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SCNOVA NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025 Edition/ SCNOVA



Bountiful Blessings - SCNOVA 2025 At a Glance

As the holiday season approaches and 2025 comes to a close, we celebrate another year at the Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia. This year SCNOVA gained new sponsors, volunteers and participants, expanded programs, engaged volunteers & grew its impact. With strong volunteer engagement, and growing community recognition, the organization continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults.

SCNOVA's volunteers continue to be the heart of the organization. At the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon held in April, SCNOVA honored several dedicated individuals who contributed 400+ hours of service over the past year. To further support this vital volunteer network, SCNOVA welcomed a new Volunteer & Operations Manager, Nikita Mutter Riverson, in early 2025. SCNOVA is also expanding opportunities for seniors to stay active and engaged. In March, the center launched a weekly Walking Club, offering a fun and social way for participants to enjoy low-impact exercise. This new offering builds on SCNOVA's core programs, including transportation, minor home repairs, friendly callers/visitors, and other services that help older adults remain independent in their homes and connected to their community.

The 4th Annual Pickleball & Golf Festival, held in September 2025, once again brought together community partners, donors, and local supporters for a day of fun and philanthropy. This event was a success and remains a key source of support for SCNOVA's essential services. Adding to the excitement, SCNOVA was selected for the 2025 Spur Local class of outstanding nonprofits, an honor recognizing high-impact, trusted organizations serving the region.

SCNOVA's most recent impact data reflects the depth of its service. More than 3,000 older adults served annually, thousands of volunteer hours logged, over 15,000 miles driven by volunteer drivers, 97% of transportation recipients reporting that rides help them remain independent.

These numbers tell a powerful story about the organization's role in supporting older adults, but nothing tells a story like a real live testimonial. SCNOVA participants gave their feedback in recent surveys expressing the impact this non-profit has on their day to day lives, "The SCNOVA transportation program is very supportive. SCNOVA provides a peace of mind I couldn't get anywhere else." said D.H., SCNOVA participant. Another SCNOVA participant, J.S., expressed, "I'd like to acknowledge drivers Mary W. and Frank F. This has been the best year for getting rides but the worst year for my health. I am super thankful for everything SCNOVA does."

SCNOVA 2025 Calendar of Programs & Events

- November 23, 2025 – **Interfaith Community Service** - supported by the Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia's Congregational Advisory Council and hosted by Emmaus United Church of Christ & Vienna Baptist Church. 7:00 pm at 900 Maple Ave. E, Vienna, VA 22180 *Pie Social to follow.
- December 3, 2025 – **Ugly Sweater Holiday Volunteer Appreciation** – Join us while we show our amazing volunteers some well-deserved appreciation with yummy bites and beverages at Vienna VA favorite, Bear Branch Tavern! Wear your favorite holiday inspired “ugly sweater”. This event will be from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm at 133 Maple Ave. E, Vienna, VA 22180. This is a free event. Please call 703-281-0538 to register with the office.
- December 9, 2025 -**Holiday Tea & Sweets Celebration** – 12:00 to 2:00 pm, at St. Mark Catholic Church, 9970 Vale Rd. Vienna VA 22181. Registration is \$20.00 for assorted treats and a holiday concert by the Sweet Adelines of Vienna Falls Chorus. **Signature Sponsor, Johns Hopkins Health Plans and Refreshment Sponsor, Sunrise Senior Living of Hunter Mill.**
- December 15, 2025 – **Holiday Bingo at Foster's Grille Vienna** – \$10 for 10 games, yummy eats and fun prizes! 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, at Foster's Grille – 138A Maple Ave. Vienna VA 22180 *Registration not required. Pay at the door. **Sponsored by Eldementals – RN Care Management and Health Care Consulting.**

***Registration opens 30 days before the event. To register please call 703- 281-0538 or visit www.scnova.org.**

SCNOVA Programs

Active Aging & Wellness

Wednesdays 10:45 -11:45 am Via Zoom

8 Week Sessions \$50 per Session

(See remaining 2025 sessions below)

12/3/25 thru 2/4/26

Contact Casey Tarr to register now,

703-850-4131. Email: Eileen

Meileentarr1@verizon.net

Caregiver Support Group

Meets via Zoom, at 10:00 am to 11:30 am on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

For more information, or to attend please contact Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838,

tarrjack5@gmail.com or Marcia Baumgartner at marciabaumgartner95@gmail.com

Tai Chi / Qigong

Every Monday and Thursday at 9:00 am.

Mondays are at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Rd, Vienna, VA 22181.

Thursdays are at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fairfax, at 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA 22124.

(See remaining 2025 session below)

Fall Session (Oct – Dec)

***Registration & waiver required. Call the SCNOVA Office to register, 703-281-0538. New participants are welcome with a suggested donation of \$45 per session.**

Walking Club with Casey Tarr

The Walking Club meets every Tuesday at 1:00 pm. Please contact Casey Tarr to register now and learn about the next meeting location

Phone: 703-850-4131

Email: Eileen.Tarr1@verizon.net

SCNOVA Volunteer Highlight- Wolfgang Sherer



SCNOVA volunteer Wolf Sherer is the 2025 recipient of The Donald Owen and Katherine Horridge Smith National Volunteer of Excellence Award. This award carries forth the legacy of the Donald Owen Smith National Volunteer Leadership Award, first established in 2014. While the original award recognized one outstanding volunteer, this expanded program now honors one exceptional volunteer each year from every Shepherd's Center (Aging Forward Alliance affiliate) across the country.

This program celebrates the many dedicated individuals who embody the spirit of giving, inspire others, and help make our communities better places to live. Each year, honorees are inducted into the prestigious National Gallery of Volunteer Excellence, showcasing their remarkable achievements and underscoring the invaluable role of volunteers in advancing healthy aging with purpose and meaning.

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia is proud to present this honor to Wolf Sherer. Wolf began volunteering with The Shepherd's Center in the spring of 2020 after his retirement. Anyone who knows Wolf quickly comes to recognize his kind, thoughtful, and compassionate character. All of us here at SCNOVA (staff, BOD, participants and other volunteers) are fortunate to have gotten to know him in the past five years. Wolf not only drives for The Shepherd's Center but volunteers for the Congregation Advisory Council, helped move and set-up when SCNOVA moved locations, and is also a handy helper volunteer. As a volunteer driver, Wolf has given over 3,175 hours and has driven over 9,770 miles. At 60 mph, that's about 190,000 miles behind the wheel – nearly 8 times around the earth. Wolf's gift is in his genuine connection with participants and making true friendships. He remembers their families, their stories and concerns and he cares deeply about their wellbeing. These are all qualities that will not show up in numbers.

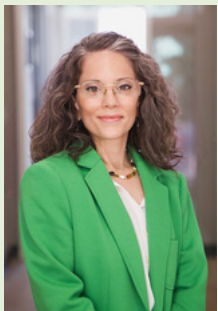
Casey Tarr and the SCNOVA Walking Club - What's it all about and how to join



Long time volunteer, friend and supporter of SCNOVA, Casey Tarr has dedicated her time, healthcare experience and passion for service yet again to spearhead the SCNOVA Walking Group. Her list of active adults interested in joining her group, once small, has now risen to 20 participants and counting. Not only does this program provide a healthy dose of exercise and fresh air, but it also directly satisfies a key point of the SCNOVA mission, socialization.

Carolyn D. said, "Exercise is really important to me. This is a way I can get out and do my walking and not be bored. I'm with a group of people within the aging community. Research shows the number one thing that supports healthy aging is community. I'm making friends, gaining new information...It's been really wonderful." The walking group always welcomes new members, free of charge. If this sounds like a group for you, please contact Casey Tarr at, **Meileentarr1@gmail.com** so we can get you signed up today!

A Word from SCNOVA Executive Director - Carolyn Pennington



I'm going to make a bold statement. Fall is the best season in Northern Virginia. The oppressive heat and humidity of August have finally passed, the colors of the leaves are magnificent, the mornings are cool, and the afternoons are sunny and bright. There are hearty soups, hot chocolate, and cozy wood fires—my list of things to love about fall could fill pages. But what I appreciate most is Thanksgiving time. For me, as for many of us, it's a time to truly give thanks—to appreciate our friends and family, our health, and the many blessings we share.

This year, as in so many before, the Shepherd's Center's greatest blessings are our Board, our dedicated staff, volunteers, participants, our Congregational Advisory Council, supporters, sponsors, friends, ambassadors, and all who cherish our community as a place where every person, regardless of age, has the opportunity to thrive. Your voices encourage and strengthen us for the opportunities and challenges in the year ahead. Keep them coming—we love to hear from you! Wishing you a holiday and winter season filled with peace, love, joy, thankfulness, and blessings that abound.

Ways to Support the SCNOVA Mission this Holiday Season



Giving Tuesday is December 2, 2025. Your support will make a powerful difference in the lives of older adults who rely on SCNOVA free transportation for doctors' appointments, food stores, banks and other needed destinations.

Thank you.

**The Giving Tuesday campaign will be
November 24, 2025 - December 5, 2025.**

*Hover your phone camera over the QR code below to pull up a direct link.



Give back by sharing your positive experience. If you had a great time at one of our luncheons, received excellent service from a driver or handy helper, or simply love The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia, please leave us a 5 Star Google review using the QR code below. Thank you!

*Hover your phone camera over the QR code below to pull up a direct link.



A Word from SCNOVA Chairman of the Board - Scott Schroth



We are speeding right into the winter season and, as usual, SCNOVA is loading up on fun and festive events for our participants and volunteers! In addition to our crucial transportation, companionship, and Handy Helper services, our mission is to cultivate social connectedness among older adults in the communities that we serve. To that end, be sure to join the fun at the Fall Harvest Festival, the Ugly Sweater Volunteer Social (of course, we all have them!), Holiday Tea and Sweets, and our final 2025 Holiday Bingo at Foster's Grille.

2025 has been another very successful year thanks to the hard work of our dedicated staff

and hundreds of volunteers. We've piloted new programs with some of our partners (for instance, free Taxi transportation in collaboration with NVRides) and, after over 25 years at the Vienna Baptist Church, we moved our offices to a marvelous new location on Church Street in the heart of Vienna. The Board of Directors remains focused on securing sustainable financial resources, attending to our 5-year Strategic Plan, and cultivating new leadership for the Board and our volunteer programs. Many of our board members and volunteer leaders have risen from the ranks of our volunteers. Leadership experience is not required, merely dedication to our mission of service. If you have enjoyed your experience with SCNOVA, reach out to me, and I'd be happy to talk about the rewards and camaraderie of joining our leadership team.

Qualified Charitable Distributions & IRA Distributions

What kind of donations make the most sense for your financial portfolio? Consider Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) and IRA Distributions as options when formulating a plan that works best for you and your legacy. Are you aware that IRA owners who are over 70 1/2 years old and are required to take a minimum distribution annually may make a contribution directly from a traditional IRA to a qualified charity? This is called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). Here's the good news. SCNOVA is a qualified 501 (c)(3) charity. This is a wonderful way to support our work while also saving on your taxes. Per IRS rules, you may donate up to \$100,000 without it being considered a taxable distribution, but we welcome any amount. Plus, the deduction lowers the donor's taxable adjustable gross income. Furthermore, QCDs are a good choice for individuals who otherwise could not deduct all or part of their charitable donations. QCDs must be made directly from the IRA to SCNOVA. No intermediate steps, such as depositing funds into a personal account, are allowed. Donors must follow the IRS QCD rules to avoid paying taxes on the donation and all donations must be received by December 31, 2025 to qualify. If you need information about making a QCD donation, please contact us at 703-281-0538.

SCNOVA Annual Appeal

Because of You we continue to foster individual well-being and independence for older adults.

We offer unique and engaging enrichment programs, Tai Chi and Active Wellness classes, Lunch n Life programs, Bingo Nights at Foster's Grille, Walking Group and Caregiver Support Group. Thank you for helping us create meaningful opportunities for social connectedness in keeping with the SCNOVA mission.

Would you joyfully consider a donation to the Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia? We are dependent on friends like you to be our source for support so we can maintain the quality and frequency of our programs.

We invite you to visit the website and use the "Donate" tab on the top of the homepage to make a secure contribution online, www.scnova.org.

Or, if you'd prefer, please send a check to SCNOVA, Attn: Annual Appeal, 111 Church St., NW, Suite 202, Vienna, VA 22180.

Murder Mystery Lunch N Life Photos



Halloween Bingo Photos



Harvest Festival Photos



If you happen to take any snapshots of the SCNOVA events you attend, please feel free to submit them via email to, Communications@scnova.org to be featured in the next edition of the SCNOVA newsletter!

SCNOVA Holiday Closure Schedule



****Please be advised that the Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia will be closed from 1:00 pm on November 26th through November 29th for the Thanksgiving holiday. SCNOVA will also be closed from noon December 24th through January 1, 2025 for the Christmas/New Year's holiday season and January 19th for MLK day. Please schedule your rides accordingly.**

SCNOVA Inclement Weather Schedule



Please be advised that SCNOVA follows the Fairfax County Public School closing schedule for inclement weather emergencies. When the office is closed all rides for that day will be canceled (and rescheduled if possible) in the interest of client and volunteer safety. If Fairfax County Public Schools are delayed, SCNOVA rides during the time they are delayed will be canceled as well. Ex. If FCPS is delayed until 10 am, all SCNOVA rides scheduled before 10 am will be canceled, and rescheduled if possible.

SCNOVA Staff will be working remotely during the days Fairfax County public schools are closed for inclement weather. Though there will be no rides on those days, you are welcome to call between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm to schedule future rides. Please remember we require at least 3 business days in advance to schedule a ride for you.

Special Thank You to Our Congregational Advisory Council Members & Supporters



If you are interested in participating in the next meeting at Emmaus UCC, please reach out to the office for zoom and/or in person information, 703-281-0538.

***All are welcome to join.**

Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church * Antioch/Redeemer Christian Church * Christ the King Lutheran Church * Church of the Holy Comforter * Emmanuel Lutheran Church * Emmaus United Church of Christ * First Baptist Church of Vienna * Oakton United Methodist Church * Our Lady of Good Counsel * St. Francis Episcopal Church * St. John Neumann Church * St. Mark Catholic Church * The Church of the Good Shepherd * Unity of Fairfax * Vale United Methodist Church * Vienna Baptist Church * Vienna Baha'i Faith Community * Vienna Presbyterian Church * Wesley United Methodist Church



111 Church St. NW, Suite 202
Vienna, VA 22180

Dedicated to improving quality of life as we age, through supportive programs and services, personal enrichment and volunteer engagement.

Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia serves Oakton, Vienna, Reston, Herndon, Great Falls, Merrifield, Dunn Loring and parts of Fairfax North of Rt. 50

SCNOVA Spotlight - Winter 2025



Shepherd's Center thanks Navy Federal Credit Union for
printing this newsletter!

Staff

Executive Director - Carolyn Pennington, 703-281-0538, carolynpennington@scnova.org
Marketing/Events Manager - Ambre Tomlinson, 703-281-0538, communications@scnova.org
Operations/Volunteer Manager - Nikita Mutter Riverson, 703-281-0538, office@scnova.org

2025 Board of Directors

Scott Schroth -Board Chair
Jayne Young - Vice-Chair
Leigh Banducci -Board Treasurer
Michelle Kang -Secretary
Alexandra Sullivan - Client Representative
Akram Aleahmad
Tim Dodd
Richard Duesterhaus
Scott Honiberg
Marsha Komandt
Annamarie Mariani-Huehn
Robin Portman