

etter FROM the CEC

REAL LIVES, REAL IMPACT

Every day, I hear stories of how Meals on Wheels People touches people's lives. For every story, we can apply real numbers to the impact MOWP has on those who benefit from our services.

Take Mary, a retired nurse who told me that over the past year, it's become harder for her to afford nutritious, highquality food. "Inflation caused a great change in my life," she said. After six months of eating mostly Cheerios and tuna fish, a friend helped Mary sign up for meal delivery through Meals on Wheels People — and Mary said it saved her life: "I'm alive because of what you guys do. I probably was going to starve to death. Now, I've got actual real food to eat every day."

Meals on Wheels America recently released a new report on the impacts of homedelivered meals. The report found that receiving Meals on Wheels not only improves food

security but also diet quality: 79% of home-delivered meal participants reported that the meals help them eat healthier, more nourishing foods. Access to medically tailored and homedelivered meals allows older adults to stay in their own homes, where they want to be, rather than transferring to a nursing facility for nutritional support. Nearly all (92%) homedelivered meal participants said that the meals help them continue to live independently. More than 85% of homedelivered meal participants said knowing they will receive regular visits by the volunteer or driver has made them feel safer at home. And, of course, the delivery of meals helps reduce social isolation or loneliness, particularly among participants who live alone.

This comprehensive review demonstrates that our work is an evidence-based and cost-effective solution that reduces the use of health

care services, prevents
nursing home admissions,
and generates substantial
cost savings for taxpayers. By
delivering nutritious meals,
fostering social connections, and
providing safety checks, Meals
on Wheels People helps older
adults maintain their health,
independence, and community
engagement.

Our services are possible because of volunteers and donors like you. Thank you for supporting the critical work we do for our community. Together, we can change lives, one meal at a time.

Suzanne Washington CEO, Meals on Wheels People

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Suzanne Washington
Chief Executive Officer





The Thread of Hope

Facing the trials of isolation and the loss of her cherished hobby after a debilitating accident, Victoria found renewed hope and purpose in her life when a phone call from a Meals on Wheels People volunteer inspired her to pick up her crochet hook again.

Victoria has been out of her house only twice in the past 10 years. She broke her neck in a fall and sustained nerve damage that left her hands numb.

"One day, you're walking around, and then the next you're doing nothing but trying to sit up straight," says Victoria, 74, who was a purchasing agent for Dow Chemical until she had to retire after the accident.

No longer able to cook, she signed up for Meals on Wheels People. But she also wasn't able to crochet — something that she's loved to do since she was a young girl. Each intricate loop was a testament to her patience and skill. Her creations were her pride, tokens of her love she'd give away as gifts. It wasn't just a hobby for her; it was a part of her identity.

"It made me feel useful," she says. "Crochet was always my go-to thing when I wanted to do something or feel like I was contributing. What's my purpose here now?" she started to ask.

Her spirit, once so vibrant and lively, seemed to shrink day by day. Her life felt limited to a routine of meals, medication, and countless hours staring at the same four walls of her home. With the weight of her disability and isolation pulling her down, Victoria was drowning in a sea of despair.

One day when she was feeling particularly low, her phone rang. Meals on Wheels People volunteer Nancy Williams was on the other end of the line.

A NEW BEGINNING

Nancy was adjusting to life by herself after her husband died in 2019. When she saw a commercial for MOWP's Friendly Chats program in November 2020, she signed up. The first person she connected with, an older gentleman, reminded her so much of her own father that it broke down barriers and created a moment of genuine, joyful connection.

"I don't remember what he said, but it was like exactly something my dad, who is 91, says to me," she recalls. "I said: 'You know, my dad and I just had that same conversation last night. I know I'm not your daughter, but I'm going to tell you what I told my dad.' He stated laughing: 'That's what my daughter told me.' It was such as wonderful experience."

Nancy has been making Friendly Chats calls once a week since. "I get so much out of it," she says. Each week, Nancy speaks with someone new. They talk about their passions, she hears their stories, she shares her own. "It feels like the slightest little things like that make somebody feel a little more connected

and like somebody cares," she says. "Even if it's not a long conversation, I want them to know that I care."

THE CALL THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

When Victoria answered the phone, Nancy could tell right away that she wasn't having a good day. She asked her about her interests, and Victoria, of course, talked about crocheting. Nancy knits, and soon, "We were laughing about our yarn stashes," Nancy says.

Nancy could sense a spark in Victoria's voice that had been missing. She suggested some different techniques and tools that might help Victoria pick up her crochet hook again.

"She really took time with me," Victoria says. "By the time she was done, I felt like I had to go pick up the thread again."

It was a short phone call, maybe 15 minutes, but Victoria says it changed everything. Today, she is on the eighth row in a new crochet project. "I may only do a stitch or two at a time, but I can still do it," she says. "I was ready to give up. I thought it was over. She saved me that day. It really brought life into my life."



Bite-Sized News

TIGARD CENTER REOPENS FOR CONGREGATE DINING

Closed since April 2022 due to construction, Tigard's Senior Center reopened Oct. 2. One of the most anticipated services set to return with the reopening is the Meals on Wheels People congregate lunches. This essential community service, which provides nutritious meals to older adults, will resume its operations every Monday and Wednesday. The initiative has always been a lifeline for many older adults, ensuring they have access to nutritious meals while also offering a social environment to engage and connect with peers. Last year, we served 838 older adults over 12.200 meals through our congregate dining sites in Washington County.



PET PROGRAM LOOKING FOR VET PARTNERS

Over half of the older adults we serve live alone, and for many of them, their pet is their closest companion and a source consistent comfort. Connecting pets to care is often an unmanageable obstacle

for homebound older adults, many of whom live on fixed or limited incomes. That's why it's so important Meals on Wheels People helps homebound older adults access care and assist with keeping their pets safe and healthy.

We partner with veterinarians who want to increase their community impact and work with a group of people and pets who have difficulty accessing these vital services. Through this collaboration, veterinarians are able to provide wellness, preventive, and treatment services to pets with Meals on Wheels People's assistance. The vast majority of the pets treated through this program aren't current with vaccines and haven't seen a veterinarian in over a year, if ever. This program supports the continued health of older adults and their companion animals, which benefits each individual and the community at large. To learn more, visit: mowp.org/pet-program.

MOWP NAMED TO TOP 100 BEST NONPROFITS TO WORK FOR IN OREGON

Meals on Wheels People is proud to announce that our nonprofit once again ranks in the top 100 on the *Oregon Business*' annual "100 Best Nonprofits to Work For in Oregon" roster. Scores are based on a total of 700, with employees rating their satisfaction with five features of the workplace: work environment, management and communication,



mission and goals, career development and learning, and benefits and compensation. At Meals on Wheels People, we are dedicated to nourishing both body and spirit of those we serve. Our team's passion and dedication are at the heart of our impact. Earning a spot among the "100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon" is a testament to our collective effort and commitment.

Upcoming Events & Ways to Give Back

The crisp autumn air, the rustling leaves, and the warm spirit of community — it's no wonder that fall is eagerly anticipated by kindhearted souls! It's that special time of year when many of us feel an extra pull to give back, share, and make a positive impact. From making individual gifts and signing up to volunteer to rallying a group of your family and friends to volunteer or fundraise



together, there are plenty of opportunities to give this season. Check out the following ways to give back this fall, and don't forget to mark your calendars!

THANKSGIVING

Help us create connections this holiday season. Become a Friendly Chats volunteer and help us meet our goal to call every older adult in our programs on Thanksgiving Day. There's nothing better than to feel a human connection, especially during the holidays. Be sure to sign up soon as it will take a little extra time for registration, training, and background checks. Sign up today at mowp.org/volunteer.

WILLAMETTE WEEK GIVE!GUIDE

Meals on Wheels People has once again been selected by Willamette Week to participate in their annual Give!Guide. Make a gift between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31 and you may be eligible for gifts and incentives. Go to giveguide. org, click on the "Hunger" category, and scroll down to the Meals on Wheels People logo to donate. Donate at giveguide.org.

GIVING TUESDAY

Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world. Join the movement by making a donation to Meals on Wheels People on Tuesday, Nov. 28, an help us meet our goal of raising \$80,000 in just 24 hours. Donate at helpmowp.org.

Donate Dinner Returns This November

Meals on Wheels People is once again participating in our annual Donate Dinner campaign Nov. 18-22, where we partner with local grocery stores and retailers to offer shoppers an opportunity to donate to MOWP at the register! Here's a look at the history and impact of the Donate Dinner campaign.

2003

The year Donate Dinner launched

21

Years shoppers have been donating dinner to older adults in need during the week leading up to Thanksgiving

21

Number of local retailers and grocery stores, including 17 New Seasons Market locations, that host volunteers who inspire shoppers to donate dinner to a homebound senior at the register

1,500

Volunteers needed to serve as store greeters, handing out fliers to boost community engagement, making it one of the largest volunteer events in the region

325,000

Amount raised last year, which provided more than 54,000 nutritious meals to older adults throughout the greater metro area





Sign up to volunteer at various stores between Nov. 15-22 or donate now.



THE PERFECT HOLIDAY TREAT FOR YOURSELF OR SOMEONE ON YOUR LIST





Caramel Apple



Bourbon Eggnog



Spiced Chai

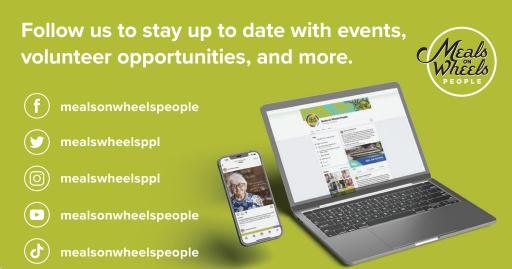
Looking for the perfect gift this holiday season? PDXPOP! is a gift that gives in more ways than one. Proceeds from your purchase are donated back to helping feed older adults in our community.

Warm up with our Bourbon Eggnog, featuring bourbon from Eastside Distilling. Try our delightfully delicious Chocolate Peppermint, a festive fusion that'll become an instant favorite. Grab a bag of our Carmel Apple for a bite of classic holiday nostalgia. Savor the cozy essence of the season with our Spiced Chai.

Why choose just one? Delight in all four! Treat yourself or share with your favorite friends, family, neighbors, or colleagues.

Give for good this holiday season!

Shop now at pdxpop.com.



Donate a meal: **mowp.org**