

# THE MEAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TEXAS



Volume 43, Issue 5  
OCTOBER 2018



MEALS ON WHEELS  
CENTRAL TEXAS



## “I’M GLAD FOR MEALS ON WHEELS IN MY LIFE”

“I think about where I am now and where I used to be,” says Brenda Wright. “I was going through depression. I stayed in bed for days a time....I wouldn’t answer the phone. But Meals on Wheels has helped me a whole lot. I’m passed [the depression] now. It’s a good life!”

Ms. Wright, who lives alone in her East Austin apartment, first contacted us five years ago looking for assistance with nutrition because her arthritis made it too painful for her to cook. “Before I got on Meals on Wheels, I was falling a lot and really not eating the things that I need. I’d eat fast food instead,” she recalls. Then a friend suggested she call MOWCTX. Soon, our dedicated volunteers were delivering healthy lunches right to her door. “I enjoy my meals. I keep my little menu for the month and I know just what I’m having. It’s always just what you need,” she says.

But oftentimes, clients need more than nutritious food to maintain their independence. In the five years we’ve served her so far, Ms. Wright has learned first-hand what our “More Than a Meal” philosophy means.



*Brenda Wright says Meals on Wheels Central Texas brings positive people into her life.*

Our Connecting Seniors with Technology program provided her with a free Chrome tablet and free one-on-one tutorials with a volunteer. “I was not computer educated,” she says with a laugh. “My great grandkids in

kindergarten knew more about computers than I did.” Now, she’s able to use her tablet and surf the web without any assistance. “I learn a lot from the internet, but I stay away from the cruder stuff.”

Because Ms. Wright has difficulty maintaining her balance, our Handy Wheels program installed grab bars in her shower. “I don’t have to worry about waiting on somebody to be here when I take my shower or bath. I have handles and holds and everything else,” says Ms. Wright. Handy Wheels also installed a door bell for her. “I would miss meals sometimes because I couldn’t hear the volunteers knocking,” she explains.

“More than a Meal” also means each of our clients is assigned a Case Manager (CM). Ms. Wright’s CM is Al Benedict, and she sings his praises: “Al is wonderful. I can call him and if it’s something

*(Continued on back page)*

## LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

The day Vanessa Gallagher first walked through our doors to volunteer, her goal was to deliver our nutritious lunches to the homebound older adults we serve. But things didn't pan out the way she planned, and 10 years later, she wouldn't have it any other way.

Her daughter, Sophie, was only three-and-a-half years old when Vanessa decided to be an MOWCTX volunteer, and she planned to take Sophie along on the days she delivered meals. "When I went in for my training, they said 'be aware, you're going to be taking her out of her car seat [several times] during your route'. It was the middle of summer and I thought gosh, that sounds really hot and hard and I don't know how my daughter is going to tolerate all of that," Vanessa recalls with a laugh. Fortunately, there was a simple solution. It turns out there was a meal manager's position open at one of our satellite distribution sites and Vanessa could bring Sophie on the days she volunteered in that capacity.

So, what's a Meal Manager? Allow Vanessa to explain: "I'm responsible for making sure that all of our routes get picked up in a timely manner. I'm responsible if there's any difficulty in a route. If we're missing a meal, or somebody doesn't know where to go, I help [volunteers] problem solve, and make sure that all of our clients get served."



*Sophie Gallagher (right) has grown up watching her mom, Vanessa, volunteer for Meals on Wheels Central Texas.*

Once a week, Vanessa heads to our Austin New Church distribution site on South Lamar and helps volunteer drivers pick up their meals and get quickly on their way to clients' homes. "I'm here supporting our drivers and the most wonderful thing about that is my relationship with them. I get a connection with people

who are doing amazing things in the community. That fills my emotional bucket," she says.

And what about Sophie? She's a teenager now. And, because she's home-schooled twice a week, she's still helping her mom volunteer. In fact, early on, the experience helped her learn her colors and how to count. "Getting to see her count out the meals and match the colors was fun. It was an educational process for her," recalls Vanessa. These days, Sophie can do it all. "She runs the [computerized check-in] tablet, she gets the hot meals, she gets the cold [bags]. She could do this without me, no problem," her proud mom says.

Asked if she'd like to follow in her mother's footsteps, Sophie replies "In a few years, once I start driving, I would love to be a (volunteer) for Meals on Wheels. I feel like that's something that would be really fun and meaningful." It turns out counting and colors weren't the only things Sophie learned watching her mom volunteer.

## GROCERIES TO GO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



*Groceries to Go volunteer Marie Grace (left) helps Rosemary Goltz stock her pantry after a trip to the supermarket.*

Our Groceries to Go (GTG) program is looking for volunteers. If you're not familiar with GTG, it pairs volunteers with clients who can still do a bit of cooking on their own but lack reliable transportation to a supermarket, or they need physical assistance with grocery shopping.

We are looking for volunteer

shoppers from all parts of the Greater Austin area. This opportunity offers flexibility. Plus, volunteers are able to spend a lot more time one on one with their client during shopping trips, allowing for the development of a more in-depth and meaningful relationship. Interested in learning more? Email us at [gtg@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](mailto:gtg@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org)

# NEW A-C'S PROVIDE RELIEF TO VULNERABLE CENTRAL TEXANS

Every day, Austin police officers protect lives on the streets of our city. But sometimes that life-saving protection comes in unexpected ways—like an air conditioner.

Central Texas' brutally hot summers pose serious health threats to older adults and people with disabilities who lack the means to cool their homes. Thanks to a unique partnership between the Austin Police Department, St. David's Foundation, and Meals on Wheels Central Texas, dozens of older adults and people with disabilities found much-needed relief from the potentially deadly

heat. St. David's Foundation provided funding to purchase 40 portable air conditioners, and volunteers from Austin Cops for Charities, an organization

comprised of Austin police officers, and volunteers from Meals on Wheels Central Texas installed the a/c units, all at no cost to the recipients.



*Earl Maxwell, St. David's Foundation CEO, (third row, far left) stands beside Adam Hauser, MOWCTX CEO, and Austin Police Chief Brian Manley after volunteers from Cops for Charities and our Handy Wheels program installed a new air-conditioner in the home of Billy Hunter (wearing #21 jersey).*

## ► CREATIVE WAYS TO GIVE ◀

### Taco Deli's Crucero de Bicicleta

Take part in Taco Deli's 4th Annual Crucero de Bicicleta on Saturday, November 3, and you'll enjoy a slow bicycle cruise through Austin at a social pace, meandering 10 miles through our city's historical districts. You'll finish at Tacodeli's Crestview location for tacos and cold beverages. Best of all, proceeds benefit Meals on Wheels Central Texas! Learn more by going to the "Get Involved" section at [www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](http://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org) and clicking on "Events".



### BlueAir Helps You Stay Cool and Be Cool!

Buying a new A/C or heater from BlueAir Heating and Air Conditioning will not only make your house a more comfortable place to live, you'll also be helping our homebound neighbors in need! Whenever a customer purchases a new HVAC system, BlueAir will donate as much as \$175 to one of four local non-profits, including Meals on Wheels Central Texas. You get to decide which charity receives the donation—just mention Meals on Wheels and BlueAir will do the rest. Call BlueAir at **512-257-8423** for more information!



### Good Food, Great Company, and an Outstanding Cause!

Here's your chance to dine at some of the best restaurants in Central Texas, meet some new friends, AND help MOWCTX in the process! Taster's Table Club (TTC) brings food lovers together for conversation and food at affordable monthly dining experiences. Each month, members choose from select restaurants offering exclusive tasting menus for club members. Now, our wonderful partners at TTC are donating 10% of every new membership and \$2 of every meal purchased to MOWCTX. Each time you participate in a TTC event, you will help feed homebound older Central Texans. In addition, when you sign up for your TTC membership, you'll save \$10 by entering the code "MOWCTX" at checkout. Visit [bit.ly/TTCMOW](http://bit.ly/TTCMOW) for more information or to sign up today!



Together, we can end senior hunger in Central Texas.



# VOTE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

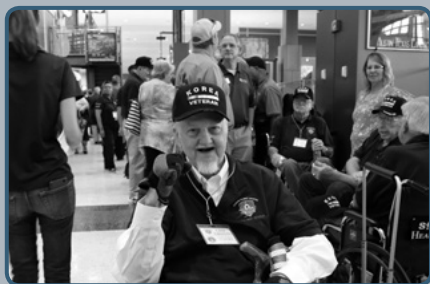
Austin is in a housing crisis, and all of us feel the effects. But that's especially true for our older neighbors, many of whom can't afford much-needed repairs to their homes.



*Meals on Wheels Central Texas Home Repair program used funding from the 2013 housing bond to repair the home of 112-year-old Richard Overton of Austin.*

Our Home Repair program helps low-income seniors by transforming their homes into safer, healthier places to live. We are able to do so thanks, in large part, to City of Austin affordable housing bonds.

## KOREAN WAR VETERAN HONORED



*Meals on Wheels Central Texas client Waylon Griffin took part in Honor Flight Austin's trip to Washington D.C. in early September. Mr. Griffin, who's a Korean War veteran, was part of a group that visited the Korean War Memorial. Thank you, Mr. Griffin, for your service to our nation!*



In the past, these types of general obligation bonds have allowed us to help people like 112-year-old Richard Overton of Austin, our nation's oldest World War II vet. Improvements done by the MOWCTX Home Repair program have allowed Mr. Overton to continue to live in the home he bought in 1948.

This November, a \$250,000,000 Affordable Housing Bond will be on the ballot. Proposition A—the Affordable Housing Bond—will be used to help nonprofits like Meals on Wheels Central Texas preserve homes for our elderly, disabled and veteran neighbors who cannot afford repairs that are necessary for their safety and health.

By voting 'yes' for the Affordable Housing Bond this November, our community can come together to tackle this crisis and help create affordable housing opportunities for all.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6, 2018. Early voting begins on Monday, October 22. To learn more about Proposition A, please visit this webpage: [bit.ly/20k4glx](http://bit.ly/20k4glx)

Follow us:



## GRATITUDE

- Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) for supporting Meals on Wheels
- Big Lots for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Charles Schwab Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Don Barker Roofing and Stucco, Inc. for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Donald D. Hammill Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Isla Carroll Turner Friendship Trust for supporting Meals on Wheels
- Keating Family Foundation for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Philip Theodore Bee Charitable Trust for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Ronald L. Mace Universal Design Institute for supporting Home Repair
- Sam's Club Store #8259 for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- Silicon Labs for supporting Breakfast Meals
- Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation for supporting Hurricane Harvey Home Repair Relief in Central Texas
- The Home Depot Foundation for supporting Home Repair
- Uber Austin for supporting Meals on Wheels Central Texas

# ADAM'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

As you cast your ballot in the November election, I sincerely hope you'll keep 112-year-old Richard Overton in mind.

Mr. Overton, America's oldest living World War II veteran, lives in the East Austin house he bought in 1948. But last year, there were concerns he might have to move from his beloved home because of its unsafe original electrical wiring and lack of central air and heat.

Thanks to the affordable housing bond approved by Austin voters in 2013, our Home Repair program transformed Mr. Overton's house into a safer, healthier place for him to live with new electrical wiring and an HVAC system.

It's the perfect example of our "More Than a Meal" philosophy. As a valued community-based health care provider, we care for our low-income seniors in their homes and offer them an array of services addressing their complex needs. By doing so, vulnerable seniors can continue to live independently in their own homes, and Meals on Wheels Central Texas saves taxpayers money by providing a much more cost-effective alternative to assisted living.

The November ballot offers Austin voters another opportunity to help our older neighbors age in place. Proposition A provides \$250 million for affordable housing initiatives. If it passes, MOWCTX and other well-respected non-profits like Austin Habitat for Humanity, Foundation Communities, and Lifeworks will use the funding to build affordable homes and repair existing ones, just like Mr. Overton's. If the bond fails, longtime Austinites may not get the help they so desperately need.

Please vote "yes" on Proposition A.

Yours in Service,



P.S. To learn more about Proposition A, please visit this webpage: [bit.ly/20k4glx](http://bit.ly/20k4glx)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## LIVE MUSIC, GREAT TIMES, AND FURRY FRIENDS

This fall, Tito's Handmade Vodka is partnering with ACL Live to give back to our PALS (Pets Assisting the Lives of Seniors) program!



*Tito's Handmade Vodka is partnering with our PALS program which helps clients such as Joe Bachicha and his dog, Amber.*

PALS provides free pet food and basic veterinary assistance to our clients' beloved dogs and cats. That's important because pets provide much needed companionship and help reduce the isolation and loneliness that many of our clients experience.



You can help by stopping by Tito's Vodka for Dog People booth during three upcoming ACL Live concerts and enjoying specialty

cocktails. For every Tito's cocktail sold at ACL Live, Tito's will donate \$1 to PALS, up to \$10,000!

Here's a listing of the three concerts:

- 11/30/18 Turnpike Troubadours
- 12/4/18 Gary Clark, Jr.
- 12/22/18 Robert Earl Keen

ACL Live is located at 310 Willie Nelson Blvd., Ste 1A. For more information, visit the "Get Involved" section of [www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](http://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org) and click on "Events".

## GLASS ARTISTS SHATTER ALL EXPECTATIONS



Armado Art Glass Initiative members gathered in our Central Kitchen recently to present MOWCTX with a check for more than \$80,000. The group is an organization of glass artists dedicated to helping people in need. Its annual festival, held every spring, spotlights artists from across the country and features live glass blowing demonstrations, silent auction, music, and food. All proceeds benefit MOWCTX. Since its inception in 2013, Armado Art Glass Initiative has raised nearly \$300,000 for our agency—enough to purchase, prepare and package more than 116,000 of our hot, nutritious meals!

**Thank you, Armado Art Glass Initiative!**

## "I'M GLAD FOR MEALS ON WHEELS IN MY LIFE" (CONT.)

[MOWCTX] can help me with, he will help, and if it's not, he will direct me in a way that I can get help."

When depression overwhelmed her, it was Al Benedict who suggested she take part in our Telehealth Treatment for Depression program, a

partnership between MOWCTX and the University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work. The free, short-term, evidence-based treatment pairs clients with mental health counselors who help them build skills to effectively manage their depression. For Ms. Wright, the results were life changing.

"If I look back at last year, I'm doing things this year, I mean GOOD things, that I wasn't doing last year. When those feelings start coming on me, I get busy. I started embroidering and I made pillow cases for my bed," she says. "I'm glad for Meals on Wheels in my life because it brings positive people to me!"