

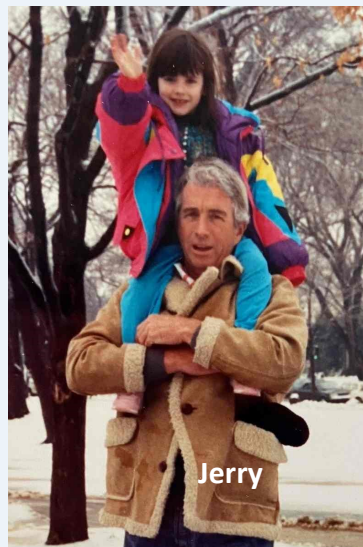
**SHEPHERD'S HERALD: Volume 7, Issue 2— Spring 2021**

**Ride Coordinators  
Key to the Center's Program**

The Shepherd's Center is a non-profit corporation established in 2006 primarily to provide free rides for medical care to older adults in McLean, Arlington, and Falls Church. This remains the core mission and it has grown from a handful of volunteer drivers in 2006 to last year's total of 75, who provided over 2,000 rides to about 100 clients. The key to providing this service has been the ride coordinators, currently a group of 8 volunteers who manage the program on a daily basis. They rotate weekly shifts, fielding incoming client ride requests and matching them with available volunteer drivers. Over the years close to 100% of the requests have been satisfied by volunteer drivers, although due to the pandemic, last summer it was necessary to supplement the requests with Center-funded taxi service. As our drivers receive their vaccines this Spring they will once again return to full strength and get behind the wheel.

**Ride Coordinators**

Mary Highsmith, Chair  
Irv Auerbach  
Denise Augustenborg  
Beth Caldwell  
Jan Gordon  
Michael Lerner  
Mark Turco  
Jerry Welch



### **Ute Ettinger-Mekhail, Featured Client**

Ute joined the Shepherd's Center as a rider in the Spring of 2016 following hip surgery and has since received over 200 rides. Over the years she has become well known by our drivers, all of whom speak kindly of her and are pleased to have made her acquaintance.

Ute was born in Germany to German parents. Her father died during WWII when she was very young. Her mother later married an American Army officer stationed in Germany. After the war he moved his family to his home town of Emmaus, Pennsylvania



where he was able to rejoin his siblings and raise his new family.

As a German-speaking youth, Ute quickly learned English and graduated from high school in Emmaus before returning to Germany. She wanted to become better acquainted with her numerous relatives and to seek employment there. She became fluent in German which she still is today.

Ute lived in Germany for 23 years before returning to the United States. While there she worked in Munich for Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe. Upon her return to the U.S. she worked for Voice of America and the United States Information Agency in Washington, D.C. Ute's final employment before retirement was with the Inspector General's Office of the U.S. Postal Service.

Ute has two siblings and other relatives in Maryland and Pennsylvania who she frequently visits.

Ute can't say enough about the Center and has often passed information about our services to her friends and people she has met at medical appointments.

### **Friendly Visitors & Calls Update**

As many may be aware, since 2014 SCMAFC has offered a Friendly Visitor/Caller program for its clients. In June 2020, however, due to the pandemic we enlisted help from a northern Virginia-based service — Let's Connect, LLC — to assist with the calls. It was our belief that Let's Connect's dedicated and professional staff was well equipped to conduct calls on a regular basis. Let's Connect has volunteered to continue offering services to our current clients for as long as they wish. SCMAFC is no longer offering visits and calls to its clients.

For SCMAFC volunteers who joined specifically to provide Visitor/Caller services, don't worry. There are a number of other roles for you to play! Watch for upcoming communications with information for volunteers who would like to serve beyond our core missions of transportation and handy helpers.

For further information on Let's Connect visit their website at <https://letsconnect.life/> or call 703-496-9409

### **Ride Statistics for the First Quarter 2021**

61 volunteers provided 368 rides, driving 2815 miles in over 250 hours  
247 were for medical or dental appointments  
31 were for physical therapy or psychotherapy  
88 were for grocery shopping  
2 were for handy helpers  
7 new volunteer drivers were added during the quarter along with 4 new clients

### **Robin Gold, Featured Volunteer**

SCMAFC volunteer Robin Gold has gone above and beyond the call during the pandemic. During 2020 she donated over 110 hours of her time, driving over 750 miles while providing rides for over 100 clients. This included helping some reach polling locations, and one to visit a doctor to have glass removed from her heel. Most recently she has taken clients to receive their Covid vaccines. Our hats are off to Robin and we are delighted to have her as a member of our volunteer team.

### **Lynda Langley, Recently Deceased Client**

As this newsletter was going to print the Shepherd's Center learned from Lynda Langley's sister, Marilyn Foster, that Lynda had just passed away. While this comes with great sadness to Lynda's family, it is also sad for our many drivers who had come to know her over our long-term, very strong, positive, and warm relationship with her.

Lynda grew up with three siblings on a self-sustaining farm in the small Kansas town of Meriden – population 500 then and almost 800 now -- with a one-room school house. But the farm with its horses, cattle, sheep, ducks, chickens, and a “ringer telephone” shared on a non-private basis with neighbors wasn't enough for her after high school.

Lynda pursued and graduated with a bachelor's degree from Washburn University in Topeka with concentrations in psychology, criminology, and computer science. The last of these led her to a computer programming job at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) in Topeka where she performed so well she was asked to take a similar assignment at the Service's headquarters in Washington, D.C. This job subsequently transitioned into one of financial systems analysis. As a senior analyst she provided training courses to USPS offices throughout the country as well as on two occasions to representatives from the Italian and Egyptian postal services.

Retiring from the USPS in 1990 Lynda continued her education, receiving a Master's Degree and a Doctoral Degree in Education (EdD) from Argosy University's well-regarded psychology program. During her EdD program Lynda became a Certified Emergency Response Team member and later worked for a mental health crisis hotline in Arlington, specializing in suicide prevention

where she received a number of awards for her service.

In the end Lynda was no longer riding horses or driving a tractor on the farm, which she did regularly at age 14. As recently as the early 2000s she was riding with friends on her Harley Davidson from her home in Falls Church to Shenandoah County and beyond. She was pleased to tell drivers about her experiences. As one of our favorites, the Center was pleased to have provided Lynda over 600 rides since 2015. We will very much miss her.

### **Jerry Welch, 2020 Volunteer of the Year**

Jerry became a volunteer with the Shepherd's Center in the spring of 2019. He began as and continues to actively serve as a driver – in 2020 alone he provided over 200 rides. Jerry has also taken on the role of serving as a Ride Coordinator, a most rewarding task as he matches client requests with drivers. When drivers are not available Jerry often takes them, and has frequently picked up last-minute requests on occasions when clients need support for appointments scheduled on short notice.

Jerry was born and raised in Geneva, New York, a small city located at the northern tip of Seneca Lake. After high school, he went to a prep school run by the Marine Corps that enabled him to attend the Naval Academy. He spent six years in the Navy, including a year in Viet Nam.

Following this Jerry worked for several firms dealing with software sales and support before starting his own company in 1991. He retired in 2019. He enjoys squash, tennis, basketball, and golf. He has two adult sons and three grandchildren. And, he particularly enjoys spending time with his three younger brothers.



**shepherd's center**

OF MCLEAN-ARLINGTON-FALLS CHURCH

1205 Dolley Madison Boulevard

McLean, VA 22101-3109

## **SHEPHERD'S HERALD: Volume 7, Issue 2— Spring 2021**

The Shepherd's Center invites you to follow our Facebook page by "liking"  
<https://www.facebook.com/SCMAFC> as well as visiting our website <http://scmafc.org/>

### **Thanks to the faith groups that support our services**

Faith Lutheran Church, Arlington  
Immanuel Presbyterian Church, McLean  
Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, McLean  
Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, McLean  
McLean Baptist Church, McLean  
Memorial Baptist Church, Arlington  
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Arlington  
Saint Agnes Catholic Church, Arlington  
Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, Falls Church  
Saint Luke Roman Catholic Church, McLean  
Saint Luke Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church, McLean  
The Falls Church Episcopal, Falls Church  
Trinity United Methodist Church, McLean  
Women of Temple Rodef Shalom, Falls Church

### **SCMAFC Board of Directors**

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**Shepherd's Center thanks the McLean Baptist Church for printing this Newsletter**

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church is a nonprofit 501c(3) licensed in Virginia. Donations may be made to SCMAFC, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd, McLean, VA 22101. The Center can be contacted through its Website [www.SCMAFC.org](http://www.SCMAFC.org), by email to [info@scmafc.org](mailto:info@scmafc.org), on Facebook at SCMAFC, or by phone at 703-506-2199.