

On the Move

Providing meals to the homebound in the State College area since 1971



Fall 2020 Newsletter

www.scmow.org

Annual Fund Drive *In A Very Different Year*

By Bill Haner

I would like to start with a thank you. Thank you for your extraordinary support this year as the virus pandemic cruelly began to take charge of our environment this past spring. Individuals and organizations throughout our community stepped up in a big way to enable the extreme measures that State College Meals on Wheels had to take to maintain the flow of meals to our clients...our community members that depend on us, week in and week out, for their sustenance.

We couldn't carry on without the incredible efforts and ingenuity of our Executive Director, Suelynn Shiller, and her dedicated and amazing staff: Chef Brad Richards, Associate Director Mary Lemmon, and assistant Rachel Wylie. And our loyal volunteers remain the backbone of our organization! Also, a huge thank you goes to Grace Lutheran Church, our gracious and supportive host since 1971, for giving us the flexibility and freedom to operate as needed during this crisis.

Higher costs came at us from every direction. Reducing volunteer exposure required increasing staff labor. Delivering multiple frozen meals and establishing a substantial reserve required the procurement of a huge new volume of freezer space. Supplementing the frozen meals with shelf-stable groceries contributed to a dramatic increase in food costs, not to mention

the increases in the overall cost of food in the marketplace. To top it off, our biggest fundraiser of the year, our annual benefit dinner, could not be held last May due to the pandemic.

Yes, it has been a year like no other. But fortunately, with your strong support over the years, SCMOW remains strong and will undoubtedly weather the storm. But we have many months to go before we emerge from this crisis. And it appears now that we will not be able to put on our benefit dinner for the second year in a row.

So please join me in contributing to this year's Meals on Wheels annual fund drive. Your tax-deductible donation stays locally to help our clients remain independent, sustain good nutrition, and maintain a social connection.

What impact can you have? As I mentioned, shelf-stable groceries supplement the frozen meals we currently deliver. \$60 provides groceries to a client for an entire month. Another way to look at this—\$360 provides enough groceries for all of our clients for a day.

All donations, large or small, are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Bill Haner is the current vice president and past president of the SCMOW Board of Directors and continues to serve as chair of the annual benefit dinner.

“Getting Help Is A Real Treasure”

When the pandemic hit in March, State College Area Meals on Wheels rapidly pivoted to an alternate delivery model to continue providing nutritious meals to our clients and to keep our clients, volunteers, and staff safe from COVID-19. Continuing our operations has been an enormous challenge, but letters from clients like the one to the right make the effort worthwhile.

We are so honored to be able to provide the help that all of our clients need during these difficult times. And your continued support of State College Area Meals on Wheels makes it possible. Thank you.

To Staff and Volunteers at Meals on Wheels,
Thanks for all the thought, kindness and effort that goes into bringing us Meals on Wheels. Each Monday, there is the surprise of the frozen meals for the week. Each Wednesday, there's some fresh food and some surprises again.

Getting used to being house-confined is a hard thing. Having it last and last is a big challenge. Getting HELP is a real treasure and kind people help make it possible to go on.

Thank you for all you do!

Local Fresh Food Deliveries

Thanks to special grants from the Centre Foundation and Bank of America Charitable Foundation, State College Area Meals on Wheels has been able to provide fresh local foods, produce, and dairy products to our clients the past few months. And in the process we were able to support local restaurants and farmers.

Freshly prepared meals from Taproot Kitchen were offered for our clients this summer. Our clients loved the treat of being able to choose from “restaurant meals” for their special deliveries. Reportedly, the entrees were delicious!

This fall, we have featured fresh fruit and vegetable trays and dairy products, including milk, yogurt, and cheese from local producers and in-house bakery treats from locally sourced ingredients. These deliveries have brightened our clients’ days in colorful and nutritious ways.



One client wrote to us to say, “Just a note to tell you how much I have enjoyed my Wednesday treats. It was exciting to open my cooler to check out the goodies when I returned from dialysis on Wednesday afternoon. It was really nice when I saw the tossed salad including an assortment of dressings. I’m looking forward to the home baked goodies.”

Your support of Meals on Wheels helps us to continue providing quality foods to our clients year-round.



Calling Volunteers Prevent Isolation

Meals on Wheels has always prided itself on being more than just food—we also deliver a personal connection with the meal. But, how do you maintain that personal connection during a pandemic?

One of the unfortunate side effects of the pandemic is the isolation of seniors and the other most vulnerable members of our community. This isolation can lead to or worsen a variety of mental and physical health issues. State College Area Meals on Wheels is working to combat isolation and loneliness with an army of “calling volunteers”. Each of our 22 callers checks in with their clients at least once per week just to chat and to find out if our clients have any particular needs.

Our callers report that they have formed friendships with many of their clients, who can also reach out to their callers

directly when they have a need or just to talk. Our clients thank us often for introducing them to their new friends. One of our clients told us that she, “really so much appreciates it and doesn’t feel alone at all anymore.”

Calling volunteers log their clients’ wellbeing with us every week and also report any needs—like toilet paper or a tube of toothpaste—so that we can be sure to send that extra item with our next delivery. One client’s family said, “It’s wonderful that everyone at Meals on Wheels goes beyond their normal duties to ensure their client’s needs are met.”

Thank you so much to all of our calling volunteers for helping our clients maintain social connections during this difficult time!

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