



The

Meal Times

Spring 2025

MEALS ON WHEELS
WAKE COUNTY

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR MEALS ON WHEELS OF WAKE COUNTY

Ending the Wait for Seniors



When cooking became too much for Edith, Meals on Wheels of Wake County was there to make sure her nutritional needs were met. She is a true joy, and is deeply appreciative of the meals and visits she receives. As the population of Wake County continues to age, more seniors like Edith are facing food insecurity and struggle with mobility issues. For many, cooking and grocery shopping are no longer feasible, leaving them reliant on external sources for nutrition.

In Wake County, too many seniors are going without meals, without connection, and without a feeling of security and independence in their own homes. The Raleigh area ranks 2nd highest in the nation for senior food insecurity, and the population of seniors continues to increase.

Meals on Wheels of Wake County is dedicated to getting all seniors who are in need of services taken care of without incurring a waitlist. However, the explosive senior population growth, increasing food prices, and looming threats to our federal funding (we are a 50% federally funded program) have us stretched to our financial limit to accommodate this need.

Through the Eyes of a Volunteer

For over a year, Stanley Wright has been a dedicated volunteer, delivering meals to homebound clients in Garner. When he first moved to the area, he had heard of Meals on Wheels but didn't fully understand its impact.

After discovering just how crucial the program is to the community, he decided to get involved—and he's never looked back. Stanley finds joy in seeing the clients' smiles when he arrives with their meals, and he feels truly blessed when they express their gratitude with a simple "thank you" for something that's so easy for him to do.

When asked about the potential consequences of funding cuts or reduced services, Stanley's response was heartfelt: "I can't even imagine. People without family would be at risk. They might get sick. I don't want to see that happen." For Stanley, delivering these meals is more than a volunteer shift—it's a way to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need it most.



Our Community. Our Seniors. Our Commitment.

A Message from the Executive Director

Ashley C. McCumber

One of the things that I say too often these days is “it’s possible for two diametrically opposed things to be true at the same time.” Now that it’s Spring in N.C., the trees - especially the big Oaks - are coming back to life and with this, they bring joy and anticipation of the beautiful green shade of Summer. However, it is also true that we’re about to suffer through a month of the green/yellow slug called pollen, which is the antithesis of joy.

To talk about the state of affairs at Meals on Wheels of Wake County this Spring, one must admit that we find ourselves very much in a place where two opposing feelings and realities exist. For all nonprofits right now, there is a great deal of uncertainty about our federal funding. Meals on Wheels receives 50% of our funding from Older Americans Act, as administered through the Department of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

On March 26th, the federal Department of Health and Human Services moved, through a department-wide restructuring order, to eliminate the Administration for Community Living (ACL), a subsidiary established in 2012 to support disabled and aging people—part of a broader series of cuts that will see the firing of some 10,000 HHS staff. HHS’ press release on the restructuring claims that ACL’s responsibilities will be re-designated elsewhere within the department, which has yet to issue further details or clarify its plans.

The Administration for Community Living was designed for “bringing programs together to make sure that there were efficiencies and synergies between aging and disability networks.” Eliminating the agency also means that its functions will be dispersed, leaving those of us serving seniors and adults with disabilities feeling underrepresented with no seat at the table.

Clearly, we do not know what the impact of the reorganization may be on funding, but any cut in funding would be harmful to the seniors we serve. This would be the “pollen” I was referring to earlier.

At the same time that we worry about the future of our programs, we must stop to recognize what makes our programs work and how they impact the lives of those we serve – and that is the thousands of volunteers who show up every day to support their neighbors.

April is National Volunteer Month. It’s impossible to overstate the importance of volunteers in our operations.

Each day 125 volunteers show up to make sure seniors are fed and safe. More than 2,000 regular volunteers show up each year.

Independent Sector reports that the value of an hour of volunteer service in North Carolina is \$31.64. Using this number, volunteers to Wake- MOW contribute in-kind benefit to our operations in excess of \$1 million annually, or 17% of our annual operating costs.

But that’s just dollars and cents. If you ask the volunteers and the clients, they will tell you the value extends far beyond what can be measured in monetary value. The measure is joy, connection, independence, dignity, and the knowledge that we all deserve to be seen and no senior should go hungry.

Because of the support we receive locally, it leaves me eternally optimistic that whatever “pollen” comes our way, we will continue to serve our community to the best of our ability and build friendships one knock at a time. Thank you to all our wonderful Wake MOW Volunteers!



Pictured above is Stephen, a volunteer for over two and a half years from our Apex Home Delivered Meals site.

More than a Meal

Senior Hunger Facts

- The Raleigh metro ranks second highest in the nation for senior food insecurity.
- 57% of the seniors we serve report living alone, facing food insecurity with the added burden of isolation.
- 45% of Wake County's overall population growth comes from people age 55 and older.
- 12,000 more seniors turn 60 each day, with 7.4MM living below the poverty line nationwide.



Your Support Changes the Outlook for Wake County Seniors



Scan QR code or head to WakeMOW.org today to learn how to get involved.

DONATE NOW

- Wake County is the largest Meals on Wheels chapter in the state - serving 1,400 seniors each day, Monday through Friday.
 - That's roughly 700 hot meal deliveries, 300 frozen and 400 people a day amongst our 10 cafes.
- Meals on Wheels can feed a senior for an entire year for the same cost as ten days in a nursing home, or one day in the hospital.
- 97% of our clients report that our meal deliveries help them to feel better due to regular, nutritious meals.
- 98% of our clients report that MOW deliveries allowed them to continue living at their home.
- 98% of our clients report that they feel more secure at home due to the daily visit.

IN RECOGNITION OF GIFTS GIVEN IN TRIBUTE

FROM
10/22/24
TO 3/19/25

IN MEMORY OF

Ann Mannino
Ann Taylor Gonski
Arlene Turner
Arthur Kilmartin
Augusta Hamilton McLeod
Beryl Wickard
Betsy Byerly Scobie
Betty Griffin
Betty Laughlin Justice
Bob Savage
Carmello Iacone
Catherine Corleto
Connie Parker
David Spencer
Delray
Eliza Douglass
Elizabeth "Beth" Bailey Smith
Elizabeth Bartle
Elnora G. Richardson
Eric Spinella
Evelyn Teeter
Gloria E. Bradley
Harold & Dorothy Pitta
Helen Cohen
Helen Hamilton White
Hugh and Bettie Voress
Ida O. Lee
Ira Newton
Ivan Accola
Janet S. Cumbee
Jettie Morrison Lee
Jim Cameron
Joan Martin
Joanne Webb Bass
Joe and Marvie Davis
Joe Fletcher
Joesephine Jagiello
Johanna Ganthner
John and Dotty Wilson
Josephine Johnson
Judith Moody
Judith Rhodes Moody
Kemper and Roberta Watson
Kenneth Miller
Margaret Roth
Marie Vassallo
Mathilda "Teda" Tucker
Mrs. Elsie Kosco
Mrs. Sadie G. Seabrook
Odell Whitted
Parrish Womble
Pauline Spencer
Raul Cardenas
Rev. Charles and Peggy Sisk
Richard Joseph Daigle, Jr.
Richard Widin
Rick A. Linthurst
Robert Alvin Bolch
Robert Cleland
Ruby Barbour
Russ Sutton
Ruth Gibson
Sarah Olive
Steven Kelley
Teresa Jones
Terrence Brown
Thomas R. Albertine
TI & Sukanya Subramanian
Tom Saunders
Vena Kathryn Scott
Verle Flowers
W,F & Lorelane Lee
Wayland Patterson
William and Jessie Ferrall
Winnie Wheelers
Yoly Munoz's Grandmother

IN HONOR OF

Angeline and Bill Mills
Ashley McCumber
Backporch String Band
Becky Tilley
Betty Ray
Bill and Brenda Taylor
Bob Gothson
Brenda Jane Summers
Brynildsen Family
Cindy Avrette
Deane Irving
Doreatha Taylor
Dottie Thompson
Fred & Nancy Hutchison
Joann Phillips
John Meyer
Johnny Edwards
Larry Rapp
Liz Fuller
Marilyn Brodd
Mary Lethers
Mary Roberts
Michael and Deanna Jarvis
Nancy Randazzo
Nikki Heron
Penny & Fulton Breen
Randy Rutledge
Rev Ryan Wilson
Rosalinda Kelly
Sinella Family
Spinella Family
Susan & Bob Wool
Susan Poux
Talia Hedrick

Including Meals on Wheels of Wake County in your estate planning will help provide vital meals to homebound older adults, reduce food insecurity, and enhance their quality of life. Your legacy gift can make a lasting impact, helping to sustain and expand these vital services for years to come, ensuring that no senior is left behind.



Around the Wheel: The Faces of Meals on Wheels



Introducing Mrs. Alice, who turned 96 years old in February. Ms. Alice has been a member of MOW at the White Oak Friendship Cafe for the past 3 years. She grew up in the very same Green Level community and has watched the significant growth, expansion and development from farmlands to suburban neighborhoods.

Ms. Alice is an active, daily participant in the Friendship Cafe programs and enjoys daily exercise, yoga, Zumba, and 3-card Bingo. When asked what else she might be doing if she didn't have the option to take the van to our site, Ms. Alice muses she would be sitting at home tending to her flower beds, but, without the socialization with her friends that she so loves!

No longer able to cook, Ms. Alice is grateful for the daily meals. She tells us that the Friendship Cafe is a wonderful outlet to meet other people and share in life stories - as she herself overcame the struggles of the Civil Rights movement. She proudly says that, every day she wakes up, her intention is to make her community a better place!

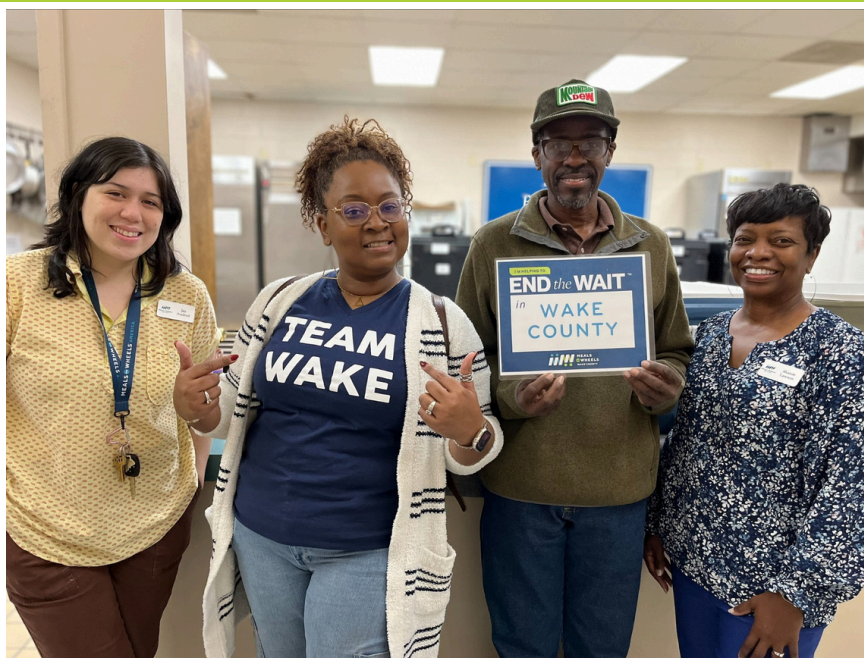
"I got my first Meals on Wheels delivery today at 11:00 a.m. today. I was looking forward to it since this past weekend. It was delicious and was an exceptionally well-balanced meal. Beginning this January, my SNAP benefits were reduced by half and I was worried about how I would be able to afford groceries needed for the month.

I want to thank you and everyone involved, including the volunteers and drivers. You folks make huge differences in the lives of so many, including me. I am so thankful for the Meals on Wheels program and I will enjoy all of the delicious and nutritious meals to come. Thank you, again. You have made me happy and supremely satisfied."

- Gregory, a Meals on Wheels Client



Elected Officials: Our Community Champions



Thank you to Wake County Commissioner Shinica Thomas, who delivered meals to homebound seniors in North Raleigh.



Cary Site Manager Dawn Shuey welcomes Wake County Commissioner Susan Evans to our Cary Home Delivered Meals Site.



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@wakemow

Change service requested

Seniors are Waiting.

Scan the QR code to watch our ride along, witnessing firsthand the impact of our services, the economic benefit they provide our community, and the potential threat of federal budget cuts.



END *the* WAIT TM



Tax ID # 56-1061085

Are you a State or Federal Employee? Support us through Combined Giving Campaigns!
State Employees Combined Campaign – 1820; Combined Federal Campaign – 59456