



June 2022

Aging Matters: Memorial Day Remembrance

A few weeks ago, during the Memorial Day weekend, my family had the privilege of taking visitors to Kansas City's National World War II Museum and Memorial. Though the outside and exhibits are awe-inspiring, I find the exhibit that still has the greatest effect on my heart is the glass entrance bridge that spans a bed of 9000 poppies in remembrance of soldiers who gave their lives in service of our country.



The poppy as a symbol of war casualties started with a poem. In the spring of 1915, a Canadian artillery unit brigade surgeon named Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae saw bright red poppies blooming on the war-torn fields where so many soldiers had lost their lives, and he was moved to write "In Flanders Fields."

Inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael, an American professor, replied with her own poem:

*We cherish, too, the poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led;
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies*

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial Day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. Subsequently, poppies have been used to generate support for military children, widows, and veterans with disabilities all over the world.

The Shepherd's Centers organization has been honored to have many staff members, volunteers, and participants that served in our armed forces. We would like to not only salute your devotion to our country but also your personal investment in the Shepherd's Centers of America network. You, like the poppies, are the bright spot in our daily lives.



A Song in His Heart

Shepherd's Center-Beachside (FL) has been in existence since April 2004, and **Edmund** has been its longest-tenured volunteer for a dozen of those years. Ed arrives at least an hour before the Adventures in Learning classes begin. He typically comes through the door singing a song from some musical he has attended. Whatever ditty Ed is singing that morning, everyone else on the staff will be humming it for the rest of the day! Notwithstanding, Ed's humor, kindness, and loyalty are contagious.

His self-starting demeanor energizes him to manage the morning set-up activities by adding and arranging chairs in classrooms, setting up audio/visual equipment for teachers, and greeting the arriving students.

Ed has had a distinguished career before becoming a volunteer at Shepherd's Center-Beachside. He served in the United States Marine Corps and worked for Northrop-Grumman.

On the last day of each term at Shepherd's Center-Beachside, Ed and his wife, Angela, arrange an appreciation luncheon in gratitude for everyone's hard work. After the most recent AIL term, Ed and Angela were honored for their incredible years of service.



Building Community Bridges

Bruce joined the **Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke (VA)** after retiring from a distinguished military career. He learned about the Shepherd's Center through the Fairfax County Volunteer website. He joined as a volunteer driver and office worker because he thought providing transportation to older adults who are no longer able to drive was a good fit.

He originally thought he would only be providing a ride from point A to point B, much like a taxi service. Bruce was pleased to find that the time spent in his vehicle allowed him the opportunity to really get to know his riders in a more meaningful way. Bruce explained, "It's more like driving your own mother or father. We talk the entire way, laugh together, and occasionally stop for a cup of coffee."

He highly recommends volunteering as a driver, office support, or one of the many other opportunities available. Bruce finds tremendous value in helping older adults remain independent by transporting them to medical appointments and shopping. He feels Shepherd's Center drivers offer more than a ride but also peace of mind. "SCFB drivers offer more than a set of wheels. They show up on time with a smile, ready to serve in whatever way they can."



The Gift that Keeps on Giving

Your legacy to Shepherd's Centers of America can have a lasting impact on older adults for generations to come. Together, we can connect older adults to meaningful programs and friendships so they can continue living vibrant, happy lives in their own homes and communities. Most Legacy Gifts offer tax

benefits today while allowing you to meet your current cash flow needs and realize future charitable goals. Legacy gifts are made possible by you...those who have lived and embraced all that our organization works to achieve in advocating for older adults nationwide.

Or maybe during this season of remembrance, you would like to make a special memorial donation for the loved ones and friends that hold a special place in your heart. When you give to Shepherd's Centers of America, a national, community-based network committed to empowering older adults to connect to the things that matter most, you help make their lives better. Stronger. Safer. Happier. More vibrant. Please contact [Sarah Cheney, Executive Director](#) to learn more about gifts that can have lasting impact. Donate today!

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