

Spring 2022

## More Friendship Cafes Opening This Spring



As Spring begins to bloom, more Friendship Cafes are opening across Wake County. Friendship Cafes are a space for seniors who are able to leave their homes to dine, socialize with friends, play games, and enjoy experiences together. With three Friendship Cafe locations already open in Wake County, we are excited to open more spaces for seniors to socialize. Over 51% of seniors who attend Friendship Cafe live alone- spaces like Friendship Cafe not only provide a reprieve from isolation for seniors, but also a place for a reliable, healthy meal.

In March, our Garner and Pine Acres Friendship Cafes celebrated their grand opening events. For many of the seniors attending Friendship Cafe, this has been the first time they have been able to come together to dine and socialize in over two years. Prior to the opening of these dining rooms, Meals on Wheels has provided lunches to seniors on a pick-up basis only. With our dining rooms opening once again, we know that seniors will have much more opportunity to socialize, and spend time outside of their homes. 8 out of 10 Meals on Wheels clients say they are able to see their friends more often because of Friendship Cafe.

“The most important thing that people don’t realize is that loneliness is a killer, and as people age, they sometimes get withdrawn from each other. People are social creatures by nature, and everybody is going to need somebody at one time or another.” A Friendship Cafe Client noted.

“Friendship Cafe brings people together to congregate, because people need people in that way too- they combine what one person brings with what another person can lack- you balance each other out.”

As we look ahead, Wendell and Wake Forest Friendship Cafes are set to open in April and May, with more locations to open in the Summer months.



**Mayor Ken Marshburn of Garner gave opening remarks for the reopening of our Garner Friendship Cafe.**

## Keeping the Wheels Rolling



Despite rising gas prices, our volunteers have continued to show up for our seniors by delivering daily, hot meals. Lillian Donahue of CBS 17 spoke with Meals on Wheels of Wake County to address how price increases at the pump have affected our volunteers.

“I love being a volunteer because it helps people.” Denney said. “I feel like it’s worth it because again, it’s fulfilling to me to help people and as long as I can afford to do it, I’m going to do it.”

Meals on Wheels of Wake County volunteers cumulatively drive over 250,000 miles over the course of a year to serve meals to over 1,300 homebound seniors and people with disabilities in Wake County. The efforts of our volunteers ensure that our homebound community not only receives a reliable prepared meal, but a visit from a friendly face as well. For many of our seniors, the meals they receive from Meals on Wheels comprise over half of the food they will have available to eat in a day, and the visit from our volunteer is often the only person they will see that day.

All of us at Meals on Wheels of Wake County have so much gratitude for our community of volunteers and supporters who continue to devote their time and resources to ensure that our seniors are never left behind. Meals on Wheels is always looking for more volunteers, especially in times like this when others may need to scale back. Volunteering typically takes about an hour, but the impact of this time and service can last a lifetime for our senior neighbors in need. Those interested in volunteering can fill out an application at [www.wakemow.org/volunteer-application-mow-wake-county](http://www.wakemow.org/volunteer-application-mow-wake-county)

*MOW is grateful for generous donations from the following foundations and corporations from November through March:*

**BAILEY ENDOWMENT  
- \$5,000**

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- \$30,000**

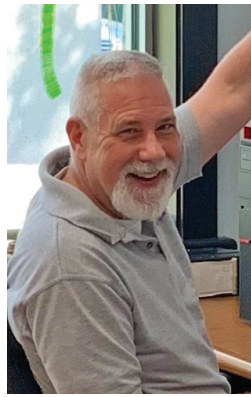
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& PONTON - \$5,000**



## A Message of Gratitude from the Executive Director

*Alan Winstead*

The Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dali painted his *The Persistence of Memory* in 1931. This painting made famous the melting pocket watches that are familiar to anyone who has seen the picture. While I am not an artist, or even an art historian, this painting does resonate with me.

Unprecedented current events have impacted all of us. We all have worked to make sense of and respond to the COVID pandemic, renewed calls for racial justice, a volatile political landscape, and the invasion of Ukraine. We are responding to a plethora of impactful events in much the same way that the artist was responding to multiple changes in the beginning of the 20th century. The human interaction between time, space, and memory make sense of the world around us in both eras.

Despite a world in flux, there are some constants. We know that the federal Older Americans Act has prioritized senior nutrition and is celebrating the 50th Anniversary Milestone this year. Our participants benefit from this established program. They eat better, feel safer, and live independently because of Meals on Wheels.

Our donors consistently support our program. They generously contribute to make it possible to sustain our senior neighbors. Without the financial support of our community, Meals on Wheels would not be able to accomplish all we have achieved over the last forty-eight years.

From the very beginning in 1974, our volunteers have played an important role in our success. They show up every day to deliver nutritious meals and social visits to our participants. They arrive on the coldest of days as well as the hottest of days; they turn up on wet days as well blustery days. Our volunteers are even taking higher gas prices in stride and continue to provide their services. While we celebrate volunteers every day, we will recognize them during Volunteer Appreciation Week. Even in a world in flux, Meals on Wheels can rely on our amazing volunteers.

I invite you to take some time with Dali's *The Persistence of Memory* to see one response to a world in flux. I invite you to join me in celebrating the constants in our changing world.

## 50 Years of Senior Nutrition Programs



*NC Representative Julie Von Haefen delivers meals to homebound seniors to honor the 50th anniversary of senior nutrition programs.*

On March 22, 1972, President Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) to include a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. This important piece of legislation provided the foundation for Meals on Wheels programs across the country to begin to address the problem of food insecurity and isolation faced by seniors in our communities. 50 years later, we celebrate the success of this community driven solution, but know that there is much more work to be done to address senior hunger and isolation in our community.

During the month of March, elected officials and community champions across Wake County advocated on social media about the importance of Meals on Wheels, volunteered to deliver meals to seniors, and raised money to fund the meals that our elderly neighbors need most. Their support of Meals on Wheels and the OAA is crucial to spreading awareness of the issue of senior hunger, and provides the resources and support needed to address the problem.





# Empowering Senior Health

A group of pre-licensure nursing students from UNC School of Nursing have been spending every Wednesday educating clients about health issues at Saint Saviour's Friendship Cafe. As part of their public health nursing class, students have presented about hypertension, stroke prevention, sleep hygiene, the benefits of music, and much more.

Advancing age brings on a host of health complications. According to Meals on Wheels America, at least 1 in 4 adults aged 65 and older reported anxiety or depression during the pandemic. In North Carolina alone, 31% of Meals on Wheels clients have some form of disability, and 26% report to have either "fair" or "poor" health.

"The students have an awareness that health resources for seniors may be limited, so they see this as an opportunity to give back in the way of knowledge and empowerment." said Instructor LaTonia Chalmers.



"The students coming here and providing health education offers opportunities for seniors to learn about, and engage in activities that can support their health and well being."

The program resonates with Friendship Cafe clients, who look forward to visits from the group every Wednesday through the end of April. "You always need a little sunshine. Them coming by shows affection. Without it, without anybody caring about you, you're in trouble!" Clients have felt invigorated by the health knowledge taught to them by the students as well. "When you feel like you're making a contribution to society, and feel like you're needed and wanted, that's a good thing."

Meals on Wheels of Wake County is grateful for UNC School of Nursing students empowering our clients with the knowledge that will support their health in perpetuity.

# Stretching Toward Mindfulness

Meals on Wheels of Wake County has partnered with the Raleigh, NC nonprofit organization You Call This Yoga to provide chair-based yoga to enhance the well-being of seniors. The free, in-person weekly classes are "served up" before lunch at three Meals On Wheels' Friendship Cafes to nourish seniors' physical, emotional and nutritional health.



"This opportunity greatly helps senior and disabled Meals on Wheels members manage the physical and emotional challenges of aging and limited mobility. We are thrilled to expand our programming partnership with You Call This Yoga," said Sharon Lawson, Program Director of Meals on Wheels of Wake County.

"This partnership with Meals On Wheels brings You Call This Yoga back to intimately serving our community with chair-based yoga classes. Our dedicated teachers and support teams are thrilled to engage seniors and generate a fun, safe and healthy experience," said Executive Director Howie Shareff.



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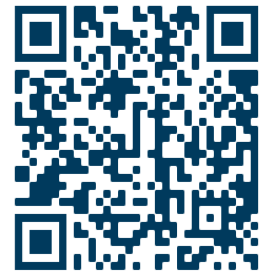
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# NO LUNCH PLANS? VOLUNTEER WITH US!



**MEALS on WHEELS**  
WAKE COUNTY

Scan to Volunteer



[www.wakemow.org](http://www.wakemow.org)

State Employees Combined Campaign donor option number  
Meals on Wheels of Wake County — 1820

Combined Federal Campaign donor option number  
Meals on Wheels of Wake County — 59456

# OLDER AMERICANS ACT NUTRITION PROGRAM FACT SHEET

UNITED STATES 2021



Senior hunger and isolation are growing problems – which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.



BEFORE THE PANDEMIC:



1 IN 3 SENIORS  
FELT LONELY



1 IN 8 SENIORS  
was threatened by or  
experienced hunger

1 IN 4 SENIORS  
LIVED ALONE

1 IN 10  
EXPERIENCED POVERTY

NEARLY 1 IN 3  
LIVED WITH A DISABILITY

FOOD INSECURITY RATES WERE HIGHER FOR BLACK AND HISPANIC SENIORS, and these disparities have only worsened with COVID-19. Black/African American seniors' risk of food insecurity is **MORE THAN TWICE** that of white seniors.

Community-based aging and nutrition services, like Meals on Wheels, have struggled to meet the need for these essential services. Demand has only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If more investments are not made as the older adult population rapidly grows, the unmet need will intensify, and the issues of senior hunger and isolation will escalate in the years to come.

BEFORE THE PANDEMIC: **85% OF LOCAL MEALS ON WHEELS PROGRAMS** surveyed saw at least some **UNMET NEED IN THEIR COMMUNITIES**

12,000 AMERICANS  
ARE TURNING 60 EACH DAY



By 2060, **1 IN 3 AMERICANS ARE PROJECTED TO BE 60 AND OLDER**

The Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program is the only federally supported program designed to meet the nutritional and social needs of older adults.

OAA services, like congregate and home-delivered meals, aim to serve groups of older adults living in the community with the **GREATEST SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC NEED**, such as those who:

- have low income;
- are a racial or ethnic minority;
- live in a rural community;
- have limited English proficiency; and/or
- are put at risk of institutionalization

# Meals on Wheels of Wake County recognizes these memorial donations given from 10-27-2021 to 3-10-2022

## In Memory Of

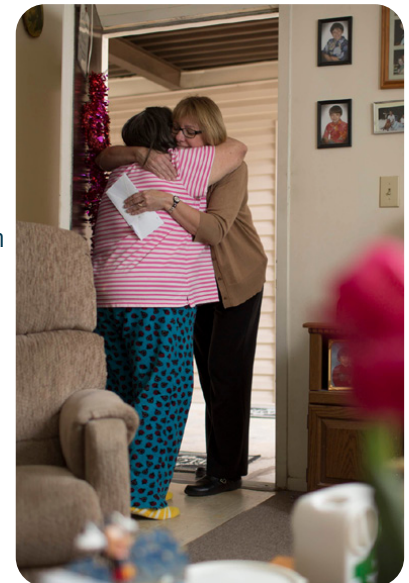
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