

# Motion

A MEALS ON WHEELS PEOPLE NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2026

**INSIDE**

Letter from the CEO	2
A New Way to Nourish Community	3
Introducing Friendly Tech Visits	5
Bite-Sized News	7
When Kindness Becomes a Legacy	8

# LETTER *from the* CEO

In recent months, I've found myself sitting around dining tables with older adults who are trying to make sense of an increasingly impossible reality. Prices climb, SNAP benefits shrink, yet their income stays the same. One woman recently told us that every month feels like a math problem she can't solve anymore. She lives alone on less than \$934 a month, with \$750 going toward rent. For groceries, she receives about \$5.80 a day. And she's not alone.

This affordability crisis is reshaping what it means to grow older in our community. More seniors are being forced to choose between food and rent, electricity and medication. Many can no longer make it to a food bank because of mobility or health challenges. And as housing costs rise, older adults are now the fastest-growing population at risk of homelessness.

In the midst of all this, one thing remains crystal clear: Growing

older shouldn't strip you of agency, choice, or the ability to live at home.

That's why the work we do together matters so deeply. Home-delivered meals aren't just nutrition — they are dignity, safety, and stability. We've heard from so many participants who tell us that receiving meals allows them to stay in the home they love, without feeling like a burden to family or caregivers. Those daily visits offer connection, a watchful eye, and the reassurance that someone cares.

And you make that possible. Your support isn't just a donation; it fuels culturally responsive meals, nutrition planning guided by our dietitians, and volunteers who help seniors stay connected and supported in their homes. Together, we're building



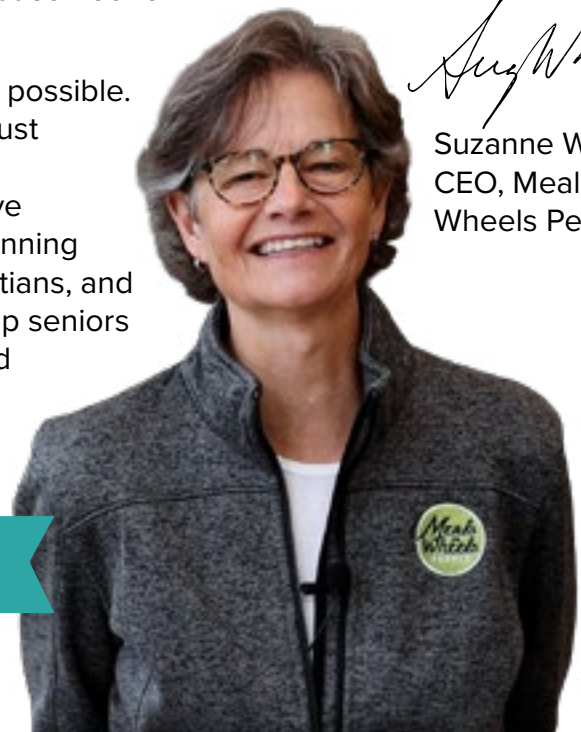
a network of care where older adults can age with dignity, choice, and independence.

As we move into the year ahead, I hope you'll continue to work with us to grow our impact. The challenges are real, but so is the community we are creating — one where no senior has to face hunger and isolation.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Washington".

Suzanne Washington  
CEO, Meals on  
Wheels People



Scan to give the gift of  
meals & connection today.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a gold Diner's Club card. The card has the text "THE DINER'S CLUB" and a logo. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a restaurant setting.

# A New Way to Nourish Community

**Your support fuels the Diners Club, a growing program that expands access, choice, and cultural connection.**

At Pho Alley 11 in Hillsboro, owner Uy Khuat ladles steaming broth into bowls of northern-style Vietnamese pho — the kind his parents love.

“We opened this restaurant pretty much to feed our parents,” says Uy, who takes care of his parents with his wife, Laura. “Our parents don’t eat big portions, but they need nutritious and fresh ingredients. We’re on this journey of taking care of our parents, and now we want to take care of the community — offering various nutritious options while satisfying their palettes and creating a friendly and comfortable dining experience.”

## Reimagining Mealtime

Through Meals on Wheels People’s Diners Club, Uy and his wife now do just that. Their restaurant is one of 11 Diners Club partners — 82% of which are culturally or ethnically specific — across Clark, Multnomah, and Washington counties where Meals on Wheels People participants can dine out with friends, enjoy diverse cuisines, and feel visible

and valued in their communities.

Diners Club, which launched in 2023, is part of Meals on Wheels People’s effort to reimagine what mealtime can look like for older adults, moving beyond the traditional model where meals are served only in a congregate setting. Through this program, participants dine at the restaurant, choosing their own meals and experiencing the atmosphere, service, and dignity that come with choosing where and when to eat.

That simple shift represents a powerful innovation. It expands access for people who might not feel comfortable in other settings, creates new options for older adults in more rural areas, supports small businesses, and strengthens cultural connections — all while

*Serving up fresh, nutritious meals at Pho Alley 11*



*Pho Alley 11 owners Uy and Laura Khuat.*

tackling isolation among older adults.

The program’s impact has been extraordinary. With over 694 participants and more than 9,149 meals served, Diners Club has more than tripled since 2024 and is one of the largest and most diverse initiatives of its kind in the nation.



## Boosting Local Businesses

At Diners Club partner restaurant Miss Delta in Portland, owner Marcus Oliver says the impact goes both ways.

“My first job ever was in a retirement home,” he says. “I loved working with older people. They’re so interesting and have so much life experience to share. I started thinking



*Diners Club participants share a meal and conversation at Miss Delta.*

about my grandma near the end of her life, how she was stuck in her place and couldn’t get out to be social, and how much it bothered her not to meet with friends.

The Diners Club program really struck a nerve

with me — the ability to provide a place to have a meal, relax in a good setting, and socialize is very important. A lot of the time, our older generation is forgotten, and it bothers me. I wanted to help.”

The Diners Club helps Miss Delta thrive as a business, too. “It’s helped us be busier for lunch,” Marcus says. “In a time like this, when restaurants are slow, it’s really nice to get some people in the doors and have it feel livelier for lunch. My staff love it.”

## Connection, Culture, and Choice

For older adults like Thi, Esther, and Clara, that opportunity for connection is everything. Thi, who dines at Pho Alley 11 with her friends Thu and Kim, says the program offers both flexibility and cultural connection.

“It’s nice to eat food that feels like home,” Thi says.

Esther, who lives alone, describes it as her social lifeline: “I

need it to keep myself social.”

Clara adds that the Diners Club has opened up possibilities she didn’t have before. She often goes with her friend Linda, but she’s even taken her son along. “With the Diners Club, you can go whenever you get hungry,” Clara says. “Today’s lunch at the Forest Grove Center was absolutely fantastic. But you know how you have personal preferences. It doesn’t matter how good it is. Sometimes, you just don’t want it. When you go to a restaurant with the club, I can say I want turkey today or eggs today or a burger today.”



*Pho Alley 11 brings choice and culture to Diners Club participants.*

For older adults, that choice — where to go, what to order, and who to share it with — is powerful. And for Meals on Wheels

People, it’s a glimpse of what the future of aging with dignity can look like: independent, connected, and full of flavor.

## The Future of Aging with Dignity

Programs like Diners Club are made possible thanks to donor support. Your generosity helps Meals on Wheels People expand access, reduce barriers, and bring choice and connection to the table for older adults across our community.



## LOCATIONS

### The Diner Vancouver

Vancouver, WA

### El Rancho Viejo

Ridgefield, WA

### African Empire Restaurant

Portland, OR

### Miss Delta

Portland, OR

### Los Tinos

Fairview, OR

### Chettinad Indian Cuisine

Beaverton, OR

### Las 4 Lunas

Tualatin, OR

### Bullets, Burgers, & Brews

Forest Grove, OR

### Taqueria Corona

Forest Grove, OR

### Ninja Ramen

Hillsboro, OR

### Pho Alley 11

Hillsboro, OR

# Introducing Friendly Tech Visits

**Your generosity makes it possible for older adults to navigate technology and remain engaged in their communities.**

Jill sits in her living room, a notepad beside her reads “Good Things Take Time.” Across from her, Meals on Wheels People volunteer Guruka Singh leans over her iPhone screen, gently talking her through the steps of setting up a Square account so she can sell some of her belongings online to help her pay rent.

“I’m not tech savvy,” Jill says with a smile. “My daughter talked me into getting an iPhone. I didn’t realize I was stepping into a whole different world.”

After a car accident left her unable to work or drive, Jill began receiving meal deliveries. “I got Meals on Wheels for my dad a long time ago,” she says. “Now I’m the one who needs it. I’m not low-income — I’m no-income.

Sometimes I just want to cry, but that’s not how my daddy raised me.”

## A New Approach to Staying Connected

Jill’s visit with Guruka is part of our Friendly Tech Visits program, launched last year as an innovative way to help older adults stay connected in today’s digital world. Through one-hour, one-on-one sessions in participants’ homes, volunteers provide basic tech support tailored to each person’s needs. From logging into health portals to FaceTiming with grandkids, tech literacy is a key part of independence — giving older adults access to essential resources, connection, and community.

When Guruka arrives for each visit, he brings not only his decades of experience as a computer professional but also patience and encouragement. “We’ll go at your pace,” he tells her as they reset passwords, add inventory, and celebrate small victories.

By the time he leaves, Jill is ready to start selling online. “I’m just so thankful,” she says. “Where else would you go to get this kind of help? It’s so beneficial for us older people. It’s the way of the world.”



*More than tech support — it’s a human connection.*

Guruka volunteers twice a week through the program. “It’s fun to bring joy to people in this way,” he says. “I spent my whole life working in computers, and now I get to give back.”

## Independence Means Access

For many older adults, independence today isn’t just about food or housing — it’s about access. From health portals to video calls with family, digital literacy means connection. The Friendly Tech Visits program pairs volunteers like Guruka and Steve, a former



*When it clicks: Jill lights up as Guruka shows her what’s possible.*

Intel engineer, with older adults who need a hand navigating technology.

“I’m not setting up data centers anymore,” Steve says. “But I can help with phones, watches, or health apps. Everyone comes to technology at such different levels. These in-home visits are the way to go.”

Thanks to donor support, Meals on Wheels People can offer these personalized visits that help older adults stay engaged, connected, and in control of their own lives. Because of you, independence is more than a meal — it’s confidence, dignity, and a bridge to the digital world.

### Want to Help Older Adults Stay Connected?

You don’t need to be a computer professional — just patient, kind, and willing to help someone learn at their own pace. Whether you’re helping an older adult navigate their smartphone or simply brightening their day with a friendly conversation, you’ll make a meaningful difference.

Visit [mowp.org/volunteer](http://mowp.org/volunteer) to learn more.

## Sneak Peek. Big Impact.

You’re invited to an exclusive, after-hours evening at the Oregon International Auto Show’s Sneak Peek Charity Preview, Thursday, Feb. 19. Explore the latest vehicles and innovations in an elevated, crowd-free setting — with hosted food, access to beverages, and live entertainment. Most importantly, \$100 from every ticket supports Meals on Wheels People, helping deliver meals and meaningful connection to

local seniors and neighbors. Scan the QR code to purchase tickets and join us for an evening where your generosity drives impact.



## Quarterly IMPACT STATS OCT. 1 - DEC. 31, 2025



**7,854**  
individuals  
served



**394,491**  
meals  
served



**5,778**  
Friendly Chats  
calls made



### From First Lunch to “I Do”

Joseph and Vicki met at our MLK Dining Center, one of 15 dining centers that serve weekly lunches across the Portland-Vancouver area. As Joseph and Vicki can attest, our dining centers aren’t just places to eat. They are a remedy for loneliness and isolation for aging neighbors. What began as a simple act of kindness blossomed into a deep friendship ... and now, love! Over the past year, they’ve shared walks, songs, and laughter. Recently, they got married! Scan the QR code to watch them sing their favorite song, “Blue Skies.”



# BITE-SIZED NEWS

## New Research Confirms Home-Delivered Meals Provide Critical Benefits

A new national study from Meals on Wheels America, Brown University, and Johns Hopkins confirms what we see every day: Home-delivered meals not only reduce hunger and malnutrition but also provide significant health, social, and financial benefits to both recipients and their caregivers. Research shows they foster meaningful social connections, combat loneliness, improve physical and emotional well-being, support independence so older adults remain in their homes, and relieve stress and financial strain on family caregivers. At a time of rising need and limited resources, these meals are truly a lifeline for older adults and their families.



Mary Jo bringing a smile (and a meal) to Sandra's doorstep.

## Driving Change for Seniors

Meals on Wheels People is a 2025 recipient of Portland General Electric's Drive Change Fund, a grant program made possible by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's Clean Fuels Program and administered by PGE, empowering recipients to invest in electrification projects across its service area with a focus on benefiting communities. With a new fully electric refrigerated truck, we'll deliver meals with zero emissions — keeping food fresh, lowering costs, and allowing us to reinvest funds toward more meals and services.



94 and still going strong! Bill's been delivering meals for 34 years.

## Meals Served Grows 10% as Need Increases

At the end of 2025, we'd served 10% more meals year-to-date than the past year. To meet this growing need, we've increased Central Kitchen production from 6,400 to 7,200 meals per day — ensuring more older adults receive the nutritious meals and caring connection they rely on. Your support makes this possible!



## Inside Our Central Kitchen: One Month of Meals

Serving 10% more meals doesn't just mean turning on the ovens longer. It means sourcing, preparing, and serving thousands of pounds of food — every single month.

Here's what it takes on average each month to keep meals moving to older adults across our community:

### 21,000+ pounds of protein

Beef, chicken, fish, and pork — carefully sourced to meet nutrition standards

### 24,000+ pounds of fruits and vegetables

Including frozen vegetables, fresh onions, and nearly 8,000 apples

### Daily staples older adults rely on

Over 10,000 half-gallons of milk

Nearly 4,000 loaves of whole wheat bread

Hundreds of liters of olive oil for heart-healthy cooking

All of this — month after month — is what allows us to increase production from 6,400 to 7,200 meals per day without sacrificing nutrition, dignity, or care.

Your support isn't abstract. It shows up on the plate.

# WHEN KINDNESS BECOMES A

# *Legacy*

Mrs. Johnston received Meals on Wheels People deliveries for years — and quietly gave back, week after week.

Her generosity reflected a simple belief: Older adults deserve nourishment, connection, and dignity as they age.

By including Meals on Wheels People in your estate plans, you can help ensure this care continues for generations to come.

Learn how you can include Meals on Wheels People in your legacy plans.

Visit [mowp.org/legacy](http://mowp.org/legacy), contact us at 503-953-8174, or email [plannedgiving@mowp.org](mailto:plannedgiving@mowp.org).

Follow us to stay up to date with events, volunteer opportunities, and more.

 [mealsonwheelspeople](https://www.facebook.com/mealsonwheelspeople)

 [mealsonwheelspeople](https://www.tiktok.com/@mealsonwheelspeople)

 [mealswheelsppi](https://www.instagram.com/mealswheelsppi)

 [mealsonwheelspeople](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmealswheelspeople)

 [mealsonwheelspeople](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mealsonwheelspeople)



Donate a meal:  
[mowp.org](http://mowp.org)



Questions? Call  
503-953-8131