

Volume I 2023



# GROWING TOGETHER

MEALS ON WHEELS IN ALABAMA'S RIVER REGION  
**Then & Now**

# A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



MACOA had a good finish to 2022. We finished the year with the distribution of holiday bags, and a special meal service for clients on Thanksgiving and Christmas Days. Thanks so much to our community supporters who made these events possible.

2023 continues to look promising and the work has begun. Our first major event of the year took place - the Culinary Caper was on March 5, and was a sold out event (we sadly had to turn some supporters away). Making the event successful took much work, but the efforts of MACOA's staff, board, and volunteers got it done.

One last comment - I want to brag on our board. This board works, all 28 of them. Having been active in community activities most of my adult life, I have served on many boards. This is one of the best and I so appreciate serving with them.

Roy McAuley, Chairman (*pictured above as a child with his sister*)



PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS  
**CHARITIES**

MACOA would like to thank Publix Super Markets Charities for their recent donation to support MACOA's Meals on Wheels program. We appreciate their continued support of seniors in our region!

## MACOA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

LaShandra Warren Barnes  
Zenobia Blackmon  
Angela Bradwell  
Sherice Brown  
Larry G. Carter  
Angela Crosby  
Cassandra Crosby  
General Trent Edwards  
Robert Froese  
Jason Gardner  
H. Lewis Gillis  
Allison Guice  
Roy McAuley  
Andrea McCain  
Nikita McClain  
Judge Vanzetta McPherson  
Gary Oos  
Cheryl Payson  
Sheron Rose  
Jennifer Scott-Epperson  
Kris Stallworth  
Aimee Steineker  
Willis Teel  
Sherry Weeks  
Dr. Tonda West  
Sherry White  
Reverend Richard Williams

## EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Dottie Blair  
Cathy Caddell  
Barbara Duke  
Sue Groce  
Pete Knight  
Sarah Spear  
Sieu Tang Wood

## SEE OUR MISSION IN ACTION

SUCCESS AT MACOA MEANS SERVING THE SENIORS IN OUR REGION THAT ARE HOMEBOUND AND VULNERABLE. EVENTS LIKE THE ONE ROY MENTIONED PROVIDE THE CRITICAL FUNDING TO ENABLE THIS WORK, WHICH WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR TREMENDOUS SUPPORTERS, INCLUDING YOU.

WE WOULD LOVE FOR YOU TO TAKE JUST A FEW MINUTES TO WATCH THE VIDEO LINKED IN THE QR CODE TO THE RIGHT TO SEE FOR YOURSELF THE IMPACT YOU AND OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS ARE MAKING POSSIBLE.



# A NOTE FROM OUR CEO



Many years ago, when my children were young, I was a member of the Junior Woman's Club of Montgomery. My volunteer assignment was to deliver meals to seniors for MACOA's Meals on Wheels program. I enjoyed the heartwarming experience so much that I never forgot some of the clients that I met. Of course, I never thought that many years later, I would be hired to take over the leadership of the program. I am so blessed to again have the opportunity to serve seniors and to be a part of a great organization.

As Roy shared, we just held the 29th Culinary Caper fundraiser where we raised funds for our Meals on Wheels program. The community response was tremendous with a sold-out event this year. Hundreds of local businesses, restaurants, and individuals supported this event by donating the food and online auction items. Dozens of volunteers donated their time to help serve the meals to our guests. This annual fundraiser is a chance for the guests to celebrate our service to clients whose smiling faces confirm our commitment to keeping them healthy, safe, and living with dignity.

I am happy to announce that our Meals on Wheels program has grown and will be growing even more. The increased number of seniors who need home-delivered meals demonstrates just how severe food insecurity is for older adults. We will be adding twelve new clients to our hot meal program. More recently, we grew the number of Frozen Meal clients as well as Weekend meal clients. With the increased number of seniors who need our services, we are constantly looking for creative ways to help them receive extra nutrition and friendly reminders that they are not forgotten.

Donna Marietta, Chief Executive Officer

# GOLF

## DRIVE FOR MEALS ON WHEELS

Since starting our annual golf tournament in 2003, MACOA has raised over \$500,000, making more than **76,000 meals** possible for our Meals on Wheels clients. We are looking forward to another great event for 2023, which will not only be a fun day on the Green, but will **help make our critical services possible to over 400 vulnerable, homebound seniors in our community.**

### FORMAT

**Four Person Team Scramble**

### WHERE

**Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Capitol Hill  
(Prattville, AL)**

### WHEN

**May 3, 2023  
Registration at 7:00 AM  
Shotgun Start at 8:00 AM**

### TO LEARN MORE & PURCHASE TICKETS

**Visit our website ([www.MACOA.org](http://www.MACOA.org)) or contact  
Hazel Waites at (334) 263-0532 or [hwaites@macoa.org](mailto:hwaites@macoa.org)**

**TEAM AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE!**



# STAFF

## Then & Now

*We asked the members of our Leadership Team to share insights on their growth, and reflections on their childhood and what shaped them. We hope you enjoy learning more about our team!*

### Chief Executive Officer: Donna Marietta

**Did you play sports as a kid? And now as an adult?**

*As a kid, I played soccer in high school and volleyball, and now as an adult, I am crazy about pickleball.*

**What was considered a special treat for you as a kid? And now?**

*A special treat as a kid was visiting my grandmother who saved coins in a jar for me. When I heard the musical ice cream van come down the street, I could get some money out and buy a treat. Now, a special treat can be hummingbird, carrot, or coconut cake.*



### Director of Senior Services: Pam Goodwin



**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*When I was having a little pity party for myself, my grandmother would say, "Honey you look to your left and your right and there is always someone who is worse off than you." I still think of this when I get to feeling sorry for myself.*

**What was considered a special treat for you as a kid? And now?**

*On Sundays when we took the drive to my grandparents, my Dad would stop at a little country store and let us pick out a small treat. The treat was always good but it was more about seeing the elderly couple that ran the store. The wife only had one arm and we were fascinated at all she could do with only one arm. As an adult my favorite treat is peach Tillamook ice cream.*

### Chief Financial Officer: Martha Furr

**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*Don't be constrained by what others think or expect of you.*

**Describe your ideal day as a kid, and now as an adult.**

*As a kid: Summer day with a good book, a jelly sandwich, and a tree to sit in. As an adult: Summer day with my kids and grandkids in the pool.*

**Did you play sports as a kid? And now as an adult?**

*No, I was (and still am) a dancer. I was also a majorette.*



## Donor Relations Coordinator: Hazel Waites



**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*Be kind to yourself.*

**What was the occupation of your parents, grandparents, or great grandparents? Do you think this influenced you in your career?**

*My father was a pastor and had a ministry that helped people who were incarcerated get resources they needed. Because I watched him impact and change lives, I grew a heart for serving others. Working with MACOA gives me a new purpose every day. I know the work I do here makes a difference in my community.*

**Describe your ideal day as a kid, and now as an adult.**

*When I was younger, my ideal day consisted of watching cartoons or playing video games every Saturday. I also enjoyed packing snacks with my parents and sister before heading out to watch a local high school football game. Now my ideal day is spent watching history documentaries, enjoying a theater production, or reading a good book.*

## Director of RSVP: Jennifer Dvorak

**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*My daddy said to never hold unpleasant events or thoughts in your “memory bank.” These thoughts only make your “today” sad.*

**Describe your ideal day as a kid, and now as an adult.**

*When I was a child, an ideal Saturday began with watching cartoons. My daddy always watched *THE PINK PANTHER* with us. We had to do chores but had time to play in the backyard—I had many imaginary worlds all over the half acre space. Since my folks both worked, Saturday suppers would be something that took extra time, like homemade spaghetti, lasagna, or something on the grill.*

*Then I might go to play in my room with my dolls, and then I would get a bath. Many Saturday nights I could go in the living room where my parents would put on records and I could dance with my dolls or stuffed animals. At 9:00 everything stopped for *THE CAROL BURNETTE SHOW!**

*As an adult my ideal Saturdays begin with waking up at the beach and sitting on my balcony with a cup of coffee listening to French Café music. A nice breakfast comes next, followed by a few chores, reading, maybe a nap, and an afternoon on the beach and watching the sun set!*



## OUR TEAM, ALTOGETHER

Our Leadership Team has worked at MACOA for a combined 77 years, but our **volunteers** share in anniversary milestones along with us. Our impact would not be possible without their tremendous commitment of time, skills, and energy.

- 2 Volunteers Have Served 35 Years or More
- 4 Volunteers Have Served 30 Years or More
- 5 Volunteers Have Served 25 Years or More
- 8 Volunteers Have Served 20 Years or More
- 9 Volunteers Have Served 15 Years or More
- 55 Volunteers Have Served 10 Years or More
- 248 Volunteers Have Served 5 Years or More



## Carl Baldwin

**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*To be nice, honest, and kind. Learn how to do what's right, and just be good. Be respectable and always treat everyone nicely. That goes a long way.*

**Describe your ideal day as a kid, and now as an adult.**

*As a kid, playing kickball, hopscotch, marbles, or jacks. Now, my ideal day is growing old, being kind, and living life.*

**What was the occupation of your parents, grandparents, or great grandparents? Do you think this influenced you in your career?**

*I did lawn service most of my life, like my father. After school I would go out and help him, and it was something I caught on to. I learned a lot of things I could do to make it, and wouldn't have to depend on other people, so I could take care of myself.*

**Did you collect anything as a child? And now?**

*I used to collect marbles. I had a bunch of them, but I moved and they got misplaced. I collected different colors. There were different games we played with them. As an adult, I collected antique yo-yos. I had a wooden one and one with a spinning top, but I gave them to my grand baby.*

## Missouri Wright

**What is one piece of advice given to you in childhood that still sticks with you?**

*My grandfather always told me to be careful of how you treat people, because life has a way of coming back at you. How you treat your fellow man will come back to you.*

**Describe your ideal day as a kid, and now as an adult.**

*As a kid, playing with friends and cousins, sisters, and brothers. Going outside and playing all day. We were from the country, and it was lots of fun picking pears, pecans, and blackberries. Climbing and rolling down hills. As an adult, helping raise grandchildren and great grandchildren.*

**What was considered a special treat for you as a kid? And now?**

*As a child, my grandmother made tea cakes, and when we would do work/jobs for her, we would get one. That was a big treat! Our jobs were to mow the yard and do chores, like taking clothes off the line. The more chores you did, the more tea cakes you got! Those were the best days. Now, as an adult, having someone bring me lunch is a treat!*

**Did you collect anything as a child? And now?**

*Worms! We'd use them to go fishing on the fishing bank. And the only way you can go fishing is if you have some bait. I was always ready to go fishing, but I had to bring my own bait, so I'd dig up worms. Now, I like to collect purple vases. A plum color that is the same color as my lipstick. And picture frames!*



# RSVP

## SENIORS THAT GIVE BACK

*In just 2022, MACOA's RSVP volunteers gave 132,623 hours of service to their communities in critical areas of need.*

### RSVP: A Brief History

In 1961, the White House Conference on Aging called attention to the need to engage older Americans in useful areas of service in their communities. As a result, the Older American's Act was passed in 1965. In that same year, a pilot program of the Community Service Society of New York involved a small group of older adults in volunteer service. The success of this volunteer program demonstrated the positive impact older Americans can have on their communities. The Older American's Act was amended to allow for the creation of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in 1969.

### RSVP at MACOA

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) was added to MACOA's programming in 1973 at the request of the Alabama Commission on Aging. RSVP at MACOA initially included around 50 volunteers across three counties, and has now grown to over 1,100 active volunteers across five counties.

## RSVP Volunteer Highlight

"Listen to those people that have truly lived life, both good and bad. You can learn a great deal from them because everyone has something to share." These are true words of wisdom from Mr. Bennie Bell, Jr., a longtime RSVP volunteer from Autauga County, Alabama.

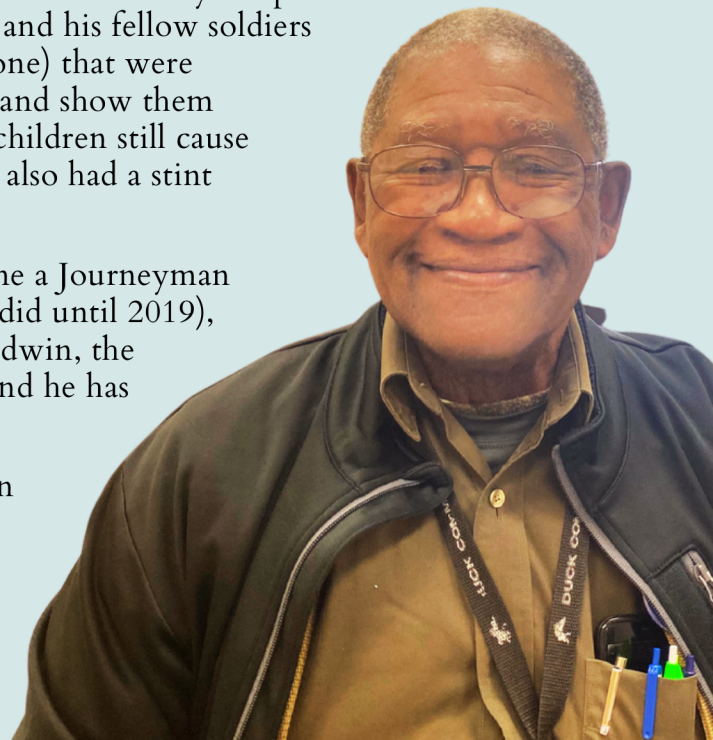
Mr. Bennie was born in Cleveland, Ohio to an Army father and a very busy mother of seven children. He enjoyed playing footvolley and baseball (in his day there were sandlot leagues). He was small as a child but still was a great team player. Always an entrepreneur, he loved to earn money for ice cream scoops and cookies. He and his brothers would collect worms to give to fishermen, unload watermelons from trucks, or sell newspapers. A fair amount of his earnings would go to his mother to help with household expenses, but he was always allowed to keep some for his favorite treats.

Mr. Bennie dropped out of school to join the Army and was sent to Germany along the Russian border. He was later posted in Korea, and, although his parents taught him to always help others in need, he got a taste of what being "in need" truly was. He and his fellow soldiers encountered so many orphans in the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) that were scared, sad, and hungry. The soldiers were able to feed them and show them friendship and compassion, and the thoughts of these lonely children still cause his eyes to get a far away look when he talks about them. He also had a stint in Vietnam, and thankfully returned home.

His time in service allowed him to learn a trade and he became a Journeyman Carpenter. He later went on to drive a school bus (which he did until 2019), and from there he became a professional volunteer. Pam Goodwin, the RSVP coordinator in Prattville at the time, snapped him up and he has been serving with RSVP ever since!

Thank you, Mr. Bennie Bell, Jr., for being such an inspiration to all of us!

To get involved with RSVP, contact Jennifer Dvorak at [jfdvorak@MACOA.org](mailto:jfdvorak@MACOA.org) or (334) 263-0532





*The Montgomery Area Council on Aging*

115 East Jefferson Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
(334) 263-0532  
macoa@macoa.org

## BECOME A VALUED VOLUNTEER

Alabama's River Region benefited from MACOA's 1,659 volunteers who contributed over 20,000 hours of service to our senior neighbors in 2022.

Even with this great support, critical opportunities to serve remain unfilled on a daily basis. We would love to connect you with our community by finding a role that aligns with your availability, interests, and skills.

### EXAMPLES OF YEAR-ROUND OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Crochet hats or sew lap quilts for a senior
- Portion meals for Meals on Wheels
- Help with home repair for our clients
- Serve as a Meals on Wheels delivery driver (or substitute driver)
- Prepare frozen meals for our clients
- Bake a cake for a client's birthday
- Help with administrative work at MACOA's office



**TO LEARN MORE CONTACT TRACI HERNDON,  
MACOA'S VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR, AT  
(334) 263-0532 OR THERNDON@MACOA.ORG**