



History of the Shepherd's Center
Of
McLean-Arlington-Falls Church
(SCMAFC)

September 2023

by Jan Auerbach

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History of the Shepherd's Center of McLean – Arlington – Falls Church

A Kansas City minister, Elbert Cole, recognized that as individuals were retiring from careers and moving into the next stage of life, they wanted to continue growing and contributing to society. In 1971, he organized a community planning team to design an organization that provided opportunities to meet a range of needs of retired adults. The first Shepherd's Center opened in Kansas City in 1972 and became a model for aging that empowered older adults to use their wisdom, skills, and talents to create opportunities for themselves and others. There are currently 55 Shepherd's Centers across the U.S. Each local affiliate Shepherd's Center is a separate nonprofit led by an independent board of directors.



Founder Ed Schrock

In 2006 McLean resident Ed Schrock had completed a 24-year career in the Navy as a public affairs officer and subsequently served as a Virginia Senator and US Congressman. In retirement he remembered how important his grandparents had been to him as he grew up and decided he wanted to do something to help senior citizens. Conversations with Fairfax County staff led to a meeting that summer with Carol Downs, who then headed the Oakton-Vienna Shepherd's Center, one of three Shepherd's Centers operating in northern Virginia at the time. She suggested that Ed set up a Shepherd's Center for McLean, Arlington, and Falls Church (SCMAFC). That fall he attended a Fairfax County senior event at which he was able to recruit about 10 volunteers to serve as drivers.

Ed described the mission of the new organization as helping people to live as long and as safely as possible. His first client needed help decluttering her apartment. Other clients received similar assistance as well as yard cleanup and just a listening ear. Always, though, the chief assistance was giving rides. Over the next several years, Ed recruited both drivers and riders by visiting 104 churches. Pastor Jim Sprouse at Trinity United Methodist on Dolley Madison Blvd. in McLean, one of the first churches he visited, offered some office space with a telephone and file storage. From the outset Ed was solely responsible for arranging rides. He received rider phone requests and sought drivers through phone and email. By 2010 there were about 25 drivers and 70 clients. By 2015 the number of active drivers reached 70 and the number of active clients was around 100; those numbers have remained fairly steady ever since. He also was the primary person to interview prospective clients and drivers. After a while, he stopped using the office because he found it easier to work from his home. From then on, the office was used to house the telephone and files and to hold meetings, but was not used as volunteer office space.

By 2011 Ed's family's complaints about the time he was spending on Shepherd's Center matters led him to ask his key volunteers to serve on a board. In early 2012 about a dozen volunteers answered the call to serve. The Board met monthly at Trinity United Methodist Church. On the initial Board were Tom and Austine Eversole, who had been drivers since 2009. The Eversoles had formed friendships with other drivers and believed the existence of the Center helped build a sense of community for both drivers and clients. Tom, also a retired Naval officer who then served as the Executive Director of a trade association, had experience preparing the legal documents necessary to create a 501(c)(3) corporation. He volunteered to do the same for SCMAFC. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church was incorporated on September 28, 2012 and received its 501(c)(3) status on February 28, 2014. Tom also served as Treasurer and opened a bank account in the Shepherd's Center name. (Before 2012 Trinity United Methodist Church maintained a separate line item in its account for Shepherd's Center donations and expenses.)

Tom also helped coordinate with other centers. He met with the Executive Director of the Vienna-Oakton Shepherd's Center who showed him the new software they were using to manage ride requests. Steve Ewart, the developer of Ride Scheduler, flew in from San Diego to give a demonstration of the software and Tom encouraged SCMAFC to adopt it. Tom became the conduit to Steve to suggest modifications to make the software more useful and Steve then made the changes. Ride Scheduler was later adopted by NV Rides and the other centers in the area. Tom trained SCMAFC Ride Coordinators on the software and later trained Mary Highsmith to take over his roles as Transportation Committee Chair and chief Ride Coordinator trainer.

In 2012 Austine became Secretary of the Board and, by 2015, took over from Ed Schrock as Chair. Ed then served as Executive Director. Austine and Ed both served through 2017. In 2014 the board instituted a Volunteer of the Year award to an individual who had provided an exceptional level of service.

The first recipient that year was Kate Jones. Since then, recipients have been Nancy Murray, Sofia Rontaler, Mary Lee, Stew Lingley, Mark Turco, Bob Schulz, Jerry Welch, Betty Douglass, and Connie Van Zandt. After Ed Schrock retired as Executive Director, the Volunteer of the Year Award was named the Ed Schrock Volunteer of the Year Award in his honor.



A Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Austine focused on organizational and procedural matters. She wrote newsy emails to volunteers to keep them informed and oversaw the holding of volunteer appreciation lunches for volunteers. During this time the board procured additional insurance to protect officers and drivers and began requiring and paying for background checks for volunteers at \$15 apiece.

SCMAFC had joined Shepherd's Centers of America based in Kansas City in 2010 and Tom became the chief liaison to that organization. Because of the concentration of Shepherd's Centers in northern Virginia, SCA Executive Director Sarah Cheney visited the area. Her visits provided an opportunity for representatives from the different centers to meet and exchange ideas. One idea Tom recalls was the need for client interviews to include a home visit to make sure the home was accessible for vehicles and the client was ambulatory. On one of these SCA visits Patricia Rohrer, the Fairfax County official serving as liaison to the Shepherd's Centers and the Aging in Place villages, suggested that the centers organize an umbrella group to serve as a coordinator within Northern Virginia. That idea spawned the creation of NV Rides in 2014 to encourage and support a network of voluntary drivers to transport seniors. Tom helped recruit its first director, Jennifer Kanarek and its second, Emily Braley. NV Rides secured funding from the county to pay for background checks for drivers. Tom incorporated the background check into the application process for drivers and conducted training sessions for new drivers. Tom went to fairs such as McLean Day, farmers markets, and NV Rides events to recruit new drivers. He and Carol and Jack Edelstein helped found the Great Falls

Shepherd's Center which later merged with the Vienna-Oakton Shepherd's Center.

Board member Laura Hicks started the Friendly Caller and Visitor Program in 2014 which continued until the pandemic in 2020. Board Vice-Chair Rob Stotz was the chief volunteer behind the Handy Helper Program. Rob had support from two other organizations, Habitat for Humanity and Rebuilding Together. In the spring of 2017 while serving as secretary Betty Douglass instituted the Birthday Card Program, whereby each month the secretary sent birthday cards to clients celebrating their birthdays that month. She was able to obtain free cards from the members of her church who donated cards they received as thank you gifts from various charitable organizations. Several years later the program was expanded to include birthday cards sent to volunteers and was administered by SCMAFC volunteer Sherry Joslin.



Recruiting New Volunteers

In 2018 leadership of the organization transferred to Betty Douglass as Chair and Tom as Executive Director. Betty had fully retired in 2011 after a career in higher education and non-profit administration. She wanted a volunteer position where she could provide service directly to the people she was helping. She saw an announcement for a Lunch 'n Life event sponsored by the Shepherd's Center that was being held at the McLean Baptist Church. She attended the luncheon, was impressed with the direct access and schedule flexibility that being a driver provided, and signed up. She began driving in 2012 and joined the board in 2013, subsequently serving as Secretary in 2016 and 2017, and then as Chair from 2018 through 2020.

Betty brought her talents from a career in administration to the functioning of the organization. She and Tom established clear guidelines for the roles of Executive Director and Board Chair. They met each month prior to board meetings to develop an agenda focused on issues requiring board attention. Betty focused on management issues. Tom focused on recruiting volunteers, getting the right people to serve on the board, and coordinating with other Centers. Tom continued to serve as a Ride Coordinator after he became Executive Director but dropped that function when enough other volunteers agreed to serve in that capacity. Betty continues to serve as Ride Coordinator.

Betty added to the existing transportation and recruitment committees by creating committees focused on community outreach, marketing and social media, client assessment, volunteer events and client advocacy. Board members assumed positions as committee chairs. Position descriptions were written for each position. Betty encouraged chairs to recruit committee members and maintain committee rosters. She also encouraged them to set goals each year, use the summer months when there were no board meetings to work on achieving those goals, and to have periodic committee meetings. During her time as Chair, the first policy manual was written. Action items from board meetings were tracked until they were resolved. She held a first-ever annual meeting and board retreat in 2019. Periodically she led the board in board-development discussions to increase board effectiveness and enhance leadership.

While there was no direct fundraising effort other than year-end letters to clients, volunteers, and churches, funds flowed in from area congregations, private donors, and some area businesses. Betty encouraged the board to establish a policy for how those funds were to be used: 1) operating costs, 2) gifts to volunteers (at the annual luncheon and for board members rotating off), 3) a Shepherd's Center Fund to provide one-time financial assistance to low-income clients, and 4) a Future Staff Fund to build up a reserve if a future board should decide to hire staff. The board strove to achieve a close to 100% ride acceptance rate. To reach that goal, Betty and Tom instituted a taxi voucher system and later a contract with a local taxi company to provide rides to clients at SCMAFC expense. Since its first use in 2017, the Shepherd's Fund has disbursed over \$12,000 to assist needy clients with items such as replacing a broken refrigerator or front door.

One of Betty's major interests was finding a way to help low-income, socially-isolated clients. She established a Client Advocacy Committee to assist clients in navigating the local social service and non-profit network to find the help they needed. In 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic five board members each called 40 clients, or 200 clients total, to check on their well-being. The effort also helped to update the client database, including emergency contact information, and identify clients who wanted friendly calls. The board established a revitalized friendly caller/visitor program to pair about 15-20 volunteers with an equal number of clients to provide social interaction. Ground rules were set so that, if the interaction was a personal visit, volunteers were not to do housework, prepare food, open mail, write checks or any other task the client might request. It was difficult to find socially compatible volunteer/client pairs. SCMAFC subsequently partnered with Let's Connect, a firm in Arlington, for \$300 per month to replace SCMAFC's program. In 2021 SCMAFC stopped paying the monthly fee but Let's Connect agreed to continue serving the clients it had inherited from SCMAFC. Let's Connect had limited success before the lingering pandemic shut it down.

Tom and Austine served with SCMAFC until October 2019. Upon Tom's departure, the board began to consider whether to have a paid, part-time Executive Director. This effort was stalled a few months later due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. The pandemic also resulted in changing in-person monthly board meetings to virtual using Zoom. Local crafters provided free cloth face masks for drivers and riders. There was little drop-off in the number of program volunteers but a 20% drop in number of rides. The drop-off had several causes: some doctors discontinued or reduced in-person office visits, some riders reduced their requests to essential appointments, and some drivers stopped accepting rides. Instead of the volunteer appreciation luncheons, volunteers got a gift card and a poinsettia plant.

In the spring of 2020 Vice-Chair Michael Lerner interviewed other area Shepherd's Centers to determine how they used paid staff. Betty felt that an Executive Director was needed to operate the organization on a day-to-day basis and make the job of the Board Chair more manageable. She felt a paid Executive Director position would also provide stability and continuity. In the summer of 2020 the board agreed to hire a part-time Executive Director and formed a search committee headed by Secretary Carol Edelstein. A person outside the organization was hired in December but resigned after only a few weeks, with both sides recognizing that the match was a poor fit.

In January 2021 Michael Lerner became acting Chair when the volunteer who was supposed to succeed Betty resigned. Thus, the year started with no Executive Director and no permanent Board Chair. Michael, after a career in energy and environmental policy, had joined SCMAFC in 2015 to replace a board member who had been serving as a representative from his synagogue, Temple Rodef Shalom. In addition to his board assignment, Michael served on the Client Assessment committee, as a Ride Coordinator, and as a driver. Soon he became Newsletter Editor and then Advocacy Committee Chair and as Vice-Chair under Betty. Once Tom moved into the Executive Director role, Michael took over Tom's role of writing policies

and procedures, including the procedures for Ride Coordinators and client assessment, and the volunteer application form.

As Acting Chair, Michael formed a Management Committee composed of Secretary Carol Edelstein and Treasurer Bob Clark and three other active Board members (Tom Callanen [Tom], Carrie Le, and Jan Gordon). The committee met before each monthly board meeting to manage the affairs of the Center and effectively serve as an operating committee. The Search Committee continued to function under Carol Edelstein's leadership. Its job was to recruit volunteers to assist with IT, admin support, vice-chairs for committee chairs, and also an Executive Director.

One of the issues the Management Committee considered was insurance since insurance has been the Center's single biggest expense at about \$2,000 per year. Tom asked each driver to verify with their insurance agents whether they would be covered for liability when giving a Shepherd's Center ride. Six insurance companies were involved and all agents said yes. Tom also managed a fundraising effort by sending letters to drivers, clients, and congregations asking for donations.

In 2021 Betty Douglass, no longer serving on the board, agreed to chair a Nominating Committee for 2022 board positions. Transportation Committee Chair Mary Highsmith and Secretary Carol Edelstein also served on the committee. Upon their nomination, Tom agreed to serve as Chair for two years, with the understanding that his Vice-Chair, Carrie Le, would succeed him.

Tom retired in 2012 after a career at CIA and SAIC. In 2017 a friend of Tom's wife suggested he might like to drive for the Shepherd's Center. Tom called and in June began to drive. In 2019 he was recruited to be a Ride Coordinator, and then in January 2020 as Newsletter Editor and board member.

As Chair, Tom's priority in 2022 was fundraising. Even though he didn't think it was necessary to hire an Executive Director while he was Chair, he felt that future chairs might want that support and that the \$6,000 SCMAFC had budgeted for the position was insufficient to attract good candidates. He felt that \$20,000/year for a part-time Executive Director would be more realistic. As he did in 2021 as a member of the Management Committee, he sent letters to drivers, clients, and congregations but this time he didn't make a direct monetary appeal. Instead, he thanked them for their service and/or their donation. These letters yielded as many funds as the letters the previous year. He also focused on seeking grants, whose applications he wrote. The Endowment Fund of The Falls Church Episcopal has been a consistent grantor. The City of Falls Church provided its first grant in the summer of 2023. In 2022 a private fund in North Carolina with an office in Washington, DC sent a large unsolicited donation. SCMAFC's annual expenses typically stay below \$10,000, and revenue is typically around

\$20,000, so SCMAFC has been building up a fund that would make hiring of staff feasible in the future.

Tom continued to hold Management Committee meetings initially but soon discontinued them. After the summer of 2022, he switched the frequency of board meetings from monthly to bimonthly, with an objective of providing board members, all of whom chair operational committees, more time to manage their work. SCMAFC continued to provide taxi service when volunteer drivers were unavailable. In 2022 NVRides began to pay 50% of the cost through a grant from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Fairfax County.

Beginning in the spring of 2022 Tom's priority was to proactively recruit additional volunteer drivers and to recruit experienced drivers for non-driving committee positions (a continuing theme of Tom's predecessor, Michael Lerner). The recruitment of new volunteers involved initiating quarterly postings of ads in local newspapers and in online websites. Recruiting from within involved urging committee chairs to identify vice-chairs so that there would be an orderly transition when a committee chair stepped down. To assist with this effort, he appointed a Nominating Committee in March of 2023 of Chris Sheehy, Jan Gordon and Mark Turco to call all board members to determine their availability in 2024 and to identify potential board members and committee members and vice-chairs from the ranks of existing volunteer drivers. Through his and their efforts, Carrie Le and Carolyn Jeskey volunteered to begin serving in January 2024 as Board Chair and Vice, respectively. Jeff Greenwald began serving as Assistant Treasurer in May of 2023. In September 2023 Jeff also agreed to begin serving in a newly established role as Fundraising Coordinator with Ride Coordinator Irv Auerbach and Treasurer Jay Clevenson. Pat Rafeale joined the Volunteer Recruitment Committee and will succeed Dave Hagigh as committee chair in January 2024. Eileen Place also joined this committee in August 2023, serving in a newly established role as Volunteer Coordinator, focusing on communication with new volunteers to assure they are welcomed into the organization.

APPENDICES

Ride Statistics

<i>SCMAFC Annual Totals 2007 & 2013-2022</i>											
	2007	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of 1 Way rides		466	1503	2087	2353	2506	2232	2533	2032	2079	2358
Number of Extra Stops		7	52	81	85	46	57	83	63	74	69
Number of Riders added		251	57	85	73	79	69	76	36	39	41
Number of Drivers added		52	39	36	29	27	17	28	30	16	19
Number of Hours		257	832	1211	1568	1743	1637	1987	1521	1602	1858
Number of Miles Driven		2527	8637	14482	13845	15650	15543	19354	13744	15676	19124
Total number of Active Riders	70	47	81	106	111	125	117	123	102	88	102
Total number of Active Drivers	25	26	57	70	78	80	71	84	87	55	59

Volunteer Awards

SCMAFC Volunteer of the Year Awards

2014 – Kate Jones

2015 – Nancy Murray

2016 – Sofia Rontaler

2017 – Mary Lee

2018 – Mark Turco and Bob Schulz

2019 – Stew Lingley

2020 – Jerry Welch

2021 – Betty Douglass

2022 – Connie Van Zandt

2023 – TBD

Other Awards

2018 Ed Schrock - designated as Executive Director Emeritus

2019 Mark Turco - Volunteer Arlington, Community Award, Award Category RSVP

2019 Mark Turco - NVRides Recognition at their 5th Anniversary Celebration

2022 Michael Lerner - finalist for SCA Donald Oen Smith National volunteer Leadership Award

2022 Connie van Zandt and Karen Steele - NV Rides recognition for Exceptional Service

2023 Mary Highsmith - Volunteer Arlington, Award Category Partner Award

2023 Mark Turco, Jan Gordon, Mary Highsmith - Volunteer Arlington, Award Category 100 Plus Hours of Service

Executive Directors & Board Chairs

Ed Schrock (2006 – 2014)

Ed Schrock is the founder and soul of SCMAFC. He had a 24-year career in the Navy as a public affairs officer and then served as a Virginia Senator and US Congressman. After retirement he remembered how important his grandparents were to him as he grew up and decided he wanted to do something to help senior citizens. Conversations with Fairfax County staff led to a meeting in the summer of 2006 with Carol Downs, who then headed the Oakton-Vienna Shepherd's Center—one of three Shepherd's Centers operating in northern Virginia at the time. She suggested that Ed set up a Shepherd's Center for McLean, Arlington, and Falls Church. That fall he attended a Fairfax County senior event at which he was able to recruit about 10 volunteers to serve as drivers. In that group were Tom and Austine Eversole who both were very active in the early years.



Ed described the mission of the new organization as helping people to live as long and as safely as possible. His first client needed help decluttering her apartment. Other clients have received similar assistance as well as yard cleanup and just a listening ear. Always, though, the chief assistance was giving rides. Over the next several years, Ed recruited both drivers and riders by visiting 104 churches. Pastor Jim Sprouse at Trinity United Methodist on Dolley Madison Blvd. in McLean, one of the first churches he visited, offered some office space with a telephone and file storage. Ed was solely responsible for arranging rides through emails to drivers and churches asking volunteers to accept ride requests. By 2010 there were about 25 drivers and 70 clients. He also was the primary person to interview prospective clients and drivers. After a while, he stopped using the office because he found it easier to work from his home.

By 2011 Ed's family's complaints about the time he was spending on Shepherd's Center matters led him to ask his key volunteers to serve on a board. In early 2012 about a dozen volunteers answered the call to serve. The board prepared the Articles of Incorporation and the by-laws and eventually obtained the 501(c)(3) designation. They also procured additional insurance to protect officers and drivers and began obtaining background checks for volunteers at \$15 apiece. They also converted Ed's paper records to Ride Scheduler, the computerized scheduling system still in use today. SCMAFC was the second center in northern Virginia to use Ride Scheduler. It was later adopted by NV Rides and the other centers in the area.

Ed stepped down as Chair of the board in 2015, but continued as Executive Director through 2017. Ed remained involved after that for several years, serving as Publicity Chair, driver, yard helper, and myriad other roles. By 2022 health issues limited his activity but his heart is still with SCMAFC.

Tom and Austine Eversole (2015 – 2017)

In 2007 Tom Eversole, a retired Naval officer, and his wife Austine moved to Arlington from Alexandria. They met Ed Schrock at an AARP meeting and signed up to be Shepherd's Center drivers. Due to the failing health and passing of Austine's parents it was 2009 before Tom and Austine were able to become active participants in the Center.



In 2010/2011, as Ed was looking to step back, the Eversoles agreed to step forward. They had formed friendships with other drivers and believed the existence of the Center helped build a sense of community for both drivers and clients. Tom, who was then Executive Director of a trade association, the American Helicopter Services & Aerial Firefighting Association (AHSFA), had experience preparing the legal documents necessary to create a 501(c)(3) organization. He volunteered to do the same for SCMAFC. Tom also served as Treasurer and opened a bank account in the Shepherd's Center name.

Tom also helped coordinate with other centers. He met with the Executive Director of the Vienna-Oakton Shepherd's Center who showed him the new software they were using to schedule rides. Steve Ewart, the developer of Ride Scheduler, flew in from San Diego to give a demonstration of the software and Tom encouraged SCMAFC to adopt it. Tom became the conduit to Steve to suggest modifications to make the software more useful and Steve then made the changes. Tom trained Ride Coordinators on the software and later trained Mary Highsmith to take over his roles as Transportation Committee Chair and chief Ride Coordinator trainer.

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Tom took over from Ed as Executive Director in 2018. In that role he focused on recruiting volunteers, getting the right people to serve on the board, and continued to coordinate with other Centers. Tom continued to serve as

a Ride Coordinator after he became Executive Director but dropped that function when enough other volunteers agreed to serve in that capacity.

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Tom and Austine helped start the friendly caller and visitor program in 2014 which continued until the pandemic in 2020. Longtime Board Vice-Chair Rob Stotz was the chief volunteer behind the handy helper program. Rob had support from two other organizations, Habitat for Humanity and Rebuilding Together.

Tom's focus throughout was to provide transportation for seniors. His goal was to keep the percentage of unfilled ride requests below 10%--a goal that was consistently achieved. Use of a taxi voucher to provide rides began while he was Executive Director and further served to keep unfilled ride requests very low.

Tom and Austine served with SCMAFC until October 2019. Tom continues to serve on the Advisory Council of NV Rides and the Annandale/Springfield Shepherd's Center.

Betty Douglass (2018 – 2020)

Betty fully retired in 2011 after a career in higher education and non-profit administration. She wanted a volunteer position where she could provide service directly to the people she was helping. She saw an announcement for a Lunch 'n Life event sponsored by the Shepherd's Center that was being held at the McLean Baptist Church. She went to the luncheon, was



impressed with the direct access and schedule flexibility that being a driver provided, and signed up. She began driving in 2012 and soon joined the board in 2013, served as Secretary, and then as Chair from 2018 through 2020.

Betty brought her talents from a career in administration to the functioning of the organization. She and Tom Eversole established clear guidelines for the roles of Executive Director and Board Chair. They met each month prior to board meetings to develop an agenda focused on issues requiring board attention.

She added to the existing transportation and recruitment committees by creating committees focused on community outreach, marketing and social media, client assessment, volunteer events and client advocacy. Board members assumed positions as committee chairs. Position descriptions were written for each position. Betty encouraged chairs to recruit committee members and maintain committee rosters. She also encouraged them to set goals each year, use the summer months when there were no board meetings to work on achieving those goals, and to have periodic committee meetings. A policy manual was written. Action items from board meetings were tracked until they were resolved. She held a first-ever annual meeting and board retreat in 2019.

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One of Betty's major interests was finding a way to help low-income, socially-isolated clients. She established a Client Advocacy Committee to assist clients in navigating the local social service and non-profit network to find the help they needed. In 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic five board members each called 40 clients, or 200 clients total, to check on their well-being. The effort also helped to update the client database, including emergency contact information, and identify clients who wanted friendly calls. The board established a revitalized friendly caller/visitor program to pair about 15-20 volunteers with an equal number of clients to provide social interaction. Ground rules were set so that, if the interaction was a personal visit, volunteers were not to do housework, prepare food, open mail, write checks or any other task the client may request. It was difficult to find socially compatible volunteer/client pairs. SCMAFC subsequently partnered with Let's Connect, a firm in Arlington for \$300 per month to replace SCMAFC's program. In 2021 SCMAFC stopped paying the monthly fee but Let's Connect agreed to continue serving the clients it had inherited from SCMAFC. Let's Connect had limited success before the lingering pandemic shut it down.

In 2019 the board began to consider whether to have a paid, part-time Executive Director. The effort intensified after Tom Eversole's resignation that October but was stalled a few months later due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the spring of 2020 Vice-Chair Michael Lerner interviewed other area Shepherd's Centers to determine how they used paid staff. Betty felt that an Executive Director was needed to operate the organization on a day-to-day basis and make the job of the board chair more manageable. She felt a paid Executive Director position would also provide stability and continuity. In the summer of 2020 the board agreed to hire a part-time Executive Director and formed a search committee. A person outside the organization was hired in December but resigned after attending the December board meeting, with both sides recognizing that the match was a poor fit.

By the end of 2019 the Great Falls Shepherd's Center's Board concluded they had insufficient resources to operate the Center and asked to join SCMAFC. Betty asked for a six-month delay to consider the request. During this time the merger offer was made to Oakton-Vienna, which accepted. About the same time Oakton-Vienna added the communities of Herndon and Reston and renamed themselves SCNOVA.

Once the pandemic began in March 2020, monthly board meetings continued through Zoom. Local crafters donated free cloth masks for drivers and riders. There was little dropoff in the number of program participants but a 20% drop in number of rides. The dropoff had several causes: some doctors discontinued or reduced in-person office visits, some riders reduced their requests to essential appointments, and some drivers stopped accepting rides. Instead of the volunteer appreciation luncheons, volunteers were given gift cards and a poinsettia plant for their continued service.

Michael Lerner (2021-2022)



Michael Lerner, after a career in energy and environmental policy, joined SCMAFC in 2015 to replace a board member who had been serving as a representative from his synagogue, Temple Rodef Shalom. Immediately he started serving on the board, on the Client Assessment Committee, as a Ride Coordinator, and as a driver. Michael also started to help Tom Eversole in writing policies and procedures including the procedures for Ride Coordinators and client assessment and revising the volunteer application form. Soon he became Newsletter Editor and served as Vice-Chair under Betty Douglass.

In January 2021 Michael became acting Chair when the volunteer who was supposed to succeed Betty resigned. Thus, the year started with no Executive Director and no permanent Board Chair. Michael formed a Management Committee composed of the four Board officer

positions and three other active Board members (Tom Callanen, Carrie Le, and Jan Gordon). The committee met before each monthly board meeting “to manage the affairs of the association” and effectively serve as an operating committee. The Search Committee continued to function under Carol Edelstein’s leadership. Its job was to recruit volunteers to assist with IT, admin support, vice-chairs for committee chairs, and also an Executive Director.

At the end of 2021, Michael stepped down as Acting Chair but took over as Chair of the New Client Assessment Committee since that chair was stepping down. In this role, he served as the primary screener of potential new clients. He wrote new procedures for this committee including one for the Chair, another for the Screeners and another for Committee members who were doing the face -to-face interviews.

Tom Callanen (2022 – 2023)

Tom retired in 2012 after a career at CIA and SAIC. In the spring of 2017 a friend of Tom’s wife suggested he might like to drive for the Shepherd’s Center. Tom called and in June began to drive. In 2019 he was recruited to be a Ride Coordinator, then Newsletter Editor and, starting in 2020, as a board member (Newsletter Editor was a board member position when Tom joined; subsequently, it has been changed to non-board at the preference of the incumbent).



In the summer of 2020 he began serving on the search committee for a first-ever paid Executive Director. The committee identified two candidates. Betty Douglass agreed to their preferred candidate but the candidate resigned shortly after being hired. In 2021, with Michael Lerner as Acting Board Chair, Tom chaired Michael’s Management Committee, serving with Secretary Carol Edelstein, Treasurer Bob Clark (and then Jay Clevenson, who replaced Bob that spring), and Communications Committee Chair Carrie Le. One of the issues Tom worked on was insurance. He asked each driver to verify with their insurance agents whether they would be covered for liability when giving a Shepherd’s Center ride. Six insurance companies were involved and all agents said yes. Tom also managed a fundraising effort by sending letters to drivers, clients, and congregations asking for donations.

In the fall of 2021 Betty Douglass, no longer serving on the board, agreed to chair a Nominating Committee for 2022 board positions. Mary Highsmith and Carol Edelstein served on the committee. In response to their nomination, Tom agreed to serve as Chair for two years, with the understanding that his Vice-Chair, Carrie Le, would succeed him.

One of Tom’s priorities his first year was fundraising. Even though he didn’t think it was necessary to hire an Executive Director while he was Chair, he felt that future chairs would

perhaps want that support and that the \$6,000 SCMAFC had budgeted for the position was insufficient to attract good candidates. He felt that \$20,000/year for a part-time ED would be more realistic. He again sent letters to drivers, clients, and congregations but this time he didn't make a direct monetary appeal. Instead, he thanked them for their service and/or their donations. These letters yielded as much or more funds than the letters the previous year. He also focused on getting grants, whose applications he wrote.

He continued to hold Management Committee meetings initially but soon discontinued them. After the summer of 2022, he switched the frequency of board meetings from monthly to bimonthly with an objective of providing board members, almost all of whom chair operational committees, more time to manage their work. SCMAFC continued to provide taxi service on occasions when volunteer drivers were unavailable, a program initiated in 2020 as the pandemic caused a number of volunteers to discontinue driving. Recognizing this unanticipated expense for several centers operating in Northern Virginia, NVRides sought and received a grant to help defray the costs. Starting in the 2nd half of 2022 NVRides began paying 50% of SCMAFC's taxi expenses-through a government grant.

Beginning in the spring of 2022 Tom's priority was to proactively recruit additional volunteer drivers and to recruit experienced drivers for non-driving committee positions (a continuing theme of Tom's predecessor, Michael Lerner). The recruitment of new volunteers involved initiating quarterly postings of ads in local newspapers and in online websites. Recruiting from within involved urging committee chairs to identify vice-chairs so that there would be an orderly transition when a committee chair stepped down. To assist with this effort he appointed a Nominating Committee in March of 2023 of Chris Sheehy, Jan Gordon and Mark Turco to call all board members to determine their availability in 2024 and to identify potential board members and committee members and vice-chairs. Through his and their efforts, Carrie Le and Carolyn Jeskey volunteered to begin serving in January 2024 as Board Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Jeff Greenwald began serving as Assistant Treasurer and Pat Rafaele joined the Volunteer Recruitment Committee and will succeed Dave Hagigh as committee chair in January 2024. In addition, Katharine Carney joined the Outreach Committee and Connie Van Zandt and Sandy Crowley joined the Volunteer Appreciation Committee. Similar changes were made to the Client Assessment & Advocacy Committee, with the appointment of Carolyn Jeskey as Chair and the addition of committee members Ronnie Precup, Sandi Paige, Tony Tobat, Vickie Marx, and Sarah Siegel. In a similar fashion Kim Chapman was recruited to serve as a Ride Coordinator. And, Jan and Irv Auerbach volunteered to serve in additional capacities: Jan as Secretary of the Board and Irv as a member of the newsletter team and a volunteer to assist with fundraising. Finally, Ed Groark was recruited in February 2023 to serve as Newsletter Editor when Laurie Clark resigned that month from this position.