

# BENSON MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



3rd Quarter- 2024

Helen Hall & Margie Schlesinger

May was Older Americans Month (OAM). OAM is a national observance that celebrates the contributions and achievements of older adults. The theme for 2024 was “Powered by Connection.” A variety of events were held at the Benson Center, including a Mother’s Day luncheon, a Sip and Paint Event, an Evening of the Arts, a Third Act Dating Workshop, a field trip to an Atlanta Braves Game, a Greatest Milestone Celebration, and a Community Day.

The Greatest Milestone Celebration was a luncheon and program honoring members over 90 years old. It was a fantastic event and enjoyed by all. The oldest attendee was 109 years old!!! Many of the honorees have not been able to attend the center as frequently as they had in past years, but over 25 of them attended the event and several of the attendees were members of the famed Bread Gang!

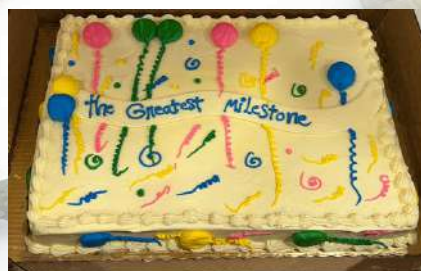
The Bread Gang established relationships with local groceries and bakeries (Publix, Costco, Trader Joes, Panara Bread, Kroger) to collect their soon to be expired bake goods. Three days a week, the items were distributed for a donation of \$0.50 to \$3.00. Wildly popular with Benson members and the public, the Bread Gang was an on-going fundraiser for the Friends of Benson for over 20 years until March, 2020.

Margie Schlesinger, now 98 years old and as stylish as ever, was born in Carrol County, GA and moved to Atlanta at the age of eighteen. Margie worked for Franklin Simons Department Stores for 26 years, working her way up from Salesclerk to Regional Manager with four stores under her guidance. After the stores closed, she worked for Aetna Life for 17 years. Looking to stay active after retiring, Margie joined the brand-new Benson Center in 1999. Shortly thereafter, she helps start the Bread Gang and led it until 2020.

Another honoree and Bread Gang volunteer, member Helen Hall was born in Budapest Hungary and moved to the US in 1951. Settling first in Baltimore Maryland and then Maimi Florida, she moved to the Atlanta area in 1978 after her husband passed away. Helen worked at Sew and Sales for many years and traveled all over the country teaching different types of crafts classes. After retiring she joined the Benson Center and the Bread Gang, becoming known as the Ticket Master 😊. Miss Helen, as she is affectionately called, turned 100 years old on May 24th and was serenated with several rounds of Happy Birthday at the Benson Greatest Milestone Celebration. She is a Holocaust survivor and has led a remarkable and truly inspiring life.



Margie Schlesinger, 98



Helen Hall, 100



**Greatest Milestone Celebration, May 23, 2024**



**Dessert Table**



**Miss Helen and Miss Margie  
at the Greatest Milestone Celebration**



**Miss Helen and Miss Margie  
2018**



**The Benson Beats Line Dance Group  
performs at the celebration**