



COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT FITNESS NETWORK

NEWSLETTER: Spring/Summer 2026

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PLATINUM SPONSORSHIP:

ALWAYS BEST CARE



Congratulations to CEFN's Top Sellers at BOTG, Kathleen Gambrell, Anne Ryles, and Selena Gillispie



Thank you to Stephen Kinsey, Vonda Pearson, and Kiet "Ken" Pham for their contributions to CEFN

CEFN's 11th Annual Senior Gala: A Dress to Impress-Fest!

Greetings, CEFN's wonderful and precious friends and supporters! I hope you are enjoying this beautiful spring weather. I am happy to report that CEFN's first fundraiser of the year, the **11th Annual Senior Gala**, was a smashing success! We are pleased to announce that we had another sold-out event with over 550 older adults in attendance. Following the success of this year's Senior Gala fundraiser, I am also pleased to announce that we have already reserved more than 50 tables for CEFN's **6th Annual Senior Harvest Ball**, which will be held on **Friday, October 23rd, 2026**. Please see pages 2-3 for more information and highlights from this year's gala.

Unlike CEFN's annual spring gala, CEFN's fall **Senior Harvest Ball** will offer a more formal atmosphere and will be presented as a Masquerade Ball. Guests are encouraged to attend in eveningwear, and awards will be presented to the male and female attendees wearing the most creative and original masks. Back by popular demand, the **Spirit of the Legends Band** will return to provide live entertainment during the afternoon alongside dancing, a DJ, an MC, health and wellness vendors, raffle prizes, giveaways, and a delicious catered meal. The event will also feature one of CEFN's most anticipated traditions—the crowning of the **Belle of the Ball** and the **Lord Harvest**. The primary criteria for selecting the Belle of the Ball and the Lord Harvest are that contestants demonstrate inspirational leadership within their communities and maintain a positive outlook on life despite overcoming significant adversities. **Ms. Alfreda Alexander** and **Mr. Lewis McCants** were the Belle of the Ball and the Lord Harvest in 2025, and they will pass their crowns to the contestants for 2026. Please see page 4 for the Masquerade Ball flyer.

On behalf of CEFN's Board of Directors, we would like to offer special thanks to our platinum sponsor, **Always Best Care**, for helping make this year's gala such a success. We also want to acknowledge the sponsors, vendors, and community partners whose involvement helped make the day especially meaningful. The **Hilton Hotel** staff and catering team merit special recognition for preparing salmon, chicken, and vegetarian meals that were greatly enjoyed by our older adult guests. CEFN was extremely pleased with the quality of the food and with the care reflected in every aspect of its preparation. We also thank our volunteers and the Drexel co-op team, whose efforts helped the gala run smoothly from beginning to end. We would like to recognize **Malcolm Hill, DJ David Jackson, Everette Jackson, Cathy Handsford, and Vonda Pearson** for helping make this year's gala so memorable for all who attended.

Special thanks to our new and returning volunteers and interns who are dedicated to helping make the fundraiser such a success! Finally, we would like to extend special thanks to our photographer, **Dawn Parsons**, and videographer, **Evan Williams**, for their beautiful photos and video footage. To view the photos and video clips from the Senior Gala, please visit CEFN's website, www.cefn.org. We look forward to your continued support and participation in the upcoming **Senior Harvest Ball and Health Fair**, which will be held on **Friday, October 23rd, 2026**. For more information, please feel free to contact me at (215) 858-4957 or email us at cefnphila@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing your face in the place, and enjoy the rest of your day!
Peace and Blessings,
Sherry Hill
Executive Director at CEFN



Thank you to CEFN's Volunteers and Interns for your dedication to CEFN's BOTG



Cathy Handsford is seen doing a BOTG seated demo with the Golden Gems group



The UGO Band performing spectacularly at the Boots on the Ground Gala

CEFN's 11th Annual Senior Gala: A Day to Remember!

The **Community Enrichment Fitness Network (CEFN)**, alongside our valued sponsors, vendors, performers, volunteers, and community partners, proudly hosted its **11th Annual Boots on the Ground Senior Gala** on **Friday, April 10th, 2026**, at the Hilton Hotel in Philadelphia, PA. This year's celebration offered older adults an experience filled with music, fellowship, dancing, and celebration. It was wonderful to see so many members of the senior community come together once again to share such a spirited occasion. When attendees reflected on the gala, "**excellent**" was the response we heard most often. The mood in the room made that response easy to understand. Between the lively ballroom, the excitement on the dance floor, and the warm conversations shared among guests, the gala carried an atmosphere that felt festive and inviting. Much of what made this year's gathering so memorable was its ability to bring older adults together in a setting filled with connection and laughter. Our guests also shared that the music, entertainment, and social atmosphere were highlights of their day.

The entertainment and program participants helped define the vibrant tone of the afternoon. **Malcolm Hill**, our host/comedian, kept the room lively and maintained a strong connection with the audience of older adults throughout the day. **DJ David Jackson** provided music that kept the event flowing, while the **UGO Band**, featuring **Henri McMillan**, brought live entertainment that was met with clear enthusiasm from guests. The Boots on the Ground dance demonstration by **Cathy Handsford** and **Vonda Pearson** was another outstanding aspect of the program, adding even more liveliness to the gala. For older adults who were unable to participate in the standard Boots on the Ground dance demonstration, CEFN was proud to offer **Cathy Handsford's** seated dance demonstration, allowing all guests to take part and engage in accessible fun with their peers. We would also like to express our appreciation to **Everette Jackson**, who contributed not one but two commemorative photo booth experiences to guests. Their work, combined with the efforts of event coordinator **Alisha Willis**, video walls technician **Dion Martin**, photographer **Dawn Parsons**, and videographer **Evan Williams**, made the event feel animated, well-coordinated, and thoughtfully executed. In collaboration, these entertainers, performers, and participants were essential to the success of our Boots on the Ground Senior Gala, as their valued services kept everyone in attendance smiling, singing along, and enjoying their day from beginning to end.

One of the most praised aspects of the gala was the catered meal. Many of our older adult guests spoke glowingly about the healthy menu options this year, including salmon, chicken, and vegetarian dishes that benefited the health, fitness, and especially the taste buds of all who we had the pleasure of serving. Kathleen Gambrell stated that her guests had no complaints about the food and particularly enjoyed the salmon. In fact, one of these guests recommended that Sherry Hill, CEFN's executive director, should "kiss the chef!" The opportunity to serve delicious and nutritious meals to such an amazing community of older adults gave all volunteers and staff a deepened sense of gratitude for our time spent with a wonderful aging community.

We also want to extend our appreciation to the Hilton Hotel staff and catering team, CEFN's board members and volunteers, and the Drexel co-op team. Their labor behind-the-scenes was crucial to the gala's preparation, coordination, and execution. Whether they were keeping operations on track or assisting guests during demonstrations, their presence was woven into every part of the day's success. A gathering of this scale is never the work of one person, and we remain profoundly grateful to everyone who lent their time, effort, and care to make it possible. The support we received means a great deal to us, and the thoughtful feedback we gathered will continue to strengthen the work ahead. We are excited for **Friday, October 23rd, 2026**, when CEFN will host its **Senior Health and Wellness Fair** combined with **CEFN's 6th Annual Harvest Ball**. We hope you will be there to enjoy the festivities, reconnect with the community, and take part in another meaningful day together. We hope to see your face in the place! For more information about tickets, please contact **Sherry Hill** by phone at **(215) 858-4957** or by email at **cefnphila@gmail.com**.

Thank you for your time,
Luke Holsinger
Grant Writer at CEFN

11TH ANNUAL SENIOR BOOTS ON THE GROUND GALA HIGHLIGHTS



CEFN PRESENTS
6TH ANNUAL SENIOR HARVEST BALL



Masquerade Ball



Back by popular demand!

Live Entertainment, DJ, Dancing, Catered Meal, Health Fair/Health & Wellness Vendors, Raffles, Best Mask Contest, and much more!

Dress attire: Elegant Evening Wear

SAVE THE DATE

FRIDAY, OCT 23, 2026 | 9AM - 3PM

\$65 DONATION

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

\$60 FULL DONATION BEFORE JUNE 30TH

HILTON HOTEL
4200 CITY AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA PA, 19131

For more Information-Contact:
Sherry Hill at (215) 858-4957 or email
cefnphila@gmail.com, or visit cefn.org