

February 2015
Volume 40, Issue 1



Meals on Wheels and More

newsletter of meals on wheels and more

“Meals on Wheels is a **LIFESAVER**”



Meals on Wheels and More client Diane Young in her Cedar Park home.

Diane Young knows heartache when she sees it.

The 62-year-old Cedar Park woman has endured more than her share of grief in life.

Her only child, a daughter named RoChelle, died in a car crash two weeks before her 15th birthday. Ms. Young's husband died of a heart attack. Her body began to betray her; she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and breast cancer. She underwent a double mastectomy. But before either of those health scares, she found out

she had dystonia, a rare disorder characterized by involuntary muscle contractions that cause slow repetitive movements or abnormal postures. The condition left her body contorted in agony. “I was twisted to the left, as far as I could go, my body was twisted to the left. Oh my gosh, the pain was so severe,” she says now.

This wasn't the life she envisioned for herself when she graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in finance. Ms. Young worked for Medicare for 10 years and then for doctors in private practice, handling their insurance claims. “I loved what I was doing,” she says more than 20 years later. She got married and had RoChelle. The marriage ended when the little girl was three.

Still, Ms. Young says life was good for her and her daughter, right up until the day she got the call telling her RoChelle had been killed. Her daughter had been on the way to a

movie with friends. The driver lost control of the car on a slick road. Everyone else in the vehicle suffered only minor injuries.

That tragedy unleashed one catastrophe after another. After her second husband, Bernard, died of a heart attack, Ms. Young moved from California to Central Texas to be closer to family. These days, an electrode implanted in her brain and connected to a battery-powered stimulator implanted in her chest has reduced the painful contractions. But it's still very tough for her to get around. “I thank God that I'm still alive. But it has taken my life from me. I was a go-getter,” she exclaims.

Cooking for herself was a challenge. “That hurts me, because I'm a good cook,” she says. A few years ago, a friend told her about Meals on Wheels and More. Soon, our hot, nutritious meals were being delivered right to her doorstep

(continued on back page)

Father & Son Deliver **MORE THAN MEALS**



Stephen and Jack Brown with MOWAM client Edith Ussery

When Stephen Brown was a boy, he and his father, Jack, bonded over playing ping-pong.

Thirty-two-year-old Stephen and his 66-year old dad now spend quality time together delivering our hot, nutritious meals to some of the older adults we serve. But this isn't their first experience doing so. Years ago, Stephen's elementary school in Lubbock had a weekly route with the local Meals on Wheels agency; Jack chauffeured the students as they delivered food to homebound seniors.

After high school, Stephen moved to Austin to attend the University of Texas. Eventually, Jack and his wife, Debbie, followed their son to the Capital City. Stephen started his own company, Titan Real Estate, after graduating

lars and cents."

He also wanted to find a way to spend more time with his dad. Stephen recalled the days of delivering lunches together in Lubbock. "We looked back at our time with Meals on Wheels and how much we got out of it," he says.

For the past two years, they've delivered lunchtime meals to homebound older adults in North Central Austin. Tag along on their weekly route and it quickly becomes apparent that father and son bear more than food, they also offer friendship. "They're homebound and they're lonely and they really enjoy not just the hot meal but the interaction with us. They get to know our family's names and where we're from, it's just a nice visit," Jack says with a smile. Stephen adds "you really

do form that special bond with people. You see them once a week, you see them more than you see a lot of people in your life."

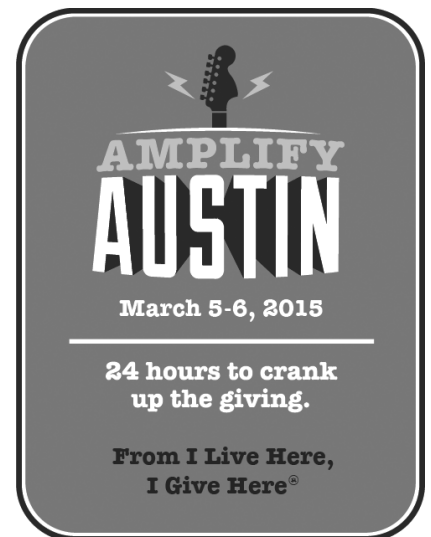
The younger Brown says he and his dad enjoy volunteering for MOWAM, because "it's such a great organization, and we enjoy spending time together as father and son."

His dad agrees. "It's been a blessing for us to just be together and to help others," Jack says before he adds with a laugh, "it's non-competitive, so we don't have to argue like we do when we golf."

do form that special bond with people. You see them once a week, you see them more than you see a lot of people in your life."

The younger Brown says he and his dad enjoy volunteering for MOWAM, because "it's such a great organization, and we enjoy spending time together as father and son."

His dad agrees. "It's been a blessing for us to just be together and to help others," Jack says before he adds with a laugh, "it's non-competitive, so we don't have to argue like we do when we golf."



Pre-scheduled gifts are being accepted now. Visit mealsonwheelsandmore.org for more info!

LIFESAVER (cont.)

and that's made a big difference in her life. "It's meant a great deal to me. When you're living on a fixed income it means a lot to get that hot meal every day. Meals on Wheels is a lifesaver. I don't know what I would have done without it," she tells a visitor.

These days, she volunteers her time counseling, over the phone, people who have recently been diagnosed with dystonia. Who better to teach others about coping with heartache than a woman who has survived so much of it herself?

SAVE THE DATE!

11th Annual Meals on Wheels and More Golf Tournament

Monday April 13, 2015

Visit www.golf4meals.org for more info!