

THE MEAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TEXAS



Volume 43, Issue 5
December 2018



MEALS ON WHEELS
CENTRAL TEXAS



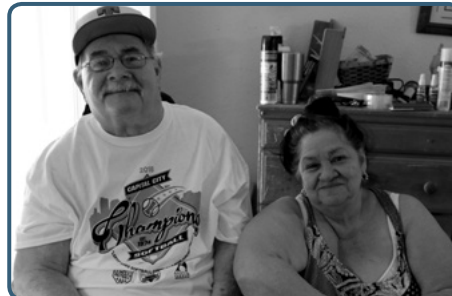
“YOU ARE OUR GUARDIAN ANGELS”

“I was a waitress and he was a carpenter. He was one of my favorite customers because he would always leave me a 50 cent tip. Back then, people didn’t leave 50 cent tips for a cup of coffee,” recalls Pam Morgan of how she and her husband, Roy, met 50 years ago.

The Morgans have been married for 47 years and live in the East Austin home they bought in 1989. They raised five children there. Over the years, Mr. Morgan, who served in the U.S. Marines from 1964-1966, worked his way from carpenter to construction superintendent. Ms. Morgan was employed by the Austin school district, working with students with intellectual disabilities.

Things began to change in 1999 when Mr. Morgan was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. “I started out with a cane, then a walker, and then a wheelchair,” he says of the crippling effects the disease took on his body. At the

same time, Ms. Morgan began to face health issues of her own, including diabetes and chronic arthritis. That’s when they turned to Meals on Wheels Central Texas for assistance.



Ray and Pam Morgan rely on MOWCTX to maintain their independence.

The couple depends on our lunchtime meals to get the nourishment they need, and they love the fact that their lunches are delivered right to their door by dedicated volunteers. “It’s like being in a cafe, ordering your food, and then having it arrive,” Mr. Morgan says with a laugh. “The volunteers are the nicest people, they always ask how you are,” he adds. Our home-delivered meals and

safety checks go a long way in helping the Morgans live independently. But last year, major problems with their home threatened their ability to continue living there. A roof that leaked, and old carpeting that was difficult for Mr. Morgan to maneuver in his wheelchair, were just some of the challenges. Years ago, Mr. Morgan could have fixed anything that went wrong with the house. But that was no longer possible, and, as Ms. Morgan puts it “we couldn’t afford to fix it.”

Fortunately, our Home Repair program and The Home Depot Foundation were able to transform the Morgan’s home into a safer and healthier place for them to live. We replaced the roof, tore out the carpet and installed vinyl plank tile (which Mr. Morgan reports is much easier to navigate in his wheelchair), and retrofitted an old bathtub into a walk-in shower. With his keen knowledge of construction, Mr. Morgan couldn’t be happier

(Continued on back page)

NEW DEPARTMENT TAKES DEEP DIVE ON DATA

We live in a data-driven world. So it's a good thing our agency has been collecting and evaluating data for years. And, more importantly, we apply that data to improve the lives and health of the people we serve. Towards that end, we are expanding the role of our Nutrition Services Department and changing its name to the Department of Nutrition, Health and Impact (NHI).

This new department will employ a client-focused, data-driven approach to manage data across our organization and enhance assessment of and care for our clients, and to demonstrate the efficacy and scope of our mission and the positive impact our programs have in the lives of our

seniors and on our community. NHI will also promote our role as an effective provider of services in the region's healthcare system.



Seanna Marceaux (left) is Vice-President of MOWCTX's new Department of Nutrition, Health and Impact, and Lauren Sasser serves as the department's Research and Program Analyst.

Seanna Marceaux, MOWCTX's Director of Nutrition Services, will lead the new Department of Nutrition, Health and Impact as its Vice President, and Lauren Sasser, our Nutrition Services Coordinator, will now serve in the

role of Research and Program Analyst, overseeing the data function described above. And, of course, we will always remain committed to the value of nutrition, so the NHI department will maintain the current role of Nutrition Program Coordinator, and continue to oversee our kitchen/food operations and ensure that our clients get the nutrition they need to remain healthy.

We look forward to sharing with you data that spotlights the ways in which our services help those we serve, proving what we've known all along—MOWCTX programs deliver overwhelmingly positive outcomes in the lives of the vulnerable people we serve.

SEASON FOR CARING PROVIDES HOPE FOR FAMILY

At 51-years-old, Michael Gomez would like nothing more than to provide for his family—like he did back when he ran the receiving dock at Dell Computer.



MOWCTX client Michael Gomez, his wife, Nora, and their family are featured in this year's Austin American Statesman's Season for Caring campaign.

But that was before both of his legs were amputated due complications from diabetes. And before the kidney his niece donated to him failed, which left him no choice but to undergo dialysis treatments three days per week. Now, his wife, Nora Gomez, supports the family, which includes three of the couples' children who still live at home, through her job with Child Protective Services.

Our nutritious, home-delivered lunches nourish Mr. Gomez while his wife is at work. But the family needs assistance in other ways. Because Mr. Gomez is in a wheelchair, he can no longer navigate the stairs in the family's two story home. The house also lacks a wheelchair accessible bathroom and shower,

but the family does not meet the eligibility requirements for funding through the MOWCTX Home Repair program.

Fortunately, the Gomez family is one of the featured families in this year's Austin American Statesman's Season for Caring campaign. The event is a partnership between the newspaper's Editorial and Community Development departments and introduces readers to Central Texans in need and the non-profit agencies that provide services to them.

To find out how you can help the Gomez family this holiday season, please visit community.statesman.com and click on "Season for Caring".

EMPTY BOWLS AND HOT SOUP: A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Hundreds of Central Texas soup-lovers lined up recently to take part in the Austin Empty Bowl Project, an annual event that benefits our Meals for Kids program.

The Austin Empty Bowl Project (AEBP), which began in 1997, features the work of local potters who donate bowls of every shape, size, and color to the cause.



The annual Austin Empty Bowl Project raises funds for MOWCTX's Meals for Kids program.

Then, every year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, folks line up at the Central Texas Food Bank, pay \$25 to purchase one of the bowls and fill it with soups made by dozens of local restaurants, including our very own Meals on Wheels Central Texas Chef Ruben Burnett, and bread from several nearby bakeries. Attendees also enjoy live music performed by talented Central Texas artists.

Best of all, the immensely popular event raises money for the Food Bank's Kid's Cafe program and our Meals for Kids (MFK) program, which provides nutritious snacks and lessons on healthy eating habits to children who live in public housing communities and attend after school programs run by our dedicated partners at Communities in Schools.

The totals for this year's event are still being tallied—but AEBP has raised nearly \$250,000 for MFK over the past few years! We thank the organizers of this wonderful holiday tradition for their continued support of Meals for Kids!

**HELP US
DELIVER
HOT MEALS
AND WARM
SMILES!**



We have many open volunteer meal delivery routes and need help getting them filled.

To get started on the most fulfilling volunteer experience around, call us at **512-476-6325**, or email us at volunteer@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org, or visit mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org and click on the "Get Involved" tab

► CREATIVE WAYS TO GIVE ◀

Art for Charity

After local artist Jessica Fontenot learned about the needs of Austin's growing senior population and the demand for Meals on Wheels Central Texas' services, she went into action. Her latest artwork series, Art for Charity, will be sold to support our mission. Visit <https://shop.jessicafontenot.com/> and click on Art for Charity for details.



BlueAir Helps You Stay Cool and Be Cool!

Buying a new A/C or heater from BlueAir Heating and Air Conditioning will not only make your house a more comfortable place to live, you'll also be helping our homebound neighbors in need!

Whenever a customer purchases a new HVAC system, BlueAir will donate as much as \$175 to one of four local non-profits, including Meals on Wheels Central Texas. You get to decide which charity receives the donation—just mention Meals on Wheels and BlueAir will do the rest.

Call BlueAir at **512-257-8423** for more information!



Good Food, Great Company, and an Outstanding Cause!

Here's your chance to dine at some of the best restaurants in Central Texas, meet some new friends, AND help MOWCTX in the process! Taster's Table Club (TTC) brings food lovers together for conversation and food at affordable monthly dining experiences. Each month, members choose from select restaurants offering exclusive tasting menus for club members. Now, our wonderful partners at TTC are donating 10% of every new membership and \$2 of every meal purchased to MOWCTX. Each time you participate in a TTC event, you will help feed homebound older Central Texans. In addition, when you sign up for your TTC membership, you'll save \$10 by entering the code "MOWCTX" at checkout. Visit bit.ly/TTCMOW for more information or to sign up today!



Together, we can end senior hunger in Central Texas.

THE HOME DEPOT AND MOWCTX TRANSFORM HOLLY NEIGHBORHOOD

On a hot and muggy morning near the end of September, more than 300 volunteers from The Home Depot and its Garden Department vendor partners worked alongside Meals on Wheels Central Texas Home Repair program to brighten the lives of disabled veterans and low income homeowners in East Austin's Holly neighborhood.



Volunteers from The Home Depot and its Garden Department vendor partners work to beautify a home in East Austin's Holly neighborhood.

For several hours, volunteers painted the exterior of homes, landscaped yards throughout the neighborhood, and installed fences, flag poles and pergolas. Earlier in the month, our Home Repair program performed major modifications on some of the houses—work which included putting in new roofs and making bathrooms wheelchair accessible.

The big volunteer beautification project is part of The Home Depot Foundation's commitment to improving the lives of veterans nationwide. Giving back to veterans is personal to The Home Depot, as more than 35,000 of the company's associates have served in the military.

GRATITUDE

- American Lebanon Association for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Church at the Conservatory for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Evelyn M. Davies Foundation Trust for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Fifth Age of Man Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Herndon Family Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Nancy Taylor Memorial Fund for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Stuart Foundation, Inc. for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Tecumseh Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Ting Tsung & Wei Fong Chao Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- University Area Rotary Club Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Valley Services, Inc. for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- WellMed Medical for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Westminster for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Wheatsville Co-op for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The Chenven Fund for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- The LGR Foundation Fund of Austin Community Foundation for supporting Mike's Place
- The Henry Renfert, Jr. Fund of Austin Community Foundation for supporting Mike's Place
- Bountiful Blessings Fund for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Danny Reed Advertising for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- H-E-B for supporting Thanksgiving Day meal delivery
- IBM Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs for supporting Handy Wheels
- Ira Davis Charitable Trust for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Joni Templeton Charitable Trust for supporting PALS
- Nature's Treasures for supporting Mike's Place
- Petra Communications, Inc. for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Professional Flooring Supply for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- St. David's Foundation for supporting In-Home Care
- St. David's Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas

ADAM'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on the year gone by. I suppose that explains all of the year-end lists that come out in December—those itemized accounts of the year's top films or books or TV shows.

But wouldn't it be more meaningful to have a year-end list that highlights the best acts of kindness performed in the past 12 months? My top picks for 2018 would be the incredible examples of support we received in our mission to nourish and enrich the lives of Central Texas homebound older adults and people with disabilities.

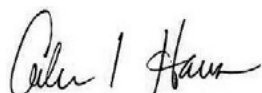
Here's a great one—in March, while Austin was understandably on edge over a frightening series of deadly explosions in our city, our dedicated volunteers served as a familiar face and comforting presence to the homebound seniors we serve. Our volunteers' unwavering dedication to clients' well-being, especially during times like that, nourishes our clients' emotional health.

More recently, during the week-long boil water mandate, hundreds of Central Texans donated to our bottled water campaign for clients who were unable to safely boil water. Then, on top of delivering our nutritious lunches, our wonderful volunteers also delivered all of that bottled water to the clients who so badly needed it.

And, of course, you are on our list too for the generous support you continue to provide us year in and year out! Your ongoing commitment to our cause means we can continue, as a valued community-based health care provider, to offer an array of holistic programs—focusing on social determinants of health—that work in concert to help clients maintain their independence and age-in-place with dignity.

And that certainly beats any film, book, or TV show from this year or any other! I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a very happy new year!

Yours in Service,



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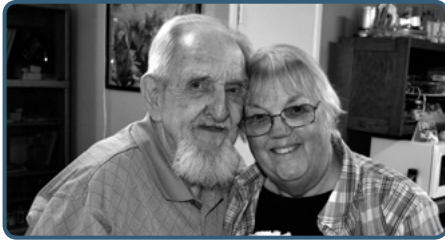
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“THEY’RE LIKE FAMILY TO ME”

Every Wednesday morning, for the past seven years, 74-year-old Donna Harwood leaves her San Antonio home, gets into her Honda Fit, and drives to Austin to deliver meals to our homebound clients. “It’s a 155 mile roundtrip. I do it because the people I have on my route, they’re like family to me,” she says.



Longtime Meals on Wheels volunteer Donna Harwood delivers hot meals and warm smiles to MOWCTX client Robert McMurray every Wednesday.

Ms. Harwood’s commute time used to be much shorter. She lived in Austin when she first

started volunteering for us nearly 20 years ago, shortly after her husband, Richard, passed away. “I lost my husband in 1999 and I sort of vegetated and I knew I needed to get out because I knew he wouldn’t want me to [be depressed],” she recalls. That led her to Meals on Wheels Central Texas.

Soon, Ms. Harwood was delivering meals Mondays and Wednesdays, and serving as a substitute volunteer two other days of the week. But when her daughter, Elizabeth, got a job in San Antonio in 2011, Ms. Harwood moved there as well so she could help care for her grandson, Lennon, who was six at the time. She hasn’t let the relocation interfere with her volunteerism and she even brings Lennon along when

his school schedule permits. “Most of the people on my route have watched him grow from a toddler, and he turned 13 this year,” she says.

But the end of the road is in sight. Ms. Harwood plans to deliver meals for us through January 2020. “That will be 20 years and I’m already older than a couple of my clients,” she says with a laugh before adding “it’s time for me. The drive from San Antonio is getting a little bit too hard to do on a weekly basis.”

When asked what she’ll miss most about her volunteer experience at MOWCTX, she says “the people.”

And we’ll miss you, Ms. Harwood. Wednesdays won’t be the same without you!

LIVE MUSIC, GREAT TIMES, AND FURRY FRIENDS

This fall, Tito’s Handmade Vodka has been partnering with ACL Live to give back to our PALS (Pets Assisting the Lives of Seniors) program!

PALS provides free pet food and basic veterinary assistance to our clients’ beloved dogs and cats. That’s important because pets provide much needed companionship and help reduce

the isolation and loneliness that many of our clients experience.

You can help by stopping by Tito’s Vodka for Dog People booth and enjoying specialty cocktails during the sold-out Saturday, December 22, concert by Robert Earl Keen. For every Tito’s cocktail sold at ACL Live, Tito’s will donate \$1 to PALS, up to \$10,000!



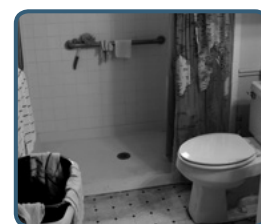
Tito’s Handmade Vodka supports our PALS program which helps our clients’ furry friends.

For more information, visit the “Get Involved” section of www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org and click on “Events”.

“YOU ARE OUR GUARDIAN ANGELS”(CONT.)

with the finished product. “The Home Depot and Meals on Wheels Central Texas blessed us with doing this job, otherwise we never could have done it,” he says.

When asked what Meals on Wheels Central Texas means to him and his wife, Mr. Morgan says “You are our guardian angels.”



MOWCTX Home Repair Program transformed the Morgan’s house into a safer place for them to live.