

Spring 2022

# Friendship Matters



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FriendshipCenters.org  
(941) 955-2122

## NOURISHING MIND, BODY AND HEART

Because of you, Senior Friendship Centers is on the frontline, providing for hungry seniors. But hunger can have many meanings and causes, and affect more people than we know.

A person can be hungry for food, but also for a connection, for friendship, and for support. Many of the seniors we serve are lonely. You help feed their souls, minds, and bodies through programs and services that prevent isolation and loneliness.

With your support, we served almost 300,000 meals in 2021 through our dining centers and home-delivered meals. And lonely and homebound seniors received over 8,600 friendly visits and phone calls – a literal lifeline of hope and connection.

We often think of hunger as being caused by financial strain. But right here in our community, seniors may be hungry because they have lost a spouse who did the cooking, have limited mobility, or can't get to the grocery store. Some may be experiencing depression or cognitive decline.

The pandemic introduced new

levels of hunger, loneliness, and despair. Many older adults fear being taken from their homes if anyone knows they're hungry. So they stay hidden, and hard for us to help. Up to two-thirds of seniors who qualify for SNAP benefits don't apply for them, often because they don't know how. Or because of fear and shame. As a result, they often don't know where they will find their next meal.

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**They have nowhere to turn – but you can offer them hope.**  
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Your support helps us reach into our communities and bring food and connections to those who need it most. Without the meals that your gift provides, many will pass on eating altogether. Hunger and isolation also take a severe toll on seniors' health and wellbeing - putting them at risk for chronic health conditions like depression,



asthma, and diabetes.

Senior hunger is a growing issue, and only with your continued support can we serve this vulnerable population. Thank you for helping seniors in your neighborhood get nutritious meals. And ensuring that they are not alone. Seniors can get more than a meal at our dining centers. They also make friends, form connections, and become involved with a community. Your support gives their lives meaning and purpose.

Seniors need you more than ever, can they count on your gift today?

Look inside to read about seniors you've helped



## Lives You've Touched

### Frances Hines

Frances, 76, is a widow who lives alone. When she recently fell on financial hard times, she wasn't able to pay her electric and water bill, and both were shut off. Fortunately, Senior Friendship Centers and the Friendship at Home program were there to help.

When faced with financial hardship, many seniors have to choose between paying their bills and paying for groceries or medicine. Getting behind on bills can be a cycle that is impossible to get out of, and can cause homelessness, depression, or food insecurity.

With the help of your generous donations and Season of Sharing funds from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, our Friendship at Home program helped Frances get back on her feet.

"I needed help," she says. "I was alone and had nowhere to turn, I really didn't. Senior Friendship Centers helped me with my electric and my water and I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Your support of Senior Friendship Centers helps us to provide services and programs for seniors like Frances who have limited resources.



### Larry Cappetto

Larry, 90, was married for 61 years to "the most beautiful woman in the world," he says, until she passed away from dementia. He was her caregiver for the last three years of her life. After she passed, he says, "I became like a hermit."

Unfortunately, Larry's story is not unique. Thousands of seniors in Southwest Florida do not have any family, friends or support system. Social isolation can lead to depression and a decline in physical health, and many do not regularly eat healthy meals or exercise.

Loneliness and isolation in seniors have been linked to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, increased risk of falls, Alzheimer's disease, and even death. People who find themselves alone due to the death of a spouse or partner, separation from friends or family, retirement, loss of mobility, and lack of transportation are at particular risk.

Conversely, studies have shown that people who engage in meaningful, productive activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose. These activities help maintain their well-being and improve their cognitive function.

Larry didn't want to be around anyone for about seven or eight months, and became more and more isolated. One day, his daughter brought him to the senior center in Venice, where he and his late wife used to come together to dance. Larry found a renewed sense of hope, dancing again and making friends.

"This place brought me back to life!" Larry beams. He now enjoys dancing to the live music every day at the center. He says that the other members all think he dances like Fred Astaire, although he says, "I do my own style. I create my own choreography. They all love it." Larry says dancing keeps him young. "This place is about more than just dancing. When I'm here, I'm not alone."

The social interaction, music and dancing at Senior Friendship Centers all contribute to a dramatically improved quality of life. Your support makes it possible for seniors like Larry to find the services and programs they need, and a sense of purpose.

We couldn't do this work without you

# Legacy Society - Planned Giving Made Easy

## What is Planned Giving?

Planned giving is a donation arranged in the present, but given at a future date. Commonly donated through a will or trust, planned gifts are most often given once the donor has passed away. For donors, planned giving can be a great way to give their life new meaning...to keep doing good beyond your lifetime.

Since a planned gift is for the future, it is not limited by your current financial status or needs. Planned giving may allow you to make a gift you might not ordinarily be able to make because it isn't dependent on your regular income.

## Why Should I Join?

Planned giving preserves your legacy – and helps secure the future of Senior Friendship Centers. With your planned gift, you can combine your heart for helping others with your overall financial and estate planning goals. This is a special opportunity to touch lives for years to come.

Some planned gifts offer you direct benefits, such as lifetime income or tax savings. Most planned gifts are excluded from estate tax, which can be a benefit to your family. Selecting the right type of planned gift may help you create a larger gift than you thought possible.

## What Can I Donate?

Planned giving can include gifts of cash, trusts, stocks, life insurance, real estate, or retirement accounts. Whatever gift you choose, planned giving can help you fulfill your personal and charitable goals. If you're worried that your gift might be too small – don't! Even the smallest planned gift can have a lasting impact on seniors. Senior Friendship Centers is here to help you find the option that's right for you.

## How Do I Join the Legacy Society?

The Legacy Society is a group of individuals committed to securing the future of Senior Friendship Centers and improving the lives of older adults throughout the community for generations to come. Joining this special group is easy: a conversation and a simple form are all you need to join the Legacy Society. Jane Icely, Charitable Giving Officer at Senior Friendship Centers, will guide you through the process and help you understand your options. Call or email her today to get started with leaving your legacy: (941) 556-3215 or [mjicely@friendshipcenters.org](mailto:mjicely@friendshipcenters.org).

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## **Your Legacy can change lives. Get started today!**

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*“Senior Friendship Centers has been a central part of my life for years. I joined the Legacy Society to preserve the organization and provide support for seniors long after I'm gone. I like knowing that my personal legacy will be remembered as someone committed to improving life for older adults in our community.” – Crissy, Legacy Society Member*



**To get started with leaving your legacy  
contact (941) 556-3215 or [mjicely@friendshipcenters.org](mailto:mjicely@friendshipcenters.org).**

# Community Impact



Senior Friendship Centers



**298,851**  
meals to hungry seniors last year

*1 in 6 older adults in Florida faces food insecurity. Senior hunger can be caused by poverty, mobility issues, depression, loss of spouse, and more.*



Our Adult Day Services provided  
**26,966**  
hours of respite care in 2021



Our Caregiver Resource Centers delivered over  
**2,917**  
hours of support & education in 2021

*Nearly 70% of caregivers say caring for a loved one in the #1 stress in their lives*



Nearly  
**10,000**  
Seniors served last year

*50% of adults live longer as a result of social connection*



There were more than  
**16,000**  
visits to our Senior Centers in 2021



SFC helped  
**276**  
seniors in 2021 who were experiencing financial crisis



Volunteer friendly visitors made  
**4,909**  
visits to homebound seniors in 2021



Volunteers made  
**3,748**  
telephone reassurance calls to homebound seniors in 2021



**1,673**  
older adults received case management services in 2021 to help them remain independent in their own homes

[Click Here to Donate](#)



Visit us on the web at [friendshipcenters.org](http://friendshipcenters.org)

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