



The

Meal Times

Summer 2025

MEALS on WHEELS
WAKE COUNTY

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR MEALS ON WHEELS OF WAKE COUNTY

She Fed Generations of Children — Now Meals on Wheels Feeds Her

For 20 years, Sylvia was a beloved cafeteria worker in the Wake County Public School System. She didn't just serve lunch—she served care, warmth, and kindness to every child who came through her line.

Now 70 and retired, Sylvia finds herself on the receiving end of that same compassion. Today, Sylvia receives daily visits from volunteers who bring her nourishing meals—and a bit of connection.

Sylvia's story is a powerful reminder that those who once gave so much to their communities often come to rely on them later in life. Thanks to the generosity of Meals on Wheels supporters, Sylvia can stay in her home and receive the care she once gave so freely.

"She cared for our children," says one volunteer. "Now we can care for her." You can help honor Sylvia's legacy—and support seniors across our community.



Sylvia smiles on the front porch of her longtime home near Oberlin Village.
Photo by Jillian Clark.

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Driven to Serve

Every day, thousands of seniors across Wake County depend on the compassion and consistency of Meals on Wheels volunteers. Among them stands Cledus, a dedicated community member who has volunteered to deliver meals to homebound seniors since 2018.

"There's someone on my route I always deliver to last so we can have extra time to talk—we enjoy chatting. Since her husband passed, she doesn't get many visitors, so I like to spend extra time with her."

Cledus is not just delivering food—he's delivering hope, connection, and a reminder to our homebound neighbors that they are not alone. Cledus reminds us all that small acts of kindness—delivered one meal at a time—can make a lasting difference.

To anyone interested in volunteering, Cledus says: **"You might come aboard just thinking you're helping someone, but you will gain just as much you give."**



VOLUNTEER



Cledus packs meals at our Blair Drive site before delivering his route. Photo by Jillian Clark

GIFTS GIVEN IN TRIBUTE

3/20/25-7/22/25

IN MEMORY OF

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A Message from the Executive Director

Ashley C. McCumber

As we reflect on the summer of 2025, I am filled with gratitude and pride for what we have accomplished together at Meals on Wheels of Wake County. With your partnership, this summer has been one of remarkable impact, community connection, and renewed commitment to our mission.

Thanks to your continued support, we delivered more than 100,000 meals over the past four months—each one carefully prepared and brought to the door of someone who needed it. But these deliveries are about more than just nutrition. They are about kindness. They are about the familiar face that shows up at the same time each week, offering a warm smile, a gentle check-in, and a few minutes of genuine conversation.

For many of our clients, that visit is the highlight of their day. It's a lifeline to the outside world, a reminder that they are seen, valued, and cared for. That is the heart of our mission, and this summer, I've seen it lived out time and again through the incredible commitment of our volunteers and staff.

Beyond our meals, we have partnered with state and local agencies to connect our seniors to resources like local produce, cooling fans for summer heat, and pet food to feed beloved companions.

As we look ahead to the fall, I carry with me deep gratitude for all we've achieved together, and what we can accomplish as we unite to face challenges ahead. Thank you for walking alongside us, and for helping us bring nourishment and hope to those who need it most!

It takes over 100 volunteers each weekday to deliver to the 1,400+ neighbors we serve.



Cooling Relief Delivered

This summer, Wake County's Cool for Wake initiative teamed up with Meals on Wheels of Wake County to deliver over 80 box fans to seniors living without adequate cooling or air conditioning. The district-wide effort aims to protect vulnerable residents from high summer temperatures.

To reach homebound seniors, Meals on Wheels volunteers integrated more than 30 fans into their delivery routes so far this season, bringing relief directly to homebound seniors across Wake County. For recipients, each fan represents more than a cooling breeze—it's comfort, a measure of safety, and a reminder they're not alone.



Over 30 Fans Distributed so far!



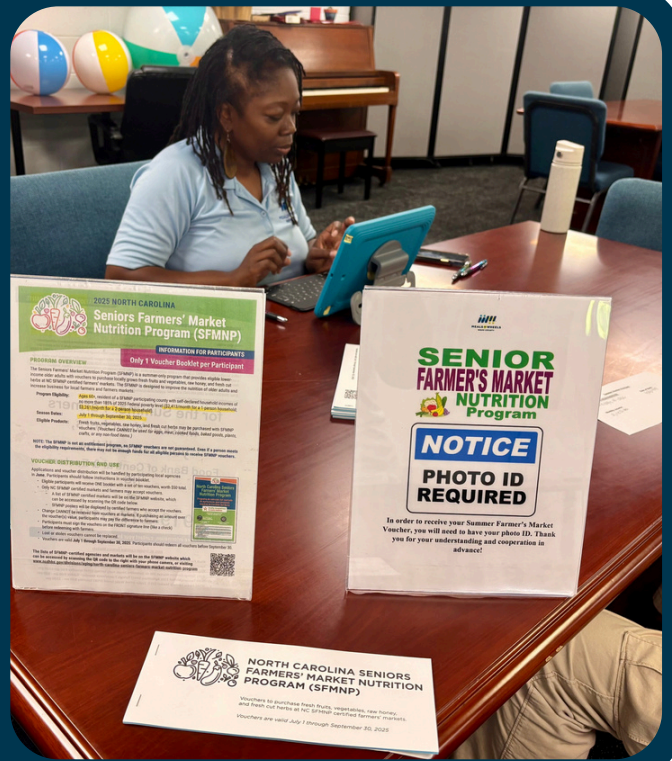
Supporting Farmers and Seniors

Meals on Wheels of Wake County partnered with the State Farmers Market Nutrition Program every summer to provide fresh produce vouchers to local seniors. As part of this initiative, eligible seniors received \$50 in vouchers to be used at participating state farmers markets throughout Wake County.

1,008 vouchers were distributed to Friendship Cafe senior's thanks to the State Farmers Market Nutrition Program!

The vouchers were distributed at all 10 of Meals on Wheels' Friendship Cafe locations, which serve as community hubs where older active adults gather for nutritious meals, social connection, and wellness activities. The effort is aimed at increasing access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables while supporting North Carolina farmers.

The State Farmers Market Nutrition Program is designed to benefit both seniors and local agriculture by connecting recipients directly with fresh, seasonal produce. For many seniors, the vouchers not only help improve nutrition but also offer an opportunity to engage with the community and local food systems. Nothing beats a summertime visit to the farmer's market!



VOLUNTEER



DONATE



APPLY FOR MEALS



A Growing Partnership at Rosenwald Friendship Cafe



Rosenwald Friendship Cafe Manager Wilma smiles with volunteer Brenda.

At the Rosenwald Friendship Cafe, a meaningful partnership is taking shape. Cafe participants and members of the Triangle Disability and Autism Services come together each week for shared activities like line dancing and working in a community garden. These simple routines offer space for connection, learning, and building relationships across generations and abilities.

The line dancing sessions bring everyone together through music and movement. Whether someone is just learning the steps or offering support to others, the group encourages participation and mutual encouragement.

Out in the garden, the collaboration continues. Led by longtime Meals on Wheels volunteer Brenda, participants work side by side planting, weeding, and tending to the space. Brenda's guidance and warmth help make the garden a place where people feel comfortable trying something new, sharing knowledge, and engaging in conversation.

This partnership reflects the Meals on Wheels mission: it's more than a meal. It's about fostering community, creating opportunities for connection, and supporting the whole person. At Rosenwald Cafe, that spirit is thriving—in each shared dance step, each garden row, and each new perspective gained.

Learn about Friendship Cafes
wakemow.org/friendship-cafe





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Change service requested

A Gathering for Good

Make your next church event, school fundraiser, or community gathering even more meaningful—partner with Meals on Wheels of Wake County! By making your event a benefit, you'll help deliver warm meals and heartfelt connection to seniors in need.

We can make kindness go further—together.
Email Sara@WakeMOW.org to get your fundraiser or event started today!



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



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