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Meals on Wheels and More

newsletter of meals on wheels and more

## “Meals on Wheels **MEANS THE WORLD TO ME**”

Louise Poppe looks forward to Fridays. That’s the day of the week her lunch is hand delivered by 4-year-old Jace and his mother, Nicole Miles. “I just love to see them at my door. I look forward to their visits very, very much,” says Ms. Poppe.

Jace and his mom have been delivering our nutritious meals to her Southwest Austin home for the past year and a half. At 93 years old, Ms. Poppe has lived alone since her husband, Ben, passed away in 1982. We’ve been honored to serve her since 2011, shortly after she had a fall that required hip surgery. “My first telephone call after I came home was to the Area Agency on Aging for suggestions. They arranged for Meals on Wheels to begin delivery of a noon meal right away. That meal, which is carefully prepared, nutritious and delivered to my door is a great blessing,” she says.

Shortly after becoming a client of

ours, she received an in-home visit from one of our case managers. That’s when she learned about the many ways in which we help older adults maintain their independence. “I was impressed with the list of many other services available,



Client Louise Poppe with Meals on Wheels volunteer Nicole Miles and her son, Jace

from the man who installed a special grab bar in my bathroom, to the nice young lady who helps me shop for groceries. Meals on Wheels and More means the world to me” she says.

Ms. Poppe credits our dedicated volunteers for brightening her life: “Volunteers are so special to me. They willingly and faithfully give of their time to help others less fortunate. They are the face of Meals on Wheels. But there are so many more that work behind the scenes to make it all possible. With everyone doing his/her job, the “wheels” can keep turning day in and day out.”

Jace and his mom are among those who ensure the wheels keep turning. “She’s our favorite client. We always chat with her. We love seeing her,” says Nicole. “Jace has lots of grandparents; they don’t live here in Texas but they do get Meals on Wheels. So we love that they’ve helped and we’re able to help out here. It means a lot,” she adds.

When asked what those Friday visits from Nicole and Jace mean to her, Ms. Poppe says “it means happiness. Jace is my friend.”

# Church Team Finds Volunteer Experience “REWARDING”



Members of the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church volunteer team include: (l-r) Kitten Richter, Glenn Richter, Dick Lowke, Janice Pinckard, and Ronny Pinckard.

“Our deal is to be a church without walls,” says Janice Pinckard of the congregation at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Bee Cave Road.

Janice and her husband, Ronny, volunteer for us as part of their church’s Meals on Wheels delivery team. Dick Lowke, another member of the Shepherd of the Hills family, organized the group last August. He got the idea after delivering meals with a church friend who volunteered as

part of Keller Williams’ corporate team. “I did that with him for years and then just kind of got carried away with the joy I was getting out of it. So I approached a number of people at our church. I called a lot of people and I don’t think I had a single turn down,” he says with a smile.

In all, there are 22 members of the Shepherd of the Hills team. They rotate delivering five different routes every week out of our Prince of Peace distribution site in South Austin.

They’re quick to jump in if someone else on the team is unable to deliver on a particular day. “We have people that will say ‘I’m out on vacation. Can someone take my route?’ Almost immediately there’s an answer from someone else saying ‘I can take it.’” says Ronny. Volunteering their time together has also been a bonding experience for the group. “We had a big potluck dinner recently. We all got together and had a good time and shared a few stories,” says Dick.

Dick believes he and his friends deliver more than meals. “I think the clients enjoy the visit more than the food, even though the food is great. Most of them just don’t have any contact with other people throughout the day. So that’s rewarding,” he says.

Janice sees the whole experience as a perfect way to be ‘a church without walls’: “This is certainly one way for that to be expressed, doing something like this. Reaching out to others is a special part of it.”



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