



Metro Meals on Wheels

1200 Washington Avenue S., Suite 380
Minneapolis, MN 55415
ph 612.623.3363 fx 612.331.9401
meals-on-wheels.com

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN

Save the Date for Give to the Max Day

Minnesota's biggest day of online giving is back on Nov. 18. As part of the festivities, we are pleased to announce that the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation will provide \$30,000 in matching funds toward our fundraising goal! More than \$100,000 in prizes will be up for grabs for participating nonprofits and we'd be honored if you made Meals on Wheels a part of your giving plan.

Schedule your donation beginning Nov. 1 at bit.ly/givemeals.



Support Meals on Wheels in the Walk to End Hunger

The Walk to End Hunger is a peer-to-peer fundraising walk historically hosted on Thanksgiving Day at the Mall of America. This year, the Walk to End Hunger will take place for the entire month of "No Hunger November" with a Walk to End Hunger route installed along the Mall of America for participants to visit and walk anytime during the month of November. Walking the route at the mall is a fun, family-friendly way to participate in the event, but not required.

You can support Meals on Wheels by registering, asking your friends and family to support your Walk, or simply making a donation. Learn how you can participate on behalf of Meals on Wheels at meals-on-wheels.com/walk.



The WHEELER

report

Metro Meals on Wheels Newsletter – Fall 2021

Long history in the community prepared Meals on Wheels programs for this moment

Carol Ward began as coordinator for Mobile Meals of Northern Dakota County in 1973. In the following 48 years, she's seen the program from every angle: as an employee, volunteer delivery driver and, now, a meal recipient.

After retiring in 2011, Carol (pictured above) picked up a regular volunteer route as a driver and would occasionally help out with program operations as needed. Then this summer, as she was tending to her beloved garden, she fell and fractured two vertebrae.

With her mobility severely limited, she knew who to call. As she continues her recovery, she relies on Meals on Wheels to nourish her. Preparing food beyond heating something in the microwave or frying a couple of eggs is difficult.

"I can fix easy meals myself but it's nice to have a more substantial meal," Carol says, with meatloaf and spaghetti among her favorites.

While she says it's been a little strange to be on the receiving end

of Meals on Wheels, it's given her a new perspective on what the program provides. "I think it's an absolutely wonderful program and I've seen so many people in whose lives it's made a difference," says Carol.

Mobile Meals of Northern Dakota County, which serves South St. Paul, West St. Paul, Mendota Heights and Inver Grove Heights, is one of a number of local programs that have been in operation for more than 50 years. Like many, it was started in a grassroots effort. In their case, it was a group of nuns who saw the need in the community for a Meals on Wheels program in 1963.

Metro Meals on Wheels, our association of 32 Meals on Wheels programs, is celebrating 25 years of existence this year. Metro Meals on Wheels was formed when Twin Cities programs recognized that more could be done to meet the community's needs if they worked together to share resources.

Continued on page 2

See our Annual Report Inside

Patrick Rowan, Executive Director

It just so happens that our last Fiscal Year (April 2020-March 2021) roughly coincides with the first 12 months of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As we looked back, it was striking and humbling to see all that you, our supporters, were able to help us accomplish throughout this crisis.

With so many of our neighbors needing to isolate or struggling with pandemic-related financial distress, our 32 member programs served an unprecedented number of meals last year without having to turn anyone away. To meet that need, we also saw a record number of volunteers and donors step forward to help.

The number of people our programs are serving remains at pandemic levels and the need shows no sign of letting up. We're grateful you are here to support your neighbors.

Annual Report on Page 3





Continued from Page 1

Carol says that those types of efforts have made it possible for Mobile Meals to continue serving the community for as long as they have. She cites the opening of the Meals on Wheels Kitchen of Opportunities in 2017 as one of those shared projects that's allowed Mobile Meals of Northern Dakota County to serve recipients at a high level by offering a wide variety of meal options and reliable service.

Mobile Meals has seen an 81 percent increase in their client base since the start of the pandemic, says Joan Ward, the program's current coordinator (she also happens to be Carol's daughter-in-law). She credits new volunteers who signed up during the pandemic for being able to accommodate that growth. Many stepped in to fill delivery routes that were once held by older community members who were at high risk should they contract COVID-19.

Through a combination of deep experience in the community and working together as a network, Twin Cities Meals on Wheels programs have been able to help our neighbors through the challenges of the last year and a half.

Volunteers pack 5,400 emergency meals

While the weather was gorgeous on Oct. 5, a group of 30 volunteers from United Healthcare spent the day assembling 5,400 emergency meals at The Food Group's warehouse for days that are not nearly as nice. The Blizzard Bag Blitz is our annual meal packing event where volunteers pack shelf-stable meals that are delivered to Meals on Wheels recipients in the fall. Recipients are then instructed to save the meals for days when winter weather may prevent their volunteer driver from delivering their regular meals.

This year's event was made possible with a sponsorship from United Healthcare that helped cover the cost of the meals. Along with the sponsorship, their employees provided all of the volunteer power for this event. Local programs will be delivering the bags throughout October to recipients so that they are ready for winter.



Volunteer Chanel Rivers
packs shelf-stable meals

Happy 50th Anniversary to Community Emergency Service

Community Emergency Service (CES), which operates a Meals on Wheels program that serves more than 350 Minneapolis residents is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. The program was founded by Augustana Lutheran Church in 1971, inspired by the shared vision between Pastor William Berg and philanthropist Russell Lund, Sr., of Lund's Foods.

In addition to a Meals on Wheels program, CES operates a food shelf and provides comprehensive programming aimed at helping those struggling with poverty and hunger. They serve downtown Minneapolis, as well as much of South and North Minneapolis.

Congratulations to CES on 50 years of serving our Minneapolis neighbors! You can learn more about CES's history and programs at cesmn.org.



You Helped Your Neighbors Through an Extraordinary Year!

**Twin Cities Meals on Wheels
Programs Are Serving More
People Than Ever**

10,607

NEIGHBORS
received Meals
on Wheels

↑ **48%**
from last year

470,575

MEALS SERVED
out of the Meals on Wheels
Kitchen of Opportunities
operated in partnership
with Open Arms
of Minnesota

↑ **87%**
from last year



**All of this is made
possible by you**

Metro Meals on Wheels
Annual Report for
Fiscal Year 2021

April 1, 2020–March 31, 2021

**Meals on Wheels Provides
Relief During Pandemic**

551,673

meals were served free of
charge to people experiencing
hardship due to the pandemic

\$1,287,000

was distributed to our network
of **32** member programs to
ensure all who needed a
meal would receive one

2,780

NEW VOLUNTEERS
stepped forward to deliver meals
or prep meals at the kitchen

14,470

PEOPLE
made a donation to help their
neighbors access Meals on Wheels