



Keeping Independence on the Table



BEHIND THE WHEEL

The Newsletter for Friends of Meals on Wheels Chicago

You Made This Moment Happen

Spring 2017

Meals on Wheels Chicago partners with the City of Chicago and Open Kitchens to provide nutritious meals to more than 5,700 senior citizens and people with disabilities in every ward in the city. Each partner has a distinct role to ensure the meals reach our clients. It is a complex operation and it is easy to overlook the moment when someone opens the door and is greeted by a friendly driver with an armful of nutritious meals. They share a laugh, a hug and maybe a story. This moment is why Meals on Wheels Chicago exists. None of this could happen without your generous support. In order to demonstrate the enormous impact of your generosity, we provide a glimpse of the moment.



Earlene began receiving home delivered meals two years ago when chronic pain prevented her from shopping and preparing meals. Due to the expense of all her medicine there were weeks when food wasn't even on the budget.

"Thank the Lord, I found Meals on Wheels. These meals aren't just a matter of life and death. They are Godsend. Every time Calvin shows up at my door, I feel a warm feeling that lasts for days. I feel cared for. I feel like I am not alone."

"The food is nutritious and the selection is great. I love the ravioli for dinner and the roast beef for lunch. Every meal comes with a snack of baby carrots or broccoli florets. There is always fresh fruit. I love fresh fruit. I showed my menu to my nutritionist and she is impressed."

"The best part of Meals on Wheels Chicago is my delivery man, Calvin. He is always smiling. He is polite and friendly and you can tell he really cares about me. On the days, I can't get out of bed, he tells me he is praying for me. If they just dropped off the meals, I would feel lonely and feel that no one cares."

"Thanks to you, I don't have to choose between medicine and food. Every time Calvin pulls up, I feel your warmth and generosity. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!"

- Earlene, Home Delivered Meal Client



CALVIN HARRIS

Calvin Harris has been delivering Meals on Wheels since 1984.

"You know I think I get more out of delivering meals than my clients. Sometimes I come in and you can tell that they aren't feeling well. I offer them a spiritual word and someone to talk to and then you see them feel better. This job taught me to slow down and just listen. People need to be heard—especially if they are feeling lonely. Slowing down and listening gives them new life."

"Just because you are old or disabled, doesn't mean you don't care about dignity. If you have to depend on family or friends, the relationship changes. You can't help but feel their resentment. But with Meals on Wheels, there is nothing to feel embarrassed about. You know when you go to a good restaurant and how important the service is? No matter how good the food is, if the service is bad, the meal is bad. That is why we drivers always try to polite and supportive. It is not just a meal, it is our way of telling them that they matter."

"I am so grateful to people like you who donate to Meals on Wheels Chicago. Not only do you make sure senior citizens and people with disabilities get a nutritious meal, you have given me the opportunity to be the best person I can be. This is more than a job. It has transformed me."



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OUR DONORS

Chandra Ram

Meals on Wheels Chicago does not receive any state or city funding. We rely on the support of individuals, corporations and foundation with more than two-thirds of our income coming from thousands of generous donors like you who demonstrate their care for our less fortunate neighbors by their support of Meals on Wheels Chicago.

This month, we would like to honor Chandra Ram. Not only has she been donating to us for more than 16 years, she has served as chair of our board of directors and for many years chaired our Celebrity Chef Ball, which has raised millions of dollars for our programs.

1. What was your first contact with Meals on Wheels Chicago? How did you find out about us?

I was encouraged to volunteer for the Celebrity Chef Ball in 2001, when it was a brunch for 800 guests at the Chicago Hilton. I offered to pick up visiting chefs at the airport and help in the kitchen, and wound up helping run the kitchen that day. That afternoon, Gary Hopmayer, who founded the ball with his wife, Meme, handed me his giant kitchen/menu planning binder, and I wound up running the kitchen for the next ten years. During that time, I served on the event planning committee, chaired the committee, joined the board, and served as board president for three years.

2. What makes you a regular donor? Is it in honor/memory of someone? Have you had a family member who has been a recipient of a meal delivery and/or home modification program?

I don't have a personal connection to the program, but feel strongly that I want to give back to the community, and the focus on providing meals to Chicagoans who need help in such a basic area speaks to me. Like many people, I am very fortunate to live a good life, and enjoy delicious food anytime I want it. It's comparatively a very small thing to donate and volunteer so that someone else can have a basic need like a hot meal.

3. Does the Meals on Wheels Chicago mission inspire you to regularly donate?

I do find it inspiring; I think independence to live your life is one of the most important things a person can have. I believe it's necessary for us as a society to do what we can to make sure seniors and people with disabilities can enjoy such a basic but essential thing.

4. What would you say to someone if they asked you about Meals on Wheels Chicago? What would you say them to if they were thinking of supporting Meals on Wheels Chicago in some way?

I tell people about the mission, and about the program providing essential independence to others in the community. Meals on Wheels has a lot of name recognition, and many people I talk to have a connection to the needs the programs fulfill. We all have older family members we worry about, and donating to and working with this organization is a great way to give back.



PHOTO: GEOFFREY SMITH

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FOR 30 YEARS, YOU HAVE KEPT INDEPENDENCE ON THE TABLE

In 1987, a group of concerned citizens, Chicago city officials and representatives of area foundations, determined that senior citizens and people with disabilities were experiencing food insecurity and thus were liable to lose their independence.

Meals on Wheels Chicago was created to address the funding shortfalls the Meals on Wheels program was experiencing. Our founders understood how isolating and lonely the holidays could be for the homebound.

The very first holiday meal delivery took place on Thanksgiving Day, 1988, to 1,218 homebound seniors. By Thanksgiving Day 2016, the number of individuals served increased to 4,130, a 240% increase.

To commemorate our 30th Anniversary, we are please to announce the launch of our new logo and our new website (<http://www.mealsonwheelschicago.org>.) Consistent with a new year, the new logo represents the idea of a better future and the hope Meals on Wheels Chicago brings to the elderly and people with disabilities in our community.

We are truly grateful to you, our generous sponsor who have made this all possible.



David Tabak, Executive Director

*"As our nation's population ages, the need for nutritious home-delivered meals will grow. **Because of your generous support, Meals on Wheels Chicago will be there for them.**"*



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We Set a World Record for Caring



Meals on Wheels Chicago partnered with Nestlé Toll House to set a Guinness Book world record for the most consecutive hours of baking. For 25 consecutive hours, the six Bake Some Good bakers prepared their favorite recipes, which were delivered to more than 7,500 senior citizens and people with disabilities served by Meals on Wheels Chicago.

“We are grateful that Nestlé Toll House has selected Meals on Wheels Chicago as its partner for the 100th day of their Bake Some Good program,” shared David Tabak, executive director, Meals on Wheels Chicago. **“Our goal is not only to help seniors and people with disabilities remain in their homes through the delivery of nutritious meals, but also enjoy the simple joys of life such as getting a home-baked treat.** Our deep gratitude to Sarah, Eric, Cherise, Kate, Soyoun and Hayley and the folks at Nestlé Toll House for truly baking some good.”

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Your Generosity Bought Jonathan a Chairlift

Meals on Wheels Chicago provides funding to the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities to support their Home Modification Program (Home Mod). The Home Mod Program enables people with disabilities of low to moderate income to receive home modifications that make their living environment accessible. All services are performed in accordance with federal, state and municipal accessibility legal requirements. Services are provided to eligible residents throughout the city.

Your generosity helped Jonathan and Chicagoans with disabilities remain in their home to live independently.

“Thank you for my lift on my house and giving me a million reasons to go on living my life in an accessible manner!” - Jonathan, HomeMod Client



What You Helped Us Accomplish in 2016

Below is the direct result of your generosity in 2016. None of this would have happened without you.

31,737
Meals to Individuals with Disabilities



\$104,255
Raised for the Home Delivered Meals for People with Disabilities Program

50,476
Holiday Meals Served



\$165,815
Raised for the Holidays Meals Program



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SECURE YOUR LEGACY

We honor the memory of Lynette Flowers who included Meals on Wheels Chicago in her estate plan.

You can leave a legacy of generosity with a planned gift to Meals on Wheels Chicago. Your plan today will ensure future generations of homebound Chicagoans will always have a source of nutritious meals.

Remembering Meals on Wheels Chicago in your estate plan isn't difficult, and you don't need to be wealthy - each legacy gift, no matter the size, makes a difference



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Frequently Asked Questions

Don't I have to be rich to make a legacy gift?

Absolutely not. An estate is simply the value of everything you own. Most people have very respectable estates when they add everything together. And, remember, you can make a legacy gift of any size.

What can I leave to Meals on Wheels Chicago besides cash?

You can make a gift of just about anything you own - cash, stocks, life insurance policies, retirement accounts, real estate, or personal property.

Do I need a will to make a legacy gift?

It depends on the type of gift you make. Some legacy gifts need to be part of your will to be valid. Please consult a professional advisor to ensure your wishes will be honored.

Is there an easy way I can leave a legacy gift to Meals on Wheels Chicago in my will?

To leave a gift to Meals on Wheels Chicago in your will, you may use the following language:

"I leave Meals on Wheels Chicago the sum of \$___ (dollar amount), OR ___% (percentage) of the residue of my estate to be used at the discretion of its Board of Directors."

For more information on Meals on Wheels Chicago's planned giving options, please contact our Director of Development, Margo Willard, at mwillard@mealsonwheelschicago.org

Make a Difference in 2017!

Chicago on Tap

April 27, 2017

Thalia Hall

Sample the best local craft beers while enjoying delicious food prepared by Michelin-star restaurant Dusek's.

22nd Annual Golf Classic

June 5, 2017

St. Andrews Golf & Country Club, West Chicago

Enjoy a wonderful day out on the links. Since 1926, Chicago area golfers have sought out St. Andrews for its two championship courses.

Nourish 2017 Celebrity Chef Ball

November 10, 2017

Morgan Manufacturing

Chef's Table guests enjoy a VIP reception, followed by an intimate dining experience. Served by three chefs and a mixologist, guests enjoy a 6-course dinner, followed by entrance to the Chef's Tasting Party. Guests of the Chef's Tasting Party will enjoy a dine-around of over 40 chef and cocktail stations.

"The Meals on Wheels Chicago Celebrity Chef Ball is always one of the most spectacular culinary events of the year." - Chicagoist

For more information, please visit: mealsonwheelschicago.org and click on events.

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE
1987-2017