



Wheels In Motion

1824 Fowler St, Richland WA 99352

(509) 735-1911

www.seniorliferesources.org

It's not about us. It's about the people we serve. Find us on Facebook

Kristi's Update

As our community has moved to Phase 2 of the Safe Start Washington plan, our Meals on Wheels office has started receiving calls from seniors wondering when we'll be able to open our dining centers. They've read of area restaurants opening their doors and are eager to return to eating with friends at their favorite local senior/community center.

Although we're as anxious as anyone to return to our signature daily hot meal service, we plan to take small and incremental steps to gradually increase our levels of service, **as long as it is safe to do so**. The safety of our clients, volunteers, and staff has to be our first priority. Just a few of the challenges we face regarding re-opening our dining centers include:

- The senior centers where we serve are not yet open.
- Many of our senior clients and volunteers have not yet had the opportunity to be vaccinated.
- Many of our volunteers and staff are not yet eligible for vaccinations.

Please know that reopening and increasing our level of meal service is a near constant conversation for us. We are very excited for the day when we can return to face-to-face visits and meals with our wonderful seniors!

Please see the top of page 4 of the newsletter for some important vaccine information we hope you will find helpful.

Kristi Thien, Nutrition Services Director

Meals on Wheels Fundraising Breakfast 2021 CANCELLED

Tuesday, March 9th would have marked our 6th Annual Meals on Wheels Fundraising Breakfast. Sadly, this year's event, like last year's, had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

The Fundraising Breakfast is our premier profile-raising and fundraising event of the year, so its cancellation marks a significant loss in both funding and public exposure for us.

Despite 2020's cancellation, last year's event sponsors generously honored their funding intentions, as did many of the table captains and folks who had planned to attend. Their support salvaged an otherwise lost event, and we are so grateful.

Although we are again unable to hold the breakfast in 2021, we so appreciate our supporters who recognize the continued need to support the seniors in our community!

Hot Meal Drive-Thru 3 Days a Week!



Who: All seniors age 60+

What: Hot Meals Drive-Thru (see menu on back page of newsletter)

Where: Meals on Wheels Café, 1834 Fowler St in South Richland

When: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, 11 am to noon

We're inviting all seniors age 60+ to pick up a hot meal to go from our convenient Meals on Wheels Café Drive-Thru. Drive-Thru meals are available every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 11 am and noon. Please wear a mask, stay in your car, and let us do the work! Meals on Wheels staff will bring your meals right to your car. If it is your first time receiving meals from us, please be prepared to fill out a quick registration form. There is no charge for the meals, but we accept donations.

Sick with COVID-19?

If you test positive or suspect you have COVID-19, please contact our office at 735-1911. Our Director will deliver meals to you throughout your illness and recovery. Protecting the health and safety of our clients AND our wonderful volunteers remains our top priority!



Masks Please!

Please protect yourselves and the people around you, including our staff and volunteers, by wearing a face mask over your mouth & nose during meal deliveries and drive-thru. If you need a mask, please call our office at 735-1911.



Participating Agency

Volunteer Spotlight

Natalie Huggins, Site Staff & Volunteer Manager

Question: How does a staff of 24 people, many of whom work part-time, prepare and deliver seven meals a week to 700 people over a large geographical, two-county region?

Answer: Only with the dedicated, caring assistance of hundreds of volunteers!

On Tuesday, February 23, 2021 Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels did not deliver meals to clients because of the hazards that unplowed roads and sidewalks posed to volunteer drivers. While we missed not seeing our clients, we were grateful for the dozens of volunteers who earlier this winter packed and delivered five shelf-stable meals for each client, as well as numerous servings of BOOST nutritional drinks. Thanks to our volunteers, we knew our home delivery clients had food for this closure.

On Thursday, February 25th, Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels volunteers did DOUBLE DUTY by preparing, packaging, and delivering not only the six frozen meals previously scheduled for Tuesday but also a hot meal, along with fresh produce and milk. Meal packaging volunteers accepted the urgent, last minute call for “HELP PLEASE!” and showed up at six dining sites to carefully bag the clients’ meals for delivery. This Herculean effort was possible partially because of the many volunteers who have identified themselves to be “Snow Drivers”—volunteers with ice-worthy vehicles and experience safely driving on “dicey” roads. Many of these drivers accepted routes that they had not previously driven—all to ensure that clients received their meals. Clients and drivers were happy to see one another. AND HOW were so many meals ready to be so quickly bagged and delivered? Because for four days a week, for months and months, dozens of volunteers had come into Meals on Wheels Central Kitchen to assist with the preparation and packaging of the meals.

Not only were the Meals on Wheels Central Kitchen, our 8 senior dining centers, and roadways bustling with volunteers, but so were our phone lines. Phone Buddy Volunteers were calling their clients to be sure that they were safe, warm, and had a caring ear and heart to share in conversation.

While the events above describe one week in the lives of Meals on Wheels volunteers, please remember that our service delivery to local seniors happens every week of the year! If you would like to learn more about joining the Meals on Wheels team as a volunteer meal packager, driver, or Phone Buddy, please contact Natalie Huggins, Site Staff & Volunteer Manager, at (509) 735-1911 or at nhuggins@seniorliferesources.org.

Welcome to the Newest Cadre of Meals on Wheels Volunteers

It is with great pleasure that Meals on Wheels welcomes our new, enthusiastic volunteers.

Please join us in a round of -filled !

Central Kitchen: Jacki Bowker, Marilyn Medsker
Café Driver: Jim Hart
Returning Richland Driver: Blaine Hood

Drive-Thru: Colleen Grall, Carrie Locke
Richland Driver: Debbi Karas-Schmoe

Staff Spotlight: Benton City Site Manager, Cathy Spurgin



Cathy is the Meals on Wheels Site Manager for our Benton City Site, ensuring that all home delivery and take-out meal clients in Benton City receive their meals each week.

Cathy is dedicated and compassionate. She goes above and beyond for her clients.

Anyone who knows her knows that her sense of humor and fun-loving personality make her a joy to be around. We are so thankful to have her on our Meals on Wheels team!

Tell us about yourself! I am a grandma with 6 grandchildren. I can thank my two daughters and stepson for them. My bestie is my cocker spaniel that I acquired last August.

How long have you worked for MOW? 6 years.

What do you like best about your job? The interactions with all the people we see every day.

What was your first job That would be Jack in the Box at the age of 15 ½. I was told that was close enough to 16 back then!

If you could have a superpower, what would you pick? The power to heal.

What is your favorite book or movie? The Secret Garden when I was young.

What is the first concert you ever attended? Led Zeppelin at the age of 16 at the Green Lake Aqua theater in Seattle.

What is something that’s on your bucket list? Go to Europe.

What is something that many people don’t know about you? I held a patent to something I made and sold for a few years then sold the licensing agreement to a business that took over the product and sold it overseas.

THANK YOU!



Thanks to Bethel Church!

Thank you to Bethel Church for their generous \$5,000 donation to provide meals for local seniors! Angie Hufford (left), Bethel's Care & Compassion Director, braved the snow and ice on the roads to deliver the check. Beth Wasemiller, our SLR Payroll Administrator, is seen above accepting the check. Beth attends Bethel Church and always advocates on our behalf. Also seen receiving the check are our Meals on Wheels Service Coordinators, Amy Cole and Ashton Preuning. We are so grateful for the supportive Bethel congregation!



Thanks to Prosser United Good Neighbor!



Rachel Ashton, Board member from Prosser United Good Neighbor, presented us with a \$6,000 check in response to our grant application. Prosser United Good Neighbor is a generous and long-time supporter of

Prosser Meals on Wheels clients, and they've been supporting the Prosser community since 1956!

We consider Prosser United Good Neighbor to be good community partners, and we DEFINITELY consider them to be "Good Neighbors!" We so appreciate their many years of support!

Holiday Snow Removal

Thanks to the President's Day efforts of our wonderful volunteers, our parking lot was the safest in town! Mike Thien, Board President Dave Sanford, and Executive Director Grant Baynes joined forces to remove snow from our parking lot, sidewalks, and loading dock. Their work on the holiday ensured safe access for food delivery, clients, volunteers, and staff. Thank you!



IMPORTANT VACCINATION INFORMATION COVID-19 Vaccinations: Help for Seniors Who Need Assistance

On page 7 of this newsletter, you'll see information from People for People explaining how to register for a COVID-19 vaccination. You'll notice that much of the process has to be completed online. We're hearing from some of our seniors that they have no access to the internet or are unable to complete the process.

If you are a Meals on Wheels senior age 65+ who is having difficulty completing the FindYourPhase screening or registering online for an appointment, please note the 1-800-525-0127 phone number at the bottom of the flyer. Staff at People for People is available to answer your call to help you complete the process.

Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels is also committed to helping our seniors gain access to the vaccine if they wish to be vaccinated. If you'd like help getting signed up for a vaccination, please call our office at **735-1911** to speak to Sarah. She will assist you with the screening process, help you schedule your appointment, and will work with you to arrange transportation for your vaccination appointment.

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Thank You to our Many Pet Food Heroes!

We had a HUGE response to a Facebook post requesting pet food for us to share with the pets of our Meals on Wheels seniors! Many thanks to EVERYONE who donated pet food! We are in good shape to help our Meals on Wheels clients feed their furry companions.

If you are a Meals on Wheels client and you need pet food, please contact our office at 735-1911. Amy will work with you to get you food for your beloved pet.

From Our Food Services Manager: Frozen Meal Handling

Here at Meals on Wheels, we take great pride in the food we produce. A lot of time and effort goes into the production of our meals and food safety and quality are of utmost importance. We also want to ensure that our clients are properly handling the frozen meals.

Regardless of whether you receive your frozen meals as a home delivery or if you pick them up from one of our sites, it is important to place the meals into your freezer as immediately as possible. Please do not store them in your refrigerator, as this will drastically reduce the longevity and quality of the meal.

When cooking your meal, remember to pierce the plastic film on each section before heating. Please keep in mind that each oven/microwave has varying power and heat distribution. In addition, different meals may take different lengths of time to heat. Due to these variances, we recommend cooking the meal for 4 minutes initially. After 4 minutes, check the meal to evaluate if additional time is needed.

As always when using an oven or microwave, please remember that these meals will be hot and should be allowed to cool slightly before removing them from your oven/microwave.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the food we serve, please reach out to me at 509-735-1911 or email me at bkinner@seniorliferesources.org

Thank you and stay safe!

Brian Kinner, Food Services Manager

Meals on Wheels Staffing News



Thank You for Your Years of Service!



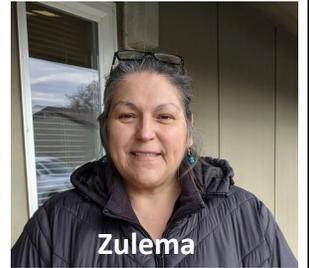
Blanca

Volunteer
Hubert

Rose

Meals on Wheels bids sad farewell to our Connell Site Manager and Assistant Manager, Rose Trembley and Blanca Melo Gonzalez as they transition to new roles in their community. Both Rose and Blanca are great cooks and have provided dedicated and caring service to the seniors in Connell. We wish them both nothing but the best as they accept new challenges! They will be greatly missed by our staff and the seniors in Connell!

Many Meals on Wheels clients and volunteers know and love Zulema Zavala for her caring service as the Parkside Site Manager. Zulema joined Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels in January of 2004, and her passion for serving local seniors continues to grow. Zulema will be temporarily serving our Connell seniors during our transition to long-term staff. We are so grateful for Zulema's willingness to serve where needed in order to ensure uninterrupted service for the seniors in Connell



Zulema

Thank You!

Many thanks to ALL the Meals on Wheels team for their hard work over the past year! Staff members have been asked to learn and perform new tasks, modify their daily work schedules, and change procedures to meet COVID-19 safety protocols. We so appreciate all the efforts our staff have made to ensure that seniors continue to receive food and care throughout the pandemic!



We are very happy to welcome Ashley Torres to the Meals on Wheels team! Ashley is our new Packaging Coordinator and will be overseeing the packaging of our meals at the Central Kitchen. She ensures that every meal contains the proper amount of food and is properly sealed.

Ashley has shown great flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic since joining us, and she's been very quick to understand the functioning of our automated sealer. Ashley's past experience includes both customer service and food service.

Ashley recently got married and has 4 cats, who are well adored. Ashley enjoys backpacking, camping, video games, digital art, and drawing. Welcome to the team, Ashley!



Brad Johnson has joined the Meals on Wheels team as one of our transporters. In addition to distributing food from our Central Kitchen to our 8 meal sites, Brad has been helping maintain our vehicles and is learning lots about frozen meal packaging and storage. Brad previously worked in Food Service for the past 25 years.

Brad is married with 2 wonderful children, and he loves to spend time with his family. Brad enjoys playing guitar, cooking, and baseball. He enjoyed playing in a recreational baseball league in past years.

We are thankful to have Brad on our staff, and hope you will give him a warm welcome when you see him delivering to the sites in one of the Meals on Wheels vans.



Nutrition for Your Eyes

Jill Berg, Registered Dietitian

Although maintaining good vision throughout our lives is certainly challenging, proper nutrition can provide some help. I wanted to share the following article from The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics because it offers sound, practical advice to promote good eye health.

Foods for Eye Health

Reviewed by Sarah Klemm, RDN, CD, LDN
Published February 18, 2021 Reviewed January 2021

Do your eyes have all the nutrients they need to help prevent cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma and other sight woes? Read on to learn about some of the top foods to promote eye health. But don't count on popping a pill to reduce your risk! To get these nutrients — your best sources of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants are from whole foods, since it may be a combination of nutrients within that provide these benefits.

Kale: See the Light

This leafy green is a source of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are related to vitamin A and beta-carotene, and may help protect eye tissues from sunlight damage and reduce the risk of eye changes related to aging. Other good sources of these nutrients include dark green leafy vegetables such as collard greens, turnip greens and spinach, broccoli, peas, kiwi, red grapes, yellow squash, oranges, corn, papaya and pistachios. Your body needs fat to absorb lutein and zeaxanthin, so be sure to eat them with a bit of unsaturated fat such as a drizzle of olive oil or a few slices of avocado. And kale also contains vitamin C and beta-carotene, other eye-friendly nutrients.

Sweet Potatoes: The Color of Health

Beta-carotene gives these tubers their orange color. Your body converts beta-carotene to vitamin A, a nutrient that helps prevent dry eyes and night blindness. Sweet potatoes not your favorite? For beta-carotene, try other deep orange foods, such as carrots and butternut squash, plus dark green foods including spinach and collard greens. Liver, milk and eggs are also sources of vitamin A. And, similar to lutein and zeaxanthin, beta-carotene and vitamin A are absorbed best when eaten with a little healthy fat such as olive oil.

Strawberries: Help You "C" Better

Fresh, juicy strawberries are a good thing for your eyes, and contain plenty of vitamin C, which is an antioxidant that may help lower your risk of cataracts. Also, be sure to load up your plate with other vitamin C-rich foods including bell peppers, broccoli, citrus (such as orange and grapefruit) and cantaloupe.

Healthy Fats: Include sources of Omega-3s

Besides helping with the absorption of certain nutrients, some healthy fats also contain omega-3s. Salmon is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which may be beneficial for eye health. Include salmon or other types of fatty fish two to three times per week. Other foods that include this type of healthy fat are walnuts (which also contain eye-healthy vitamin E), flax and chia seeds.

More About Eyes: Keep An Eye on the Weather!

If the weather looks hazardous on your meal delivery day, please listen to local radio & tv stations to see if we're able to deliver meals. Announcements should be made on KEPR, KNDU, and KVEW. You may also get information from these sources:

- Meals on Wheels main office: (509) 735-1911
- Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels Facebook page
- Meals on Wheels/Senior Life Resources website: www.seniorliferesources.org.

Thank you for helping our staff help our seniors!



Toilet Paper

We seem to have made it through the Great Toilet Paper Crisis of 2020, which is a great thing! Meals on Wheels still has quite a number of rolls of toilet paper, so please don't hesitate to request a delivery of a couple rolls if you're running out and don't have consistent access to a store. We'd be glad to send a few rolls with your drivers if you need some.

Client Donations

Whether you receive meals delivered directly to your home or you pick them up from one of our meal sites, please remember that all meals are provided to seniors age 60+ on a donation-only basis. Donations toward the cost of meals are appreciated but are not required in order to receive meals.

Our suggested 2021 donation is \$3.00/meal. Clients are asked to donate only what is comfortable within their own budgets.



Mid-Columbia
Meals on Wheels

**Adapting, Innovating, & Advancing
In Service to Seniors**

Meals on Wheels strives to provide practical information to help you make healthy lifestyle choices. If you have any questions about your diet, please contact our Registered Dietitian, Jill Berg, at (509-735-1911 or