

Plateful of HOPE

Meals on Wheels' Major Gifts Initiative to Address High Priority, Unfunded Goals 2017 - 2018



MEALS on WHEELS™ SALEM COUNTY



"Since October 15, 2015, my husband and I have been receiving Meals on Wheels. Everyone who has delivered has been helpful, cheerful, and prompt. I don't mean to be gushy about this but I want you to know how much we appreciate your wonderful organization."

- MR. & MRS. P. JANUARY 2016

WHO WE SERVE

In life there are no more basic needs than food and water. Yet having daily sustenance is only one part of what makes people *thrive*. Relationships, having someone listen, the feeling of being remembered, respected, appreciated and even *cared for* are equally essential. We wish these vital things for each other, and surely for ourselves. The mission of Meals on Wheels of Salem County is to provide these supportive elements to those who must rely on the goodness of their neighbors.



For example, Bill had served his country gallantly. After three tours of duty in Vietnam, he returned home to Salem County, and got on with his life. Or so he planned. Enduring years of post-traumatic stress, Bill still faithfully took care of his aging parents until they passed away. Suffering with congestive heart failure, edema in every limb, and failing vision, Bill soon became malnourished. Now 72 and with no family support, Bill eagerly looks forward to the daily meal, friendly visit and the encouragement of his volunteer driver.



Ellen is 86, as is her husband Henry. Both suffer from diabetes and congestive heart failure, among other illnesses. Henry has also had two knee replacements and wears a pacemaker. Ellen is her husband's primary caregiver, a job made more difficult because of his recent fall. Since their children live out of state and Ellen and Henry can no longer drive, the couple is housebound. Meals on Wheels volunteers have been delivering meals and conducting safety checks daily to Ellen and Henry since 2015.

MEETING THE NEED IN SALEM COUNTY



"I can't even express the reasons why I am so grateful to have so many people ready to start my day, making me know that everything will be alright."

- MS. B

The nutritious meals, safety checks, and friendly visits our volunteers deliver every day allow seniors to reside in their own homes with the independence and dignity they deserve. And our clients are deeply appreciative, as expressed in a 2016 survey:

87%

said meals from Meals on Wheels are their most important source of food

91%

said the personal contact from our volunteer is important to them

76%

said that our nutritious meals enable them to stay in their own home

Our clients are part of an alarming problem across our nation. According to Meals on Wheels America, 9,600,000 Americans over the age of 60 face the threat of hunger. *Everyday.* That's 1 in 6 senior citizens.

Here in Salem County, over 45,500 meals were delivered to 252 individuals last year. Nationwide, nearly 2,500,000 seniors received home delivered or congregate meals from Meals on Wheels programs in 2016. Approximately 500,000 were veterans.

WHO WE HELP*



35% of our seniors are 85 or over; the average age is 77



63% are female; 37% are male



12% are disabled individuals between the ages of 27 and 58



24% are minorities



29% live in poverty



60% live alone

**Based on 2016 Data*

WHY SUPPORT FOR MEALS ON WHEELS IS SO IMPORTANT

There are three reasons why our community's support is needed to ensure that Meals on Wheels will continue to be the safe haven for our area's vulnerable seniors:

1. WE HELP LOCAL SENIORS MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE AND HEALTH.

Over three quarters of our clients state that our meals enable them to stay in their own homes. Living in the familiar surroundings of their home has enormous ramifications for their self-respect, positive mental health, and financial situation. Each delivery supplies a balanced, complete and nutritious meal that can help prevent the onset of illnesses. Each daily visit helps our clients feel more safe and secure.

2. WE HELP PREVENT THE NEED FOR OUR SENIORS TO USE MORE COSTLY HEALTHCARE ALTERNATIVES.

Meals on Wheels of Salem County can provide a senior with meals for an entire year for less money than the cost of one day in the hospital or one week in a nursing home. In fact, on average, **\$2,000 is about what it costs to receive Meals on Wheels in Salem County for an entire year.** We never require payment; some clients donate what they can afford when they can give.

According to a U.S. News and World Report article, a private nursing home could easily cost \$90,500 per year, an enormous sum that would quickly deplete a senior's life savings. The availability of daily nutrition from Meals on Wheels saves billions of taxpayers' dollars in services that Medicare and Medicaid would otherwise have to fund.

3. WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP PACE WITH DEMAND.

Funding from government grants continues to drop. About half of our clients are able to live independently because of the compassion and generosity of our contributors, and the community events we hold. In simple terms, each year, because of budgetary uncertainties, we are unsure if we will be able to adequately fund meals and services to all clients who are eligible.



"Thank you so much for caring and serving our father. He completely enjoys your meals and appreciates your visits. God bless you and continue your goodness."

- A GRATEFUL FAMILY



RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE



*"I wish more people could
know the reasons to support
Meals on Wheels and see
how it changes our lives.
I wish I could say this in
better words."*

- MRS. V



Nearly 90% of our clients report that our meals are their most important source of food every day. Tragically, despite our best efforts and the support of the community, shortages in public and contributed funding cause a waiting list of 40 people per year whom we struggle to help.*

As part of the agency's long range planning process in early 2016, the Board of Trustees and staff resolved to develop reliable, recurring financial resources to sustain a future in which no elderly or disabled individual in our community went without at least one daily hot, nutritious meal. The Board recognized the effort would require receiving support from our generous donors as well as identifying potential new contributors. A major gifts initiative was structured to expand private giving by \$43,000 per year and fund \$12,500 for additional services as quickly as possible. However, gifts at every level of generosity are both needed and welcomed!

WAITING LIST OF 20% GROWS EACH YEAR DUE TO FUNDING SHORTAGES*



**Based on 2012-2016 data*

PLATEFUL OF HOPE PRIORITY NEEDS

Through the efforts of dedicated staff, we provide essential services such as an initial client evaluation and ongoing follow-up visits, nutrition education and counseling, handling interactions with family members and physicians, plus a range of emergency concerns. Each day, deliveries are organized with our caterer and scheduled with volunteers. About 250 volunteers must be recruited and supported all year long to drive, and another 160 carry out important outreach and events.

1. EXPANDED PROVISION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

Serving our clients on a daily basis requires more than simply delivering food. Meals on Wheels' mission – what we have pledged the community to do on their behalf – is a serious one. Individuals, most of them elderly, living alone, perhaps a widow or widower with no children or family who reside far away, *count on us*, our professional staff, our faithful volunteers. *They rely on us*.

Yet as hard as we work, at any time there are still about 40 individuals who are on our waiting list due solely to funding constraints, at risk of hunger – waiting for the phone to ring and waiting to hear good news from us. For years, Meals on Wheels has had to contend with inadequate hours and compensation for the direct program services to our current clients, much less those on the waiting list.

Now, with demands mounting for the provision of additional services to additional seniors, through the Plateful of Hope initiative, Meals on Wheels seeks to fund 20 additional service hours per week or \$720 for essential program support. Annually, this means 1,000 additional program service hours at a cost of \$36,000 *will ensure program services can be provided to current and new clients*.

This challenge of budgeting for the actual services and meals we would like to provide is compounded by the fact that we have no control over costly, external requirements imposed on agencies like ours. For example, we face two new recurring requirements totaling \$7,000 a year:

- Changes in grants and Medicaid procedures now require a full criminal background check on all volunteer applicants, at an estimated cost of \$3,000 a year.
- As part of a new three-year building lease, rent and utilities costs increased by over \$4,000 a year.

In summary, in 2017 and every year thereafter, Meals on Wheels must raise an additional \$43,000.

2. MANDATORY ONE-TIME PURCHASES IN 2017

In addition, the agency must secure funding for two major but necessary purchases.

a. Replacement of a Commercial Freezer - \$3,500

Up to 20 clients a week are served frozen food because their schedules for chemotherapy or dialysis do not allow them to be home at the time of the daily meal delivery. One of our three commercial freezers broke down and must be replaced at a cost of \$3,500.

b. Replacement of Thermal Bags - \$9,000 (15 bags x \$600)

Delivering 40,000 hot and cold meals a year requires that the prepared food be transported in insulated thermal bags that keep the contents at State-mandated safe temperatures for up to four hours. The high quality thermal bags utilized by Meals on Wheels have a shelf life of eight years. Currently, 15 of our thermal bags are overdue for replacement.





MEALS on WHEELS

SALEM COUNTY

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

PLEASE HELP...

There are hundreds of homebound folks in our own community who look to us – our staff members and 250 dedicated volunteer drivers – to help meet their needs for nutritious food and comfort. They are good people who worked, played, loved, raised kids and volunteered, but are homebound due to illness or injury and now find themselves relying on Meals on Wheels.

Meals on Wheels is turning to the community in Salem County and surrounding areas to help us help them. Meals on Wheels is turning to you. Please, give as generously as you can. And on behalf of those your gift will support, thank you!



MEALS ON WHEELS OF SALEM COUNTY
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