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## VIEW



MICHAEL LYLE/VIEW

Henderson Mayor Andy Hafen speaks Dec. 6 during a holiday party organized by Smooth Transitions and the Henderson Seniors' Auxiliary Foundation. The event honored the volunteers and organizations that assist seniors in Henderson and raised money for Henderson Meals on Wheels Homebound Seniors.

## Holiday salute

*Groups that assist Henderson seniors honored at party*

By MICHAEL LYLE

VIEW STAFF WRITER

A Dec. 6 event put on by Smooth Transitions and the Henderson Seniors' Auxiliary Foundation honored senior-specific organizations and workers and raised money for the Henderson Meals on Wheels Homebound Seniors.

Smooth Transitions, an organization that facilitates moves for seniors, held the event to recognize people around the city who have helped the growing senior population.

"What an impact you are making to our community," Henderson Mayor Andy Hafen said to open the event. "We want to be a vibrant community, and you help contribute to that."

Francine Fields is the owner of the licensee Smooth Transitions, which has been in the area for a year. She wanted to put on a party for the organizations she has connected with in her journey to help seniors.

"We decided to have a holiday party," Fields said. "What are the holidays without giving something back?"

The party recognized the staff from the Heritage Park Senior Facility and other senior living communities such as Lakeview Terrace of Boulder City, Willow Creek Assisted Living & Memory Care and Home Instead Senior Care.

The donations collected at the event went to the Henderson Meals on Wheels Homebound Seniors, a program that delivers meals to seniors in Henderson.

"When we started serving seniors," said Anita Gant, a senior supervision specialist with Heritage Park Senior Facility, "we were serving 100 meals in the dining room and 150 meals we delivered. We were not paying enough attention to our seniors."

Four years later, the Meals on Wheels program is serving 400 seniors in the dining room of the Heri-

tage Park Senior Facility, and more than 300 seniors are being served at home.

"We serve hot meals to our seniors five days a week and two frozen meals," Gant said. "Who says they don't get hungry on the weekends when we are not working?"

Gant is glad the program has been able to expand.

"I get to do the rewarding stuff," Gant said. "I get to make sure our seniors are eating properly. I do overfeed them."

The program is important, not just because it gives seniors hot meals but because it gives seniors a chance to interact with people.

"The Meals on Wheels delivery person and the postman are the only two people a lot of the seniors interact with," Gant said. "For a lot of the seniors, this is the only meal they eat a day. It is not for economic reasons, but who wants to eat alone? A lot of our seniors don't have the energy to cook, either."

Henderson Meals on Wheels Homebound Seniors is just one area of senior living that has developed.

Gant said that when she first started working with senior care in Las Vegas about 30 years ago, there wasn't much.

"I had worked in a rural town of about 11,000 people," Gant said. "We had a senior facility that sat 25 people but served 125 a day. And we had a nursing home. Las Vegas wasn't much different. A lot of transitions have been made."

In the past year, Henderson further contributed to that by adding the Heritage Park Senior Facility, 300 S. Racetrack Road.

"We have over 6,000 seniors that come and use our recreation centers," said Susan Bobby, a senior services supervisor with the facility. "Thank God they don't all come in at once."

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