



MEALS on WHEELS
SOUTHWEST OH & NORTHERN KY

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Friends at the Door

August 2026

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Summer Days at OTR Senior Center

This year marks the first summer OTR Senior Center has spent in their new home inside Logan Commons. The space features an all-new kitchen, communal dining area and spacious patio and garden. While the space itself is new, what remains is the same warm and welcoming atmosphere, cultivated over decades in the center's previous home on Race Street. Take a look at how older adults and Meals on Wheels team members have enjoyed a season full of festivities, connections and community.



Our new neighbors at The Collective Findlay, an art gallery and gift shop across the street from OTR Senior Center, hosted a series of art classes. Pictured here: a session on making personal "power pin" accessories.



Additional Summer Engagement



Bingo (and Bingo-cize!)



Lunch-and-learn sessions



Free health screenings



Group outings and shopping trips



Arts and crafts activities



Lunch trips at local restaurants



The Meals on Wheels team turned the patio into the "OTR Senior Center County Fair," featuring traditional games, prizes, a joking booth, popcorn and lemonade.



Our transportation team escorted folks to the 48th Lucille Chenault Senior Citizens & Disabled Persons Ball at the Sharonville Convention Center.

Dear Friends,

Happy summer! I hope this note finds you and your families well.

As the CEO of Meals on Wheels, I am blessed to work with some of the most dedicated, mission-driven people I have ever been around. Our staff shows up and does the hard work regardless of how hot or cold the weather is or whether or not precipitation is falling from the sky. **They know we have 11,000 seniors across our 13-county footprint relying on us, and they do not want to disappoint those seniors.**

I also see these qualities in many of our consistent volunteers. It is heartwarming to know so many people across our community truly care about positively impacting the independence and well-being of seniors.

You can join the legion of almost 6,000 people annually who support Meals on Wheels' mission as a volunteer. There are so many different ways to get involved. You can volunteer from the comfort of your own home by making calls to seniors as part of our Friendly Callers Club. Help us collect items for our senior birthday bags or design birthday cards. If you prefer interacting in-person, join us at the OTR Senior Center or one of our 23 partnering congregate sites to assist serving meals or coordinating activities. Help our team facilitate our Health & Wellness and Digital Connect programs. And certainly, packing pet food bags and snack boxes to supplement seniors' deliveries goes a long way in helping us contain some of our expenses.

These and so many more volunteer opportunities are available to those who are interested. Please check out more info at muchmorethanameal.org or call our team using the contact info below to get started.

Thanks, as always, for your time and consideration.



**Mike Dunn, CEO of Meals on Wheels
of Southwest OH & Northern KY**



Contact Us

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Giving Back, Making Impact: Susan's Story

For more than a decade, Susan has faithfully supported Meals on Wheels of Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky. While she modestly says she does not have much to give, she has never underestimated the difference a gift can make. She gives what she can, month after month, because she knows firsthand the impact of our mission.

Years ago, Susan's mother received our services which allowed her to remain safely and comfortably in her own home for as long as possible. The nutritious meals, friendly visits and dependable support provided peace of mind, preserving her mother's independence during a challenging time for their family. That experience inspired Susan to give back so other families could receive the same care and compassion.

"I may not be able to give much," Susan says, "but knowing that my donations help someone else makes me feel like I'm making a difference. It means a lot to know I'm helping another family the way Meals on Wheels helped mine."

Susan's story is a reminder that generosity is not measured by the size of a donation—it's measured by the impact it creates. Every gift, no matter the amount, helps provide nutritious meals, transportation, social connection and critical support empowering older adults to live independently with dignity.

Our mission is only possible because of caring supporters like Susan. Together, thousands of you make it possible for us to serve seniors every day. **Thank you for helping us deliver so much more than a meal.**

To learn more about ways to give in support of Meals on Wheels' mission, visit muchmorethanameal.org, or contact Chief Advancement Officer Justin Beale at jbeale@muchmorethanameal.org



1937 Society

Meals on Wheels traces its roots to 1937 when Wesley House was established to serve the growing needs of seniors. We commemorate that history with the 1937 Society, our planned giving community. This special group honors those who include Meals on Wheels in their estate plans, ensuring our mission continues for generations to come. With as little as one sentence, you can help sustain our mission for years to come.

Benefits of Legacy Gifts:

- You leave a lasting legacy to be remembered.
- You may reduce the tax burden on your loved ones.
- You could receive significant tax advantages.

We encourage you to consult your financial or legal advisor about the many giving options available, or we can provide you with additional information to get started. With proper planning, you can support your family and still make a meaningful charitable gift that aligns with your values.



Building With Purpose

Mornings at Meals on Wheels are a hustle. Our production facility on Radcliff Drive in South Fairmount starts humming around 6 a.m. as members of the kitchen, distribution and meal-delivery teams ensure more than 4,000 meals head out the door, reaching seniors at home and at congregate locations for group meals. By 10 a.m., the fastest-moving parts of the hustle have settled to prepare for the next day when another 4,000+ meals need to be delivered.

Meals on Wheels produces and delivers nearly 1.2 million meals every year. To make that happen, the production process *must* move like a well-oiled machine, and it does—but it's a machine that requires an upgrade, as it were, in order to keep pace with service demand.

"When we moved into our facility on Radcliff, we were producing around 300,000 meals per year. We are beyond our capacity now," says Meals on Wheels Chief Production Officer Michael Beck.

The building neatly suited the needs of our organization (then Wesley Community Services) back in 2009. Seventeen years, a full re-brand and mergers with two nonprofit organizations later, the scale of our meal production has changed tremendously. Today, space is far more limited and the production team makes the most of every inch of the facility.

Also working at our building on Radcliff are our customer care, social connections, advancement, volunteer management, administrative and leadership teams. Our social and protective services team, transportation team and our entire passenger transportation fleet operate from a different location near Clifton on Central Parkway.

Outside of two satellite distribution sites, around 100 employees are split between two properties.

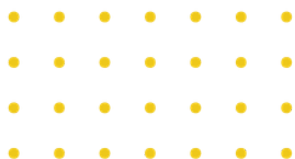
"The need for us to grow is essential to the services we provide today and in the future. Our region's aging population is growing, just like the rest of the country, and demand for our services is increasing. A new headquarters and meals production center is absolutely necessary," Michael says.

Meals on Wheels is partnering with Danis Construction and Champlin Studios to build our new headquarters at 3251 Highland Ave. in Columbia Twp. At 51,000 square feet, the building is double the size of our current property on Radcliff and brings our teams under the same roof for the first time—a true home that strengthens collaboration and efficiency. Our entire fleet, from meal-delivery vans to transportation vehicles alike, will live in a single parking lot with plenty of room remaining for our growing team and volunteer community. It is the centerpiece of the *Driving Into The Future Campaign*.

Production-Centered Design

Currently, Meals on Wheels' production facility has, what Michael describes, an "S-shaped pattern." The path the product takes is non-linear, resulting in production team members making multiple sharp turns and moving to and from multiple rooms. A non-linear path combined with storage space reaching its capacity puts additional pressure on that proverbial well-oiled machine.

Assistant Distribution Manager DaMarco Brown describes, "Maneuvering through the building gets really tough because we have stuff that needs to be stored in places and we've got to wait until certain rooms are empty or certain areas are done working





If we overdo it, we don't have space, but we don't want to underdo it either."

Combine *that* with an increasing need for our services and it is easy to see why a new space is mission-critical: We cannot increase production because of capacity and we cannot decrease services because of demand.

"We get it done no matter what because seniors are depending on us," Michael says, "but not without a few bumps and bruises along the way."

Leo Barth, Project Manager at Danis Construction, says the property is designed strategically for Meals on Wheels with the production process as its primary focus. "The site is very large and has roughly 250 parking spots which can handle the high capacity of employees and volunteers as well. The back portion of the building is very linear. This makes the production process flow through the building efficiently similar to a production line."

Sustaining the Organization

More meals in a more efficient space is but one of the benefits of the new meals production center. Says Leo, "Another key feature which allows Meals on Wheels to increase production output is the ability to accept and store more products. This new facility will have 4,000 square feet of freezer space and 1,500 square feet of cooler space, custom built to fit within the production line. It will also have two full-size loading docks, whereas the current facility only has one small loading dock."

For Michael and his team, that additional space alleviates pressure while also opening up new opportunities. For example, one of the more timely challenges our organization has faced is one we have all felt in recent months: rising food costs. Buying in bulk is a fiscally responsible, budget-friendly solution but it is presently just out of reach.

"Purchasing food in bulk is always less expensive but we cannot do that to the level we would like in our current facility. More freezer and storage space will allow us to relieve some of the strain of inflation and allow us to be more sustainable as an institution," Michael explains.

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The primary focus during design was making the space fit for Meals on Wheels.

**LEO BARTH, PROJECT MANAGER AT
DANIS CONSTRUCTION**

Additional to this cost-savings strategy, the new meals production center enables Meals on Wheels to serve local nonprofit partners who feed their communities. More storage, more bulk-buying power and more streamlined production processes give us the opportunity to provide meals to organizations within the region at affordable rates.

Michael sees it as a win-win: Purchasing meals in this capacity is beneficial to our partners, and it also draws back our dependence on government funding sources.

"We can't ignore the uncertainties of our time. All told, about 79 percent of our funding comes from government sources. It is imperative that we diversify in order to be sustainable," he says.

Retrofitting vs. Rebuilding

Regional natives might recognize our new location as the former John Nolan Ford Dealership. If not, the catchy commercial may ring a bell: *"A good deal better / at John Nolan Ford! ... Ridge and Highland, just off I-71."*

The connection is unintentionally poetic. Meals on Wheels is breathing new life into a well-known automotive sales and service center in order to deliver services, literally, for our older neighbors.

Despite minor structural and architectural improvements, Leo says, most of the exterior remains the same. "That gave Meals on Wheels the opportunity to avoid cost for full building demolition and new foundation, structural steel, site work and much more. Knowing the shell of the building was going to remain mostly the same, the primary focus during design was making the space fit for Meals on Wheels."

Construction of Meals on Wheels' new headquarters and meals production center is expected to be completed in early 2027. To learn more about our ["Driving Into The Future Campaign," visit muchmorethanameal.org](#).

How Service Coordinators Meet Everyday Needs for Seniors

No two days look exactly alike for a service coordinator with Meals on Wheels. On Monday, they might be assisting an older adult with their Medicaid renewal paperwork. On Tuesday, they could be scheduling transportation for a group outing and helping a resident connect their phone to WiFi. On Wednesday, they may be a listening ear for a senior who simply needs to talk.

Service coordinators are members of Meals on Wheels' Social & Protective Services team and work directly with residents of independent senior living communities. Brett Constable is one such team member. He has been at his post for 11 years at Booth Residence in Finneytown, where residents have dubbed him "Mr. Fix-it."

"You have to be a sort of jack-of-all-trades," Brett says, when asked how he would describe his role.

Brett is there to field questions, concerns and requests residents have about anything affecting their daily life. He helps them sort their mail, gives walkers and canes quick tune-ups when needed and checks up on residents he may not have seen for a few days. He earned his affectionate nickname, "Mr. Fix-it," by doing exactly that.

Service coordinators' work is about far more than making residents comfortable—they provide an essential support system that makes it possible for them to age well with independence.

In 2025, service coordinators at three properties facilitated no-cost, on-site medical visits for nearly 550 older adults, including:

**Podiatrist exams
Hearing aid fittings
Vision screenings
Mammograms
Diabetic shoe fittings**



"He's a good one," one of the residents at Booth says about Brett when he joined them for lunch one day. "We're really lucky he's here."

"One of the best parts about the job is how much the residents appreciate you. Everyone is kind, and as long as they see you trying, they appreciate it," says Brett.

Meals on Wheels employs service coordinators at three residences in Cincinnati. Many of the seniors there also receive home-delivered meals or are enrolled in our congregate meal program. Many participate in our Digital Connect training and our Health & Wellness Programs as well. It's an organic alignment that comprehensively promotes seniors' well-being.

"There are many benefits of our service coordinators working in the same building as older adults. We can get them connected to Meals on Wheels services if they need them, and if we don't have the solution a senior needs, we are well-equipped with a regional network of resources to get them what they need," explains Meals on Wheels Chief Operations Officer Connie Baker.

She adds, "These services make up the 'much more than a meal' aspect of our organization."

Healthy Recipes, Stronger Connections

Last June, Meals on Wheels launched a new initiative for older adults enrolled in our services in Sharonville. Through nutrition classes and cooking demos, participants learn practical ways to support their health and wellness while making the most of the fresh produce included in their congregate and home-delivered meals.

The program is a collaboration of our Social Connections Programs (which includes health and wellness programming) and Congregate Meal Services (group meals served in community settings for older adults).

Breanna Williams, who oversees Social Connection Programs, says, "The classes and demos allow seniors to try something new and to be creative. It's an ideal way to combine wellness, social engagement and learning."

Lisa Andrews is the instructor for these classes. She is a Cincinnati-based registered dietitian, educator, author and founder of Sound Bites Nutrition. When she was invited by Meals on Wheels to facilitate the series, she was given a few requirements: recipes should feature the same produce participants receive, use simple and nutritious ingredients and be easy to recreate at home.

Lisa says she enjoyed the challenge of meeting the requirements. "I tend to keep my recipes short and include easy-to-find, affordable ingredients. I also consider allergens and food safety. I leave cheese and nuts on the side in case participants don't eat these, but they usually do!"



With the cooking demos, Lisa describes every step of the meal from using the right tools the recipe calls for to extending the food's shelf-life to reducing food waste.

"Lisa is very enthusiastic and helpful, and it makes the seniors excited to try something different. They ask for all sorts of cooking advice and recommendations from her," says Meals on Wheels Senior Manager of Congregate and Nutrition Sites Pam Mawhinney.

For this series, Lisa has created recipes such as kale salad with orange dressing, smoky sweet potato and black bean stew, Mexican potato salad and mojito fruit salad.

Says Lisa, "This is one of my favorite class series to teach! The group is very engaged and asks lots of questions."

The fresh food and nutrition class initiative is made possible by Ford Philanthropy. It represents a continuing partnership with Meals on Wheels and the Sharonville Community Center.



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This group has been open to sharing their experiences with food and cooking, so we're learning from each other. It's also nice to see the same faces return for the classes I'm teaching. I look forward to every class.

LISA ANDREWS, REGISTERED DIETICIAN AND FOUNDER OF SOUND BITES NUTRITION



2091 Radcliff Dr., Cincinnati OH 45212

BUST -a- CRUST! THANKSGIVING PIE SALE



presented by  FROZEN BAKERY

benefitting  MEALS
on WHEELS
SOUTHWEST OH & NORTHERN KY

Place your order, make a gift or "pie" it forward for a senior here! Proceeds support the essential services we provide for 11,000 older adults every year.

