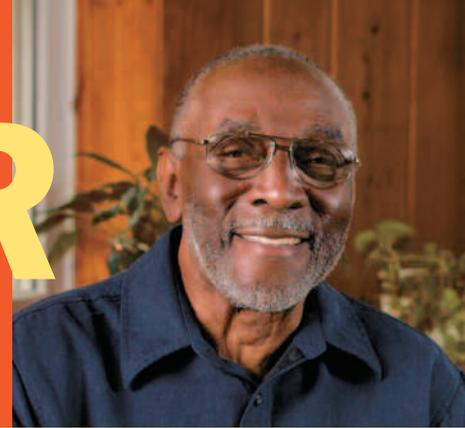


The WHEELER

Metro Meals on Wheels Newsletter – Spring 2013

report



BRINGING PROGRESS UPDATES AND STORIES FROM THE ROAD TO OUR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEER HONORED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE.

For most folks, “me time” means taking some time away to recharge and concentrate solely on themselves. But when Karin Vukich takes “me time,” others stand to benefit.

While some might recharge by reading a book, working in the garden or taking a walk, Karin centers herself through serving others. “To me, that’s kind of my time,” she says. “I feel best when I’m helping others. I don’t really need alone time.”

Over the past few years, Meals on Wheels has received a tremendous benefit from Karin’s passion for volunteerism. Since stepping up in 2010 to lead a team of volunteers at Thrivent Financial for Lutherans’ Minneapolis office, Karin has grown its workplace delivery team to 36 individuals who deliver meals three days a week for the Community Emergency Service (CES) Meals on Wheels program.

“Karin’s enthusiasm is contagious,” says Mike Krachmer, manager of the CES Meals on Wheels program. “She’s constantly working to engage others and is always eager to help at special events, all on top of her substantial regular volunteer commitment.”

Hands On Twin Cities recently honored Karin with its 2013 “Be the Change”

award for exemplary volunteer service. With a knack for paving the way for others to get involved, Karin also has led a team of eight volunteers from Thrivent the last two years to pack Blizzard Boxes, which are shelf-stable meals for Meals on Wheels recipients. Last year, her team packed more than 2,800 meals in just three hours.



“The great part about Karin is her impact and reach always seems to multiply,” says Kelsey Ohme, outreach manager for Metro Meals on Wheels. “She’s a constant champion of Meals on Wheels who is always looking for ways to get others involved.”

Karin also helped organize a volunteer recruitment challenge at last year’s Meals on Heels fundraising event that brought in 35 new volunteers in just

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New Brighton Mayor Dave Jacobsen delivers meals to the Roemers.

Meals on Wheels Month

Thanks to all the individuals and organizations that helped make Meals on Wheels Month in March a success. Look inside to see how different organizations marked the occasion.

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www.meals-on-wheels.com
Got a Question? Call us! 612.623.3363

Volunteer Spotlight

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three hours. Her commitment extends back to her home in Lindstrom as well—when she learned of a need for Blizzard Boxes for nearby residents, Karin helped organize a volunteer activity to make sure local recipients' needs were met. While she excels at organizing and getting others involved, and sits on an advisory committee for CES Meals on Wheels to guide work at a strategic level, Karin says getting out and meeting those who receive meals is what keeps her going.

“You grow to really love the regular folks,” says Karin, adding that for many of the recipients along her route, the interaction with the deliverers is just as—if not more—important than the



meals themselves. She gives the example of one of her favorite recipients along her route: “He still drives a little bit, and he could probably survive without the meals. You know the whole reason he’s getting the meals is to have that interaction.”

Karin’s advice for those interested in volunteering with Meals on Wheels or starting a delivery team at their workplace is to start small and go along with someone who has delivered before. With most of her volunteers, she finds that once they get involved, it’s easy for them to stay involved and even commit to delivering more often. When Karin organized her team, she started with one shift a week, which has now expanded to three. She says most people might not realize they have the time to volunteer until they try.

“I have three kids and commute to work an hour each way,” she says. “You find something that you’re passionate about, and it’s easy to find the time.”

Pro Tips for Starting a Workplace Delivery Team

Meals on Wheels relies heavily on volunteers to deliver meals to those who use our services. For most volunteers with day jobs, it means delivering meals over the lunch hour. Volunteers and employers alike have found establishing a workplace delivery team to be a fun, rewarding and convenient way to get involved with Meals on Wheels. Since lunch time deliveries are designed to take no more than one hour, volunteers don’t have to miss any time at work beyond their normal lunch hour. Here are a few tips from those who have organized workplace delivery teams for people interested in starting their own teams.

Start Small. If you’re not sure where to start, it’s okay to make a small commitment. When Karin Vukich started the workplace delivery team at Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, she committed the company to delivering meals one day a week. As more people have become interested in volunteering, they now deliver meals three days a week.

Buddy Up. Doing anything the first time by yourself can seem overwhelming, so it helps to pair new volunteers with someone who has done it before. “It really helps if someone who is currently a volunteer is willing to take someone with them,” says Alli Janusz, who organizes 3M’s team of more than 200 volunteers. Alli delivers meals with a co-worker she doesn’t get to see often during an average workday. “It gives us a chance to reconnect,” she says, adding they’ll usually grab lunch together after delivering their meals for the day.

Make It Regular. By scheduling your deliveries out over the course of the year, volunteers have time to block out delivery shifts far in advance. Once a month is a good frequency for most volunteers, Karin says. It’s not an overwhelming time commitment, but is frequent enough for volunteers to develop familiarity with the route and the processes. At 3M, Alli puts three teams of two volunteers on the same route so other team members can easily step in or trade delivery days if a scheduling conflict arises. For smaller workplace delivery teams, keeping the same route for the whole company makes it easy for regulars to explain the process to newcomers.

Don’t Be Shy. “Ask everyone,” says Eve Frank, executive director of the Fridley area Meals on Wheels program. “We always tell people to just ride along. Once they ride along, they see how it easy it is.” Karin says being willing to ask people face-to-face is key to building your team, as potential volunteers may be interested but have questions that the coordinator can help answer. “You can put up all the signs and posters you want, but if you really want to get people involved, you have to go out and tap them on the shoulder.”

For those interested in starting a workplace delivery team, detailed instructions and other useful resources can be found at www.meals-on-wheels.com/get_involved_team. For more information, contact Kelsey Ohme at 612-623-3363.

Partner Profile

Fridley Area – Meals on Wheels

Area Served:

Fridley, Spring Lake Park, Columbia Heights and Hilltop.

Year Program was started:

Senior Program started in 1973

How many clients:

287 clients served in 2012

How many volunteers each year:

400-500

How many meals served in 2012:

About 30,000

Types of meals offered:

Diabetic/low sodium, vegetarian, and mechanical soft.

Number of staff (full/part/volunteer):

3 part-time

Special Feature:

Fridley Area Meals on Wheels is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year and is known for having outstanding volunteer support.

Executive Director Eve Frank, who's been with the program for 38 years, lists the long-standing support of area churches and more recent contributions from delivery teams from Spring Lake Park High School and Cummins Power Generation as just a few of the reasons for the program's success in attracting volunteers. Eve's biggest secret to making the volunteer experience better: Include as many right turns as possible when drawing up delivery routes to make it easier on drivers.



Meals on Wheels Month Continued from Page 1



3M Hunger Relief Match

During March, 3M employees and retirees could leverage matching funds from the 3M Foundation to support Metro Meals on Wheels as part of 3M's annual Hunger Relief Match. In just under two weeks, approximately \$12,000 was raised for Metro Meals on Wheels.

Whole Foods Community Support Day for MOW

On March 28, Whole Foods' Minneapolis and St. Paul stores donated 5 percent of all sales to Metro Meals on Wheels as part of its Community Support Day. Shoppers could also take advantage of a speed volunteering opportunity to decorate bags or fill out postcards for meal recipients.

Dignitaries Deliver Meals

Some Meals on Wheels recipients received surprise visits from public officials during Meals on Wheels Month. Bloomington Mayor Gene Winstead, St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman, New Brighton Mayor Dave Jacobsen, Plymouth Mayor Kelli Slavik, Wayzata Mayor Ken Willcox and Roseville Schools Superintendent Dr. John Thein were some of this year's meal delivery volunteers for Meals on Wheels Month.





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5 in Thirty!

5 Simple Ways to Help Metro Meals on Wheels in 30 Days

1. Deliver a Meal! Call [612.623.3363](tel:612.623.3363) to sign up to deliver a meal over your lunch hour.
2. Save the date for **Meals on Heels - The Party with a Purpose:** Thursday, Aug. 15, 6-9p.m. at Harriet Island Pavilion, St. Paul
 Learn more at: www.mealsonheelsevent.org.
3. Create care packages for Meals on Wheels recipients with your kids! Learn how at www.meals-on-wheels.com/family.
4. Discover a new power lunch and create workplace delivery team.
 Learn how at www.meals-on-wheels.com/get_involved_team.
5. Follow us on Twitter: [@Meals_on_Wheels](https://twitter.com/Meals_on_Wheels) and like us on Facebook.