



**MEALS on WHEELS**  
SOUTHWEST OH & NORTHERN KY

# FRIENDS AT THE DOOR

May 2025

## DRIVING INTO THE FUTURE

### *The Campaign for Meals on Wheels of Southwest OH & Northern KY*

We are embarking on a transformational campaign to build a new home and create innovative, scalable solutions that improve the lives of our community's seniors. Our new home will include a larger, safer and more efficient kitchen and distribution center and will serve as a hub for activity and resources for tens of thousands of seniors. It represents the next chapter of our mission to promote seniors' independence.

### FEATURES OF THE NEW FACILITY

#### **A new kitchen and distribution center, including:**

- a 51,500-square-foot facility to house all Meals on Wheels operations under one roof;
- an improved layout and linear design for production;
- a functional production kitchen, providing capacity for social enterprise in private-pay meals and wholesale meals;
- increased cold storage and warehouse space;
- more parking and a designated area for safe and efficient vehicle loading;
- a community gathering space for seniors to engage in health and wellness programming, seminars, classes, social events and group meals;
- a welcoming volunteer engagement space.

#### **Program growth and innovation, including:**

- critical investments in our fleet, such as large, refrigerated vehicles for meal delivery and accessible vehicles to transport clients with specialized needs;
- investment in social enterprises to diversify funding and secure long-term sustainability;
- research to improve senior hunger and social isolation programs.

See more details on page two.



*Meals on Wheels of Southwest OH & Northern KY purchased property at 3251 Highland Ave., in Columbia Township in Cincinnati as our new home. Many people know this site as the old John Nolan Ford dealership.*

*For more information on how you can support Meals on Wheels or to make a gift, please contact Mike Hogan, Chief Advancement Officer, at 513-244-0672 or [mhogan@muchmorethanameal.org](mailto:mhogan@muchmorethanameal.org).*

Scan to make a gift to the campaign, or visit [muchmorethanameal.org](http://muchmorethanameal.org).



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# RISING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR REGION'S SENIORS

*A Letter from Mike Dunn  
CEO of Meals on Wheels*

## DEAR FRIEND,

On Wednesday April 30, Meals on Wheels publicly launched the “Driving Into The Future Campaign”—a \$30-million campaign that will address the increasing needs of a growing senior population in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region. This transformational campaign will enable us to meet the essential needs of seniors and promote their independence so they may remain in the comfort of their own homes.

U.S. demographics project a significant increase in the senior population. There are 79 million seniors in America today, and that number is projected to grow to 91 million in 2030 and to 112 million by 2060. Within a decade, there will be more seniors than young people 18 and under for the first time in U.S. history.

**We are quickly approaching what experts call a crisis in aging, and we are preparing to meet this challenge head on.**

This campaign will also allow us to more completely address the negative health impacts created by social isolation and loneliness as well as hunger and malnutrition amongst seniors. In addition, we will dramatically increase our meal production capacity and social enterprise capabilities.



*Our current facility has only 2,500 square feet of production space. It was originally designed to produce 250,000 meals per year. We are now producing 1.2 million meals per year.*

“Driving Into The Future” is designed to support the creation of a 51,500-square-foot facility that will:

- increase the number of unique seniors served from 10,000 to 30,000 a year;
- increase the number of meals produced annually from 1.2 million to 3 million;
- grow a private-pay meal option and transportation services to serve seniors who do not currently qualify;
- launch a wholesale business platform to provide other nonprofits with meals to serve their communities;
- support infrastructure growth by investing in vehicles and technology to ensure timely, safe delivery of meals, particularly in rural areas with limited access;
- and reduce the negative impacts of loneliness and isolation by expanding social connections and protective services capabilities.

I want to thank all those donors who have already chosen to support the campaign. I am excited to share we are over \$22 million in gifts and pledges towards our overall goal.

**We are going to need the support of our community to reach our final \$30-million goal. Please consider supporting this important initiative.**

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunn".



*Our new facility expands our production capacity tremendously, offers more parking and creates a one-stop resource center for seniors, their families and caregivers.*

## SAVE ROOM FOR DESSERT: BUST A CRUST IS BACK!

*Our annual Bust a Crust pie fundraiser will return this fall, just in time for Thanksgiving. To learn about placing a bulk pie order for your group, partnering with us as a sponsor or supporting our mission with a gift, contact Meals on Wheels Events & Partnership Manager Betsy Adams at 513-256-6507 or [badams@muchmorethanameal.org](mailto:badams@muchmorethanameal.org).*

# STAYING CONNECTED

## *How the Friendly Callers Club is Tackling Loneliness in Seniors*

Every chapter of life comes with a unique set of challenges. For seniors, one of the most commonly experienced challenges is loneliness. As many as one in four seniors (adults aged 60 years and older), reports feeling lonely and experiencing social isolation, according to research from Meals on Wheels America. Providing solutions that reduce the negative impacts of loneliness and social isolation is integral to the wraparound, essential services Meals on Wheels provides. Sometimes, it starts simply with a phone call.

Meals on Wheels of Southwest OH & Northern KY launched the Friendly Callers Club in early 2024. It is a social connection program in which a volunteer caller is trained and matched with a homebound senior to engage in weekly phone calls and provide supportive conversation for older adults.

Deb Clinkscale, an Isolation Intervention Specialist with Meals on Wheels, manages the Friendly Callers Club. She says, “We can’t completely cure isolation but it goes a long way when someone can say, ‘I know someone is going to call me and check on me once a week.’ Each client is important—and our time together matters.”

Making a phone call once a week might seem like a simple task, but Deb says its benefits are deeply impactful. “It’s really humbling when clients say, ‘I was having a bad day, and I know God put you in my life. I needed to hear that today.’ They look forward to these calls. I don’t take that lightly. People’s lives are being affected.”

Margo Rose, a Meals on Wheels client who receives home-delivered meals and actively engages in health and wellness programs, is a Friendly Callers Club volunteer herself. She knows all too well how difficult it can be to tackle loneliness and a friendly touchpoint matters greatly for older adults. One of the seniors she is paired with is a 98-year-old woman who



*Margo Rose is a Meals on Wheels client and Friendly Callers Club volunteer. She says, “It’s a beautiful thing to be able to help people break out of their patterns of isolation.”*

does not have much family in town and cannot easily leave her house. Margo sees herself as the woman’s contact with the outside world and knows how meaningful a regular phone call is.

“I remember when the weather was bad, and I just wanted contact—I just wanted human contact. When someone would come visit me, it was like, ‘Thank God, there’s someone to talk to.’ I like to think my weekly call is like that,” says Margo.

One of the enjoyable aspects of being a Friendly Caller for Margo is giving others the opportunity to share their stories. She says, “People have amazing stories. They’ve had amazing lives and they want to share that. They really do. And it’s a beautiful thing when they can open up and share their lives with you.”

## BECOME A FRIENDLY CALLER CLUB VOLUNTEER

Meals on Wheels is seeking volunteers to be part of the Friendly Callers Club, a social connection program that’s designed to reduce feelings of loneliness. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, complete and pass a background check, complete training provided by Meals on Wheels and be able to make a minimum of one call weekly for eight weeks. All calls are secure and phone numbers are masked.

### CONTACT FOR PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS

*Tammy Hitchcock, Volunteer Engagement Manager*  
513-244-0668 or [thitchcock@muchmorethanameal.org](mailto:thitchcock@muchmorethanameal.org)

### CONTACT FOR MEALS ON WHEELS CLIENTS WHO WANT TO RECEIVE FRIENDLY CALLS

*Client Care Team 513-244-5485*

# SNAPSHOTS

## *Reds Opening Day Party at OTR Senior Center*

Every March, the Meals on Wheels team at OTR Senior Center makes the most of their Findlay Market-adjacent location for Reds Opening Day. Seniors enjoy breakfast, games, music, ballpark bites and prize giveaways before taking front-row seats to the Opening Day parade.



## *Celebrating the Volunteers at Stepping Stones*

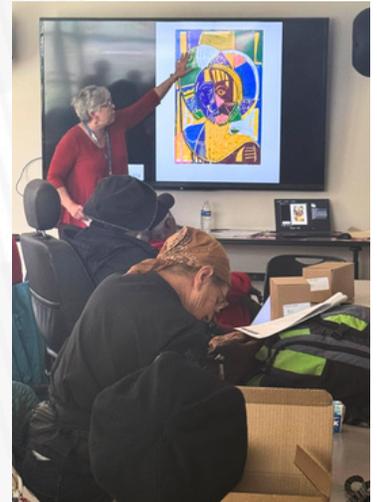
Meals on Wheels Volunteer Engagement Manager Tammy Hitchcock hosted parties for the adults who are part of Stepping Stones. The organization partners with Meals on Wheels to bring a small group of adults to volunteer at our production facility twice a week.



At the Stepping Stones Parkcrest campus, adults enjoyed a pancake breakfast, played games and decorated birthday bags for Meals on Wheels senior clients.

## *Lunch 'n' Learns at the Library*

Our Health & Wellness team has begun collaborating with the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library and our region's cultural historians and hubs to host Lunch 'n' Learn events for older adults every month at the Reading library branch. This series has quickly become a hit with our senior clients!



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