



“MEALS ON WHEELS MEANS KINDNESS”



Annie Hitchcock, shown here holding a photograph of herself as a young woman, says MOWCTX helps her maintain her independence.

“It’s not my Austin anymore,” Annie Hitchcock says with a sigh while describing the changes she’s seen in her hometown since her birth here in 1929.

Asked to name the biggest transformation she’s witnessed, Ms. Hitchcock skips the usual answers longtime residents give: an unrecognizable skyline, gridlocked traffic on six-lane freeways, or the demise of old, iconic businesses. Instead, she points to the city’s populace. “The people just aren’t as friendly anymore,” she says matter-of-factly.

However, Ms. Hitchcock quickly points out some notable exceptions – the dedicated Meals on Wheels Central Texas volunteers who deliver hot, nutritious lunches, warm smiles and safety checks to the North Austin home where she lives alone. “Oh, my goodness, they are so kind! They’re great,” says Ms. Hitchcock with a beaming smile.

She also relishes the healthy lunches those volunteers bring her. That’s because cooking meals for herself has become so difficult. “When I stand a lot, my legs hurt. It’s really hard when you get to be nearly 90. Everything is wearing

out. My body says ‘slow down, Annie’. So I’ve slowed down.”

Life has slowed down dramatically since the days when she and her husband, Kenneth Hitchcock, a World War II veteran, raised two children together. Mr. Hitchcock worked for Southwestern Bell, and Ms. Hitchcock worked for, among others, Steck Printing Company and the City Housing Authority. Mr. Hitchcock passed away in 2000 – the couple had been married for 52 years.

These days, Ms. Hitchcock credits our meals for helping her live independently. “It’s opened up a whole new world. I don’t have to worry about what I’m going to eat anymore and the food is good for my body,” she says. And, she adds, our volunteers are good for her soul: “Somedays, I don’t see anyone (except the MOWCTX volunteer). I like to see somebody once in a while. Meals on Wheels means kindness, it means that I’m going to get to say ‘hi’ and talk a little bit. I just hope it goes on forever.”

“EACH TRIP OFFERS NEW GIFTS”

Every weekday, our dedicated volunteers deliver more than 2,500 nutritious meals – and just as importantly, friendly visits and safety checks - to homebound older Central Texans.

It’s amazing to think about considering MOWCTX’s humble beginnings: eight volunteers, a group which included parishioners from East Austin’s Holy Cross Catholic Church, who, three times per week, cooked 30 meals themselves and then delivered them to older neighbors in need.

So much has changed since 1972. These days, for instance, all of our meals are prepared by our professional kitchen staff. What hasn’t changed is the dedicated support of our mission provided by the Holy Cross congregation.

A great example are the local members of the Knights

of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary (KPCLA), a national Catholic fraternal and charitable organization. The group at Holy Cross has a Meals on Wheels volunteer team that’s been delivering hot meals and warm smiles to our clients since 2004. That’s when a couple named Johnnie and Dean Dorsey who, at the time, led the local men’s and women’s division of KPCLA, decided to enlist others to join them in volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

Every Friday, two members of the KPCLA team pick up nutritious lunches at our Central Kitchen in East Austin and then embark on their labor of love. “Each trip offers new gifts,” is the way KPCLA volunteer Ira Sims describes her experience visiting with the homebound folks we are honored to serve. “It shows



Members of the Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary MOW team include (l-r) LaNita Williams, Leon Roberts, Camille Canady, Carolyn Collins, Johnnie Dorsey, and Dean Dorsey. (Not pictured: Iris Sims, Evans Emelegou, and Patricia Roberts)

[the clients] we care,” adds team member Carolyn Collins.

“We see the need and we try to act on that need,” Dean Dorsey says. She and the rest of the team are definitely in it for the long haul. “We plan to continue this until the Good Lord says ‘you’re no longer walking this earth,’” says Johnnie Dorsey.

MOWCTX EARNS TOP AWARD FOR FISCAL TRANSPARENCY!

GuideStar, the world’s largest source of information on nonprofit organizations, recently awarded MOWCTX with a 2019 Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level possible!



NEW AIR-CONDITIONERS BRING RELIEF TO CENTRAL TEXAS SENIORS



Representatives from Meals on Wheels Central Texas, St. David’s Foundation, and the Austin Police Department pose with MOWCTX client Betty Jones (front row, center) before volunteers installed a new air-conditioner in her home.

Central Texas’ brutally hot summers pose a serious safety risk to homebound older adults we serve who lack the resources to cool their homes.

That’s why we were proud to partner for the second year in a row with the St. David’s Foundation (SDF) and the Austin Police Department (APD) to provide portable air-

conditioners for dozens of our clients.

SDF provided the funding to purchase the A-C’s, and volunteers from Austin Cops for Charities, an organization comprised of Austin police officers, and volunteers from our Handy Wheels program installed the units.

Thank you, SDF and APD, for helping us help our vulnerable neighbors in need!