# THE MEAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TEXAS



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### "THIS HAS OPENED UP MY WORLD IN A BIG WAY"

"When I was living by myself, I blood pressure and pre-diabetes, started falling a lot. I hurt my back and my knees, and realized I couldn't live by myself anymore. So I moved in with my daughter," says 73-year-old Ida Haywood.

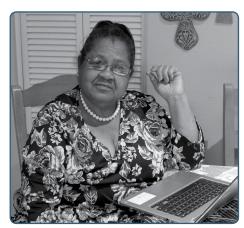
concept to Ms. Haywood. After her divorce decades ago, she worked as a nurse in order to provide a better life for her my grandmother used to make. four children. "I just felt like I could get all of my kids through school and they could get an education because I had a good job," she recalls. "I worked at somebody to talk to in the middle practically all of the hospitals in [Austin]," she says of her nearly 30-year career.

But shortly before she retired beyond nutritious food. severely injuring her knee, which Moving in with her daughter made doctors eventually her to undergo a second knee to be in control of your own life. My replacement. Meanwhile, other doctor put me on medication but

made living alone difficult.

She began receiving our nutritious midday meals, hand-delivered by dedicated volunteers, when she moved in with her daughter, Asking others for help is a foreign Nicki. Nicki works during the dav-so Ms. Havwood relishes the lunches and the visits: "[Meals on Wheels] gives me food Black-eyed peas, greens, and squash—those are my favorite foods. And [the volunteers] are just magnificent people. I have of the day and that helps."

Often times, though, the older adults we serve need assistance That in 2005, she fell at work was the case with Ms. Haywood. replaced. her feel helpless. "And that An auto accident later forced depressed me. It's depressing not health issues, including high that made it worse," she recalls.



MOWCTX client Ida Haywood with the Chrome computer tablet she received through our Connecting Seniors with Technology program.

MOWCTX Case Manager Her Jennifer Sassano recommended our Telehealth Treatment for Depression (TTD). This free program, which is in partnership with the University of Texas' Steve Hicks School of Social Work, provides free evidencebased treatment. Mental health counselors helped Ms. Haywood build the skills she needed to better manage her depression. "They helped me realize I was still in control of part of my life,

Continued on back

#### "I'M DELIVERING FRIENDSHIP"

on Wheels Central Texas. thought, 'you know, I need to do in Austin. that'," she recalls more than two decades later.

still delivers her Wednesday through East Austin, the part of route, though these days she's town in which she's lived since older than most of the clients the 1950's. Gentrification in the on her route. Giving back to her area concerns her: "It feels like community has always been a they are pushing the originals out priority in her life.

that led Estella Akins to Meals in the early 1950's, she began that really need it. You want to a long career in education. Her be a servant. was watching TV and an ad late husband, Dr. Charles Akins, said, 'go out and be a servant'. came across that said 'if you also spent decades as a local I'm delivering friendship." have time, come volunteer with educator, and is the namesake us'. I thought about that and I of W. Charles Akins High School

Just as it has since she first signed up to volunteer with us, Now 87-years-old, Estella Akins Ms. Akin's meal route takes her and bringing in the new."

town of Palestine and moved to volunteer at an age when many make it to 90. Like the old song Austin to attend college. After others are slowing down, she says says 'if the Lord is on my side', I graduating from what was then "I guess the main word is 'help'. believe I'll make 90!"

It was a television commercial called Huston-Tillotson College People need it. You have some That's what God



Longtime volunteer Estella Akins (I) delivers a nutritious lunch to MOWCTX client Gladys Shaw.

When asked how long she plans to keep delivering meals and She was born in the East Texas Asked why she continues to friendship, she says "I'm trying to



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#### "THIS HAS OPENED UP MY WORLD IN A BIG WAY" (cont.)

because I had felt like I wasn't free service provided her with a Asked what MOWCTX means through [TTD] made me realize training sessions on how to use "it makes me feel gifted. The my daughters weren't trying to the computer. take over my life, they were just allows her to see her son who them. trying to help me. [TTD] turned lives in Utah. "When he gets a meals." my life around," she says.

Meanwhile, our has expanded her horizons. The world in a big way," she says.

being able to talk to him and not home. Connecting feel so depressed because I can't depressed again." Seniors with Technology program see him. This has opened up my

in control of anything. Going Chrome tablet and 12 weekly to her, Ms. Haywood answers Being online meals are wonderful and I love But it's not just the Without [MOWCTX]. I break, he'll Skype. So it's like would probably be in a nursing I would probably be