

PEOPLE Making a Difference

Detroit Area Agency on Aging

Victor Getter



Victor Getter is 95 years old and has suffered a stroke, yet he still volunteers regularly for the Detroit AAA's Holiday Meals on Wheels program. "I'm the oldest volunteer they have," says Getter.

Getter has not missed a single holiday since he started volunteering with the program more than 20 years ago, according to Paul Bridgewater, president and CEO of the Detroit AAA. "We deliver meals at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and Labor Day, and Victor has not missed one holiday," says Bridgewater.

A retired truck driver, Getter began volunteering with the Michigan Commission for the Blind as a driver. In a sort of "Driving Miss Daisy" scenario,

Getter drove Betty Russ wherever she needed to go for some 20 years. "Her son would tell people I was the grandfather he never had," says Getter.

When Getter heard the Holiday Meals on Wheels program was looking for dependable drivers to deliver meals to area churches, he signed up. "My grandmother always told me, 'If you can help someone, help them,'" says Getter.

And help he does. "Victor is the most generous person I've met," says Bridgewater. "He is an inspiration to my staff and to the community he serves." **MI**

Region IV Area Agency on Aging

Bev Reitz-Rittmeyer

"I am truly interested in good health, achieved by exercise, healthy eating and positive mind control."

This, according to Bev Reitz-Rittmeyer, was the reason she became an instructor for the Area Agency on Aging's (AAA) Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) program, an initiative aimed to help people with chronic health conditions live life to the fullest.

Bev has always been busy. She raised 8 children, and 15 kids know her as Grandma. Following a distinguished career for more than 30 years in research and engineering with Whirlpool Corporation, she continues to keep a full calendar with volunteer work through the YMCA, her church and her neighborhood association. She's served on the AAA Advisory Council since 1999, and chaired the group for two years.

Even with her busy schedule, it didn't take much persuasion for Bev to agree to teach PATH classes. She says that having a new direction and focus in her life has helped her to work through some of the trials and tribulations that she experienced being a caregiver and losing her husband in 2009 after an extended illness.

When asked what she likes best about being a PATH instructor, Bev says she likes meeting and working with people who are interested in making changes in their lifestyle, and as a result feel healthier and better about themselves. She says this is her greatest satisfaction. **MI**



Tri-County Office on Aging

Marilyn Noeker



Marilyn Noeker laughs and jokes as she works with other volunteers to prepare for the Tri-County Office on Aging Annual Dinner and Auction. She's been a critical force in making this event happen for about 10 years.

Marilyn worked as an occupational therapist for several years. Many of the people she served received critical services from Meals on Wheels. "When I retired early, I knew this was one place I could help," Marilyn says. She started delivering meals 12 years ago. "At the time I was over-committed," she says. "I had to drop some things, but I stayed at Tri-County because I knew I was appreciated and making a difference."

In addition to her work with Meals on Wheels and the Annual Dinner and Auction, Marilyn recently helped coordinate a Soup Bowl Dinner fundraiser for Meals on Wheels. She is a shining example of how one person *can* make a difference in her community. **MI**