

## Meals on Wheels of Wake County Celebrating 50th Anniversary in 2024



**Members of the Golden Disco Committee hold up Golden Disco Balls while visiting the Umstead Hotel & Spa - the site of our Golden Disco celebration!**

On February 12, 1974 MOW delivered the first meals to nine clients in Raleigh. Fast forward to 2024 and 11 million+ meals and 200,000+ clients later – it’s time to celebrate 50 years of serving our Wake County senior neighbors in need of meals and companionship!

Two highlights during this year of celebrations are The Golden Disco 50th Anniversary Party in April and Hunger Week, focused on Senior Hunger, co-hosted with Meredith College in March.

The main event of the year is our anniversary party - The Golden Disco! This is our first event in five years and all are invited to join the party as we celebrate 70’s style. The Golden Disco is on April 25, 2024 at The Umstead Hotel and Spa in Cary. The evening includes a silent auction with spectacular items, a live auction, a lavish vacation raffle, delicious food, and, of course, disco-dancing. For event and ticket information visit [www.wakemow.org/50th-anniversary](http://www.wakemow.org/50th-anniversary).

The week of March 25, 2024 features a co-hosted event with Meredith College. The theme of their annual hunger week is the prevalence and ramifications of senior hunger. On March 28, 2024, Ucheoma Akobundu, Senior Director of Nutrition with Meals on Wheels America will lead a discussion on this topic on campus. All are welcome to attend.

Other events for the year include anniversary parties at our 11 Friendship Cafes, a special meal delivery for our homebound clients, a celebration for our volunteers, and a family-fun activity in Fall 2024.

As we celebrate our 50 years and all we have done to help senior neighbors in need, we are also looking to the future. Our goal is to continue to adapt our services to care for the ever-increasing senior population in Wake County. The same values that were established in 1974 will guide us to the next 50 years and will ensure that seniors live fully nourished lives – complete with hot meals and human connections. Please join us in supporting this mission.



## Introducing Capital Towers Friendship Cafe



**Executive Director Alan Winstead and Director of Program Services Sharon Lawson welcomed attendees to our newest Friendship Cafe location at Capital Towers.**

Our 11th Friendship Cafe location is officially open for business! We celebrated our grand opening of our Capital Towers Friendship Cafe with music, food, and fun for all attendees. Capital Towers is a senior housing complex where many of our homebound clients reside as well. With our new Friendship Cafe at Capital Towers, seniors with the mobility to leave their homes now have a space to regularly come to for a hot meal, socialization, and fun activities. We’re excited to further our mission to support seniors at Capital Towers!



**Assistant Director of Program Services; Friendship Cafes Glenn Love helps distribute food to diners at the first meal at Capital Towers Friendship Cafe.**

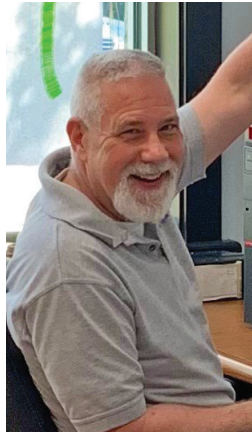
**We would like to recognize the following special gifts given in tribute from 8-1-23 to 10-15-23**

**IN HONOR OF**

- Alice Rodden*
- Bev Manifold*
- Carmen Gardner Reeves*
- Chad Flower*
- Charlotte Herring Swart*
- Dr. Sandra Grant*
- Family and Friends*
- Jenny Brown-Chin*
- Margaret Devoles*
- Marsha van Hecke*
- Mathilda Tucker*
- North Raleigh Periodontics*
- Parrish Womble*
- Ruth P Smith*
- Susan Fisher*
- William Taylor, Sr.*

**IN MEMORY OF**

- Beatrice McCormick*
- Bill "gee" Lewis*
- Bo Peterson*
- Carl Stone*
- Carmelo Iacone*
- Dorothy Ashcraft*
- Eileen Russos*
- Elizabeth Underwood Parkin*
- Finley Robe Barnes*
- Frances Edna Bazemore*
- Franklin "Bo" Peterson*
- Gail Pritchard*
- Harold Barton*
- Ira Newton*
- Jack Stein*
- James Elmore Carlton, Jr.*
- James Johnson*
- Jettie Morrison Lee*
- Joanne Lewis*
- Joseph D'Arcy McCormick*
- Lou Gianna Hasio*
- Mike Sanders*
- Narendra Tamhane*
- Percy & Naomi Leak*
- Richard Sudkamp*
- Rick A. Linthurst*
- Robert L. Gordon, Sr.*
- S. Victoria Krusiewski*
- Terry Lee Brown*
- Willia and Lennon Youmans*



# A Message of Gratitude from the Executive Director

*Alan Winstead*

Back when I was a kid, in the days before the first astronaut walked on the moon, I always enjoyed going to my grandma's house during this time of year because she received all kinds of Christmas catalogs. While I know now the aim of these catalogs was to sell products, I remember flipping through the pages and imagining what it would be like to be an explorer, a scientist, or a fireman.

Meals on Wheels Wake County is at the season when we are imagining how we want to celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2024 and how we want to invest our Mackenzie Scott Grant to impact the future. While we do not have a catalog of options from which to choose, we have smart and creative people working on this effort.

The need for our services will continue to increase as our senior population continues to grow, especially for older adults over the age of 80, and it will be important to ascertain how to best deliver our mission in an ever-changing world. We want to decide both how to expand our services and how to increase the number of participants we serve.

Our service model depends heavily on volunteers to deliver meals and provide social connections and our goal is to be the best in recruiting, retaining, and recognizing volunteers. By building on our past successes we can be successful in the future.

Funding is also critical for our future success. Public policy impacts our federal, state, and county funding. We need to communicate our outcome measurements to maintain and, if possible, increase our public funding. Additionally we can position our program services to healthcare providers and payers as they become more knowledgeable about improved health outcomes and long-term medical cost savings. Current donors are so important to us in supporting our critical work. Our donors have multiple choices for their philanthropic funds, and we want to make the case for their continued contributions.

If you want to share your perspective about what Meals on Wheels will look like over the next 50 years, I invite you to share your ideas with me at [alan@wakemow.org](mailto:alan@wakemow.org). I hope that you will take the time to dream during this holiday season with those you hold near and dear.

## Furthering Health Access for Seniors

With flu season fast approaching, we partnered with Diaper Train, Vaccine Ambassadors, and UNC Health to host free Flu Vaccine events at our Rosenwald, Five Points, and Capital Towers Friendship Cafe locations this fall. According to the CDC, "People 65 years and older are at higher risk of developing serious complications from flu, compared with young, healthy adults. This risk is due in part to changes in immune defenses with increasing age. While flu seasons vary in severity, during most seasons people 65 years and older bear the greatest burden of severe flu disease." Thanks to the help of our vaccine clinic partners, we can increase seniors' access to flu vaccines to bolster their immune health.



**Volunteers from UNC Health, Vaccine Ambassadors, and Meals on Wheels of Wake County at the Five Points Friendship Cafe vaccine clinic."**

# What Meals on Wheels Means to Our Clients

*"Meals on wheels really means a whole lot to us. When I have the Meals on Wheels meal, and supplement foods I can make later in the day, it helps us. Meals on Wheels helps my wife eat more. She loves the mashed sweet potatoes, the baked fish and chicken."*- **Eugene**

*"It means everything. The two ladies who deliver my meals lift my spirits, I could be down in the dumps and they could pick me right up. I got one that tells me I'm special. She tells me to behave myself! Everyone who comes to see me is very kind. It lets me know that someone really does care."*- **Caroline**

*"If I was down and out, it would be a meal a day that I wouldn't be getting. And sometimes it's been like that for me, I'm not going to lie to you. It means a lot to me, knowing that I'll always have that meal."*- **William**

*"My sarcoidosis, which affects my lungs and heart, flared up last July. I was in the hospital for 2 weeks- my cousin helped me get on Meals on Wheels. I live by myself, and wasn't able to cook when I first got home. Meals on Wheels meals helped. Meals on wheels has meant a lot- there are some people that that's the only meal they get. It's really a very good thing."*- **Milton**



*"Meals on Wheels means a lot to me- especially since I don't drive. I hate to ask my kids to take me here and there- they have their own lives. I live in a neighborhood that's all young people, and I don't really have any neighbor friends. Meals on Wheels is really important to me- I love it, and I appreciate it."*- **Sue**

*"After my son got sick, the nurses and healthcare people told us about services we could get. I look forward to the deliveries, it's the most wonderful thing, I'm like a little child waiting for a toy. It's such sweet people that bring it. If it wasn't for Meals on Wheels, I wouldn't get the supply of food that I needed."*- **Maurice**

## Emergency Meals Delivered



To help prepare for the unexpected, Meals on Wheels of Wake County raised funds to distribute boxes of shelf stable food and supplies to the seniors we serve. Thanks to your support, Meals on Wheels clients received these emergency meal kits in October. Emergency meals will provide food when our deliveries are interrupted by unforeseen circumstances, during inclement weather and power outages, and when our clients will need it most. A giant THANK YOU to all who donated to provide emergency meals to our senior neighbors!

**Volunteers Bonnie and Sid helped Blair Drive Site Managers Ray and Jaz load emergency meal boxes into our volunteer delivery drivers vehicles.**



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



## HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS



As we approach the holiday season, the comfort of a warm meal delivered by a friendly neighbor comes with special meaning to our homebound and senior neighbors! Here's a few ways to help:

- Make a Holiday Donation
- Volunteer to Deliver Meals
- Purchase Holiday Cards
- Sponsor a Friendship Cafe Holiday Party
- Donate Gifts



FOR DETAILS, VISIT [WAKEMOW.ORG/HELP-HOLIDAYS](http://WAKEMOW.ORG/HELP-HOLIDAYS)