Center is one of the few places we will go because we know they are doing everything they can to keep the environment healthy."

Regardless of your Shepherd's Center's decision to create COVID-19 vaccine policies, exploring the possible risk and benefits might be advantageous for all associated with your organization.

PROFESSIONAL CARE

Feeding America reaches 40 million people in need of food every year. In a typical year, Boys & Girls Clubs serve 4.3 million young people – 2 million through membership and 2.3 million through community outreach – in more than 4,700 Club facilities. Daily, 450,000 kids and teens enter the doors of a Boys & Girls Club. Last year, the American Red Cross collected more than 4.5 million blood donations and provided more than 6.4 million blood products to help patients.



What did the Shepherd's Centers Network accomplish? This is the question we are asking each affiliate with the goal that each Center will have valuable data to share with its community and the network can share its broad success. We know we are stronger together and data demonstrates this point effectively to all stakeholders.

With guidance from an advisory council of center leaders, we have now standardized metrics. For example, we have a consistent demographic profile for all involved, we have a uniform way to talk about classes and rides, as well as a meaningful value of volunteer time. At the end of the year, we will be asking each center to complete a paper or electronic survey with information on their programs.

This data will help us collectively and individually attract more funding, prove our impact, tell our stories, make decisions, and improve our effectiveness. We are [sharing the survey](#) with you now and encouraging you to schedule time to report back your information.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

One effective way to share the data we collect is to include it on your website, in reports, and in presentations. Quantitative data along with qualitative stories can make a



Check out this [Impact Report](#) from **Shepherd's Center of Charlotte (NC)**. This is currently being shared with their promotional information for their big Chef Wars special event. Another great example is from a highly regarded nonprofit, **Friendship Works**, in Boston that has a similar mission to Shepherd's Centers. (Many of you may recognize Janet from past national conferences.) This report, titled Impact & Gratitude, for FY July 2020-June 2021 creatively complements the upcoming holidays highlighting gratitude. Check out their report [here](#).

CARE PACKAGE

As the winter holidays approach, the **Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem (NC)** is gearing up for a gift collection project that will bring joy to some older adults. Through partnership with local congregations, they are collecting gift items for participants in their Saturday Night Fellowship program. Before the pandemic, the program provided a monthly fellowship meal for close to 100 residents of local housing communities for older adults. Last year, when they could no longer gather in person, the Center delivered gift bags to those who have been involved in these gatherings.



Facing another holiday season where in-person gatherings are not wise, the Shepherd's Center will again collect items and deliver holiday gift bags. The goal is to fill 125 gift bags. For some, this may be the only gift they receive.

CUSTOMER CARE

In **Shepherd's Center of West Wichita's (KS)** recent newsletter, they shared a lot of interesting information about their recent success with AIL (as well as photos as shown here), a follow-up about survey feedback received from participants, as well as a link to the SCA Network newsletter. We were thrilled to see this information disseminated further throughout the center and not just with the staff. The editor's note was straightforward, "The following is a link to the SCA newsletter. It has a lot of good information about what is going on around the SC network. It gives you an idea of what can be accomplished."



At about the same time, in a conversation with another director, she mentioned that one of her board members will periodically reference something she read in the network newsletter. This board member was thoughtfully considering how their center might apply something she had read that another center had done well.

And this is the simple point. Centers can learn from each other and gain creative ideas to adapt and try in their community. We encourage you to forward this newsletter to all stakeholders with your Center or download the file from our website. We also are happy to add any staff, board member, or volunteer leader directly to the distribution list.

Sharing the newsletter is one of several strategies we can all apply to help raise awareness of the good work of our network. [Review this checklist](#) and consider what other steps you can take.

COMMUNITY CARE

Will you help us expand our services? This was the appeal from **Shepherd's Center of Hamilton County (IN)**. They had good data and details about various programs as well as ways a gift has impact (e.g., \$75 provides one free counseling session for an older adult struggling with mental health issues and \$125 purchases a device for the virtual library for older adults to video chat with friends and family).



Along with powerful words, was a short, [powerful video](#) sharing the story of Harold and Jan Bratton, just two of the thousands of older adults served each year. If you haven't yet sent your year-end appeal, you might want to consider how you make yours "stand out" from others with a similar type of video. Wishing everyone great success with your fundraising efforts!

NO ORDINARY CARE

We are thrilled to share that the 2021 Donald Owen Smith National Volunteer Leadership Award was presented to **Carol McGinnis Kay** with the **Shepherd's Center of St. Andrews (SC)**. Carol is pictured here (center) along with Lynne Mahaffey and Ken Howell, who completed and submitted the nomination.



Carol has served continuously with St. Andrews for 15 years, first as a volunteer instructor and soon serving in many other leadership roles: chair of Adventures in Learning Committee, member of the Board of Directors including terms as Secretary, President (2010, 2011, 2017, 2018) and Past President. She currently chairs the Nominating Committee. Among the things that stood out to the review committee was the fact that: "No task is too small, and leading by example is important to Carol. She inspires others through her enthusiasm, her positive and caring attitude, and her determination to see that the programs offered meet the interests and needs of participants."

The announcement was made November 5th at an annual Center meeting, and we hear was a wonderful surprise celebrated by all. We wish to extend another heartfelt congratulation to Carol!

It is always a daunting task for the review committee to identify one honoree from a stack of worthy and deserving volunteers. We love reading about all these volunteers, their unique approach to service, how they have advanced their Shepherd's Center and inspired others. We plan to feature these volunteers in the coming months.



- **November 9** at 3:30 pm ET/2:30 pm CT/1:30 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
Network Roundtable, an informal time to connect with peers around the network to ask questions and share ideas. No registration required. Join on Zoom here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83551123399pwd=a0YvZHVva3JPZ1M0cUdQZDdnYVRUQT09>

- Tentative: **December 9** at 3:00 pm ET/2:00 pm CT/1:00 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
Dr. Helen Kerschner will share the new Volunteer Driver Program TurnKey Kit, a comprehensive online resource of information, exercises, fact sheets and more for planning, implementing, and evaluating volunteer driver programs.

- **December 14** at 3:30 pm ET/2:30 pm CT/1:30 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
Network Roundtable, an informal time to connect with peers around the network to ask questions and share ideas. No registration required. Join on Zoom here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83551123399pwd=a0YvZHVva3JPZ1M0cUdQZDdnYVRUQT09>

- **January 11, 2022** at 3:30 pm ET/2:30 pm CT/1:30 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
Network Roundtable, an informal time to connect with peers around the network to ask questions and share ideas. No registration required. Join on Zoom here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83551123399pwd=a0YvZHVva3JPZ1M0cUdQZDdnYVRUQT09>

- **January 27, 2022** at 3:00 pm ET/2:00 pm CT/1:00 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
Webinar: Walking in Balance. Craig Greening and Bob Pirner have used Native American philosophy to guide nonprofits for decades. Many of the techniques and strategies they use are in their book, *Walking in Balance* (order the book here and be prepared to get the most out of this exceptional presentation). They will be joining us live to show how Navajo and Lakota approaches to leadership will help you be a more effective executive.

- **February 24, 2022** at 3:00 pm ET/2:00 pm CT/1:00 pm MT/12:30 pm PT
DEI Training: Follow-up session with Aimee Bellmore to share ideas, progress, and challenges in creating more inclusive community centers.

We welcome your suggestions for speakers and topics. Contact [Sarah](#) to share your ideas.