

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

A Publication of Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County



Together We Are Texas Strong!

A new year, one that ends in a zero. Those always seem like significant milestones in life’s journey. Another annual report with lots of zeros, too. Rarely do people get as excited about reading an annual report as they do with turning the page on a calendar. Unfortunately, statistical reports seldom reflect the humanness of the work that we do or the lives that were changed.

Today, lots of people reminisce about times past when neighbors looked out for one

another. Back then, we gathered on front porches, families sat down together for dinner, and we took plates of food to friends and neighbors who were ill or in need. In short, we were a community. What changed?

NOTHING!

Throughout this annual report, we hope to highlight the compassion and care that is on full display in neighborhoods throughout Tarrant County. It is not necessarily a story of financial statistics, although those are

important, too. It is a tale of people serving others. In short, it is a story of our humanness, our frailties, and our connectedness. It’s what it means to be Texas strong.

Our desire is to showcase the howdy-neighbor attitude that makes Tarrant County such a caring place to live. In 2019, we improved the lives of 4,258 of our homebound neighbors by delivering 895,704 life-saving meals. More than 5,200 of you volunteered over 250,000 hours to serve others, driving over 1.2 million miles just to knock on someone’s front door and say “Meals On Wheels!”

While that is impressive, the real accomplishment is that our clients were able to remain living independently in their own homes, surrounded by a lifetime of memories. We are your neighbors at Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County and we think you will like what we have to say.

In This Annual Report:

- Letter from the Chairman of the Board p. 2
- Friend to Friend Program / Client Demographic Data p. 3
- Companion Pet Meals / Expenses and Funding Sources p. 4
- Case Managers / Volunteers p. 5
- Girl Next Door p. 6
- Client Assistance and HomeMeds Program Outcomes p. 7

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe we have already begun a new year. I am honored to be asked to serve as Chairman of the Board for a second term. I remain as dedicated as ever to serving our community through an organization such as this one.

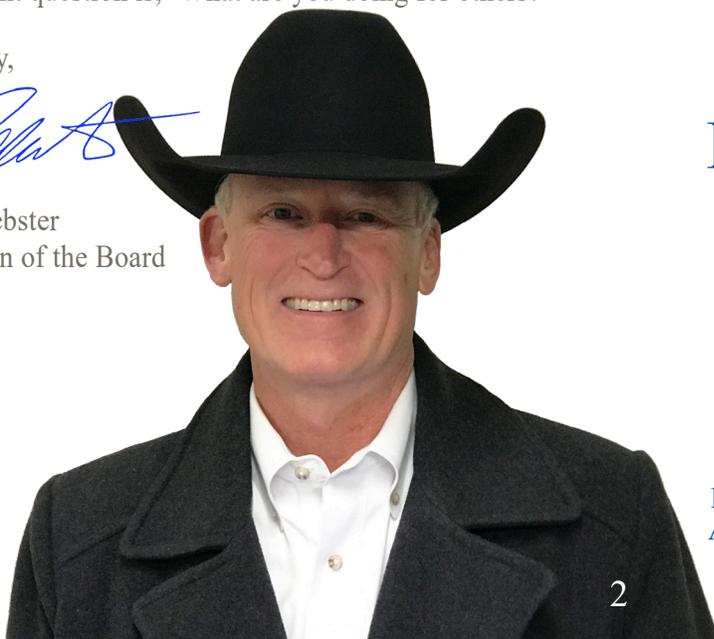
In 2019, we were able to provide almost 900,000 meals to our homebound, elderly and disabled neighbors in Tarrant County. This was achieved on an operating budget of \$6.9 million. Our Client Assistance program continues to provide additional services beyond our delivery of healthy, nutritious meals. Companion Pet Meals, HomeMeds, Friend to Friend and our holiday Silver Santa initiative are but a few of these programs and services.

In April, I will be celebrating my 10th year as a Meals On Wheels volunteer. I have been so blessed to witness the tremendous impact Meals On Wheels has on our clients. I have seen the expressions of gratitude on the faces of pet owners receiving supplemental food for their dearest companions, seen the joy on the faces of clients receiving Silver Santa gifts, and have heard the relief in the voice of a client when volunteers from FWFD installed a new smoke detector. A monthly board meeting does not go by without several stories of how our volunteers and staff have had such positive impacts on the lives of the clients we serve.

As I close, I would like to express my gratitude to the Board of Directors, volunteers and staff for their resounding commitment to Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County's mission. It is because of these dedicated individuals that we are able to meet and exceed our goals. Whether you are a financial supporter or volunteer, I want to thank you for your efforts in taking care of our frailest citizens. Having just celebrated the life of this wonderful man, I would like to leave you with a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King - "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

Sincerely,

Todd Webster
Chairman of the Board



2020

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FRIEND TO FRIEND

Researchers are beginning to recognize the effect that loneliness has on our health and emotional well-being. For far too long, social isolation was considered an unfortunate, but inevitable part of growing old. Now researchers are shining a light on this problem that affects so many of our clients. True, loneliness isn't limited to the elderly, but physical limitations associated with aging often limit an older person's opportunities for social engagement.

“Loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, making it even more dangerous than obesity.”

Douglas Nemecek, MD
Chief Medical Officer for Behavioral Health, Cigna

“Social isolation and loneliness significantly increase risk for premature mortality, and the magnitude of risk exceeds that of many leading health indicators,” says Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD, Brigham Young University. And it may be worse than originally thought. Research has linked social isolation to a higher chance of having Alzheimer's disease, according to a finding published in “Loneliness Rivals Obesity, Smoking as Health Risk.”

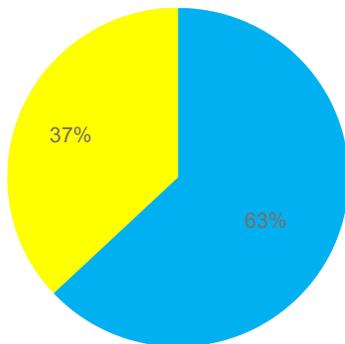
Through the Friend to Friend program, volunteers are encouraged to build friendships with lonely clients by making weekly, face-to-face visits. These volunteers can enhance someone's life by simply being a friend to an elderly or disabled person who may have no other visitors. To ensure the safety of our clients, each Friend to Friend volunteer must pass a short background check. After that, they will attend an orientation, then we will match them with one of our clients needing a friend in their area. We require a six-month commitment for this program, but the great news is that it can be done on the volunteer's own timeline.

To learn more, contact Sarah Drew-Watson at **817-258-6426** or sarah@mealsonwheels.org

Client Demographic Data

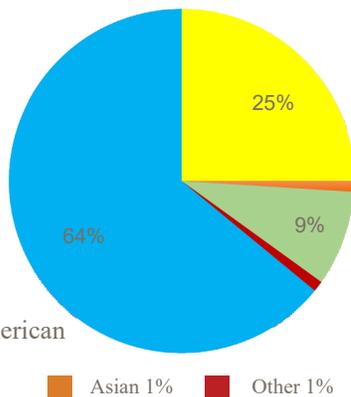
Gender

- Male
- Female

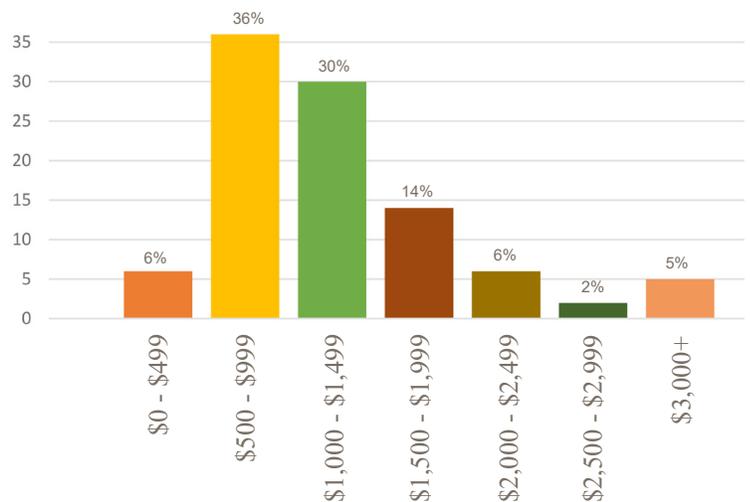


Ethnicity

- Caucasian
- Other
- Hispanic
- Asian
- African American



Client Monthly Income



Client Age

- Median client age: 76
- Clients over age 60: 89%
- Oldest client: 105
- Youngest client: 26





Companion Pet Meals

Whose heart doesn't melt at the thought of a furry, four-legged friend in need? The Companion Pet Meals program was started to address the problem of clients sharing meals with their pets. When that happens, the client does not receive the full nutritional value of the meal we provide, nor does the pet receive the nutrition it needs.

Social isolation is a big problem for many of our clients. In a recent Client Satisfaction Survey, 20% of our clients reported never having visitors other than the meal-delivery volunteer. Another 60% only occasionally have visitors. That means that companion pets are essential for the well-being of these lonely clients.

Through the Companion Pet Meals program, we provide free dog or cat food, along with veterinary and grooming services, to clients who have difficulty providing for their pets. This program is funded independent of our Home-Delivered Meals program through designated gifts.

In 2019, we made over 2,100 deliveries of pet food, providing:

- 17,307 lbs. of dog food
- 4,590 lbs. of cat food

Funding Sources and Expenses

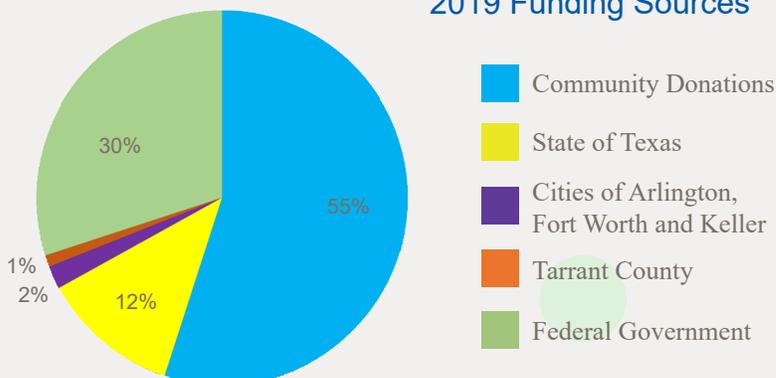
Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County is an independent 501 (c)(3) charitable organization that relies on a variety of funding sources in order to provide nourishing meals and other services to those in need.

We utilize a diverse approach to funding to ensure that we have the resources to serve everyone who needs our help. Over half of our funding comes from community contributions, including donations from caring individuals, civic and faith-based organizations, corporations, and foundations. We also take advantage of a variety of government funding sources at the Federal, State and Local levels.

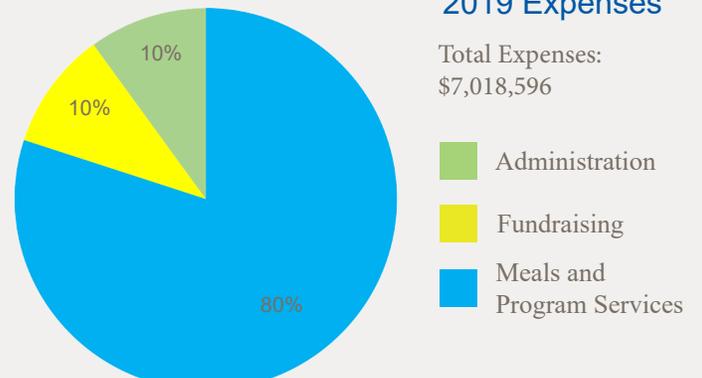
In 2019, our revenue was \$6,806,041. You will be glad to know that 100% of the money raised stays right here in Tarrant County. We ended the year with net assets totaling \$11,768,243.

We work hard to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us. We are also keenly aware that the work we do would not be possible without the financial and volunteer support of caring people in the community. We want to thank you for your generous support. Together, we are making Tarrant County a caring place to grow old for our frailest neighbors.

2019 Funding Sources



2019 Expenses



ADVOCATE

At Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County, all prospective clients are assigned to a professional case manager who assesses their individual needs, coordinates other needed services, monitors progress, and advocates for the client with other agencies.

In 2019, case managers made 11,338 home visits. They processed an average of 343 new referrals each month, conducted 7,634 wellness checks, and made 11,024 referrals for other services within the community.

This team of dedicated individuals is committed to helping those in need, and in doing so, is making Tarrant County a great place to grow old.



VOLUNTEER

You can make a difference in the life of someone in need.

The key to our success has always been the caring volunteers who have a heart for serving others. Our meals are delivered by people who freely give of their time and personal resources to ensure that our clients receive a nutritious meal.

These kind individuals do more than just provide a meal and a friendly home visit. They are trained to contact our office if the client does not answer the door. This daily safety check gives many of our clients and their families an added peace of mind.

In 2019, more than 5,200 unduplicated volunteers logged over 250,000 hours of volunteer service and drove over 1.2 million miles delivering meals!

BNSF Railway Company Volunteer Group



Who qualifies for services?

Meals are available to those who are homebound for any length of time, are physically or mentally unable to prepare nutritious meals for themselves, and have no one to help them on a regular basis. There are no age or income restrictions and no one is ever denied services based on their inability to make a voluntary contribution toward the cost of the services provided.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The cost of preparing, packaging and delivering nutritious meals to one client is only \$1,820 per year. That is less than one day in the hospital or six days in a nursing home. With your help, we can be a lifeline for the thousands of homebound, elderly and disabled residents of Tarrant County.

- \$7 provides a meal for one day
- \$35 provides meals for one week
- \$140 provides meals for a month
- \$1,820 provides meals for a year!

Donate securely online at mealsonwheels.org/donate

GIRL NEXT DOOR

By Jordan Lyle

Marie was working as a waitress in a small diner in Fort Worth when she met a young Army man by the name of Short. He had stopped in for a bite to eat while sightseeing and was taken by the young waitress. He asked Marie if he could take her home once she got off work and she agreed. When the time came, she waited for the handsome soldier to return, but he never showed. The next week Short showed up again at her work apologizing and begging for a second chance. Marie tried to ignore him, but he persisted, and she finally agreed to give him another shot. Nine days later they were married!



“I didn’t even know his name was Bill until about two days before we got married,” Marie said while laughing and reminiscing on time spent with the love of her life.

“Everybody called him Short because he was six foot five inches tall! I still miss him a lot.”

Marie is now 98 years old and has been widowed for almost a decade, following 63 years of marriage. She has also outlived her two sons and her sweet companion dog, Toby. Now, she lives alone in a small, one-bedroom apartment in North Arlington. It’s a very tidy home and the walls are covered with photos of loved ones. Alone is not an adjective that agrees with Marie.

“I just like people. I like to be around people,” she said. In addition to the isolation old age can bring, Marie has become almost completely blind over the years. This physical impairment has stolen much of her independence. “After my husband died, a friend convinced me to sell my car. I cried for two days after that,” she said, still visibly upset by the confinement of her age and sight.

Now Marie relies on our wheels to assist her with a task we commonly take for granted, eating a hot and healthy meal. More than that though, she savors the sweetness of friendship the program brings to her door. “Meals On Wheels really is a big help to me and the volunteers are so good,” said Marie. “The girl that comes on Wednesday, Margie... Margie and I have become such good friends.”

Turning strangers into friends is something Marie can still do all on her own, just like she did so many years ago when Short walked into that small Fort Worth diner. “She just sucks you in,” said Margie, Marie’s Wednesday volunteer. “She’s family now. I bring my dog over and just chat with her and see how she’s doing.”

There is a warmth to Marie that captivates everyone she meets. She listens attentively, laughs genuinely, remembers intentionally and loves boldly. That warmth has enabled her to turn a run in with a neighbor on her walk to the mailbox, a short phone call with the owner of a dog rescue, a minor home repair from the maintenance man, and a brief hello from a weekly Meals On Wheels volunteer into life-long friendships. “I have a lot of friends and I’m so thankful for them,” said Marie, realizing she’s not alone at all. She has friends right next door.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE

Many of us love the charm of an older home, especially with steps leading to a wide front porch with a pair of comfortable rocking chairs. As idyllic of a scene as this conjours up, imagine not being able to climb the steps on your front porch. This is the plight that many of our clients experience every day. Those front porch steps become a barrier between you and the outside world, turning your charming house into a prison. This is just one problem facing our clients, who often lack the physical strength or financial resources to address these issues.

Through our Client Assistance program, we can address these health and safety issues for our clients. Imagine the joy of a client who receives a much-needed wheelchair ramp or the excitement of a new lift chair for a client who labors to simply stand from a seated position. Each year, we assist hundreds of clients with durable medical equipment, minor home repairs, lawn care, toiletries, and even adult incontinent supplies. We install grab bars (and peace of mind) in slippery showers, address fire hazards caused by shorts in electric panels, replace broken window panes, and countless other projects, all at no cost to our clients. These projects are made possible by donor-designated gifts, so providing these life-changing services in no way impacts our ability to provide nutritious meals for all who need them.



In 2019, we fulfilled over 1,600 special needs with more than \$150,000 in donor-designated funding for our Client Assistance program. These projects, large and small, immediately improve the lives of our clients because they address specific needs. While the nutritional health of our clients is always our first priority, creating a safe and healthy environment can significantly help our clients maintain their independence for as long as possible when they have no other resources available to them. To learn more about our Client Assistance program, visit mealsonwheels.org/client-assistance.

HOMEMEDS

Saving Lives and Taxpayer Dollars.

As we have reported before, falls are one of the primary reasons that seniors visit the emergency room each year. Dizziness is one of the leading causes of falls among seniors, and dizziness is often a result of medication errors. Our HomeMeds program was established to prevent falls and hospitalization due to medication errors and adverse drug effects. Through this important program, we save lives and healthcare dollars by identifying serious drug reactions, including duplicate therapies and ingredients, as well as inappropriate medications and dosages.

In 2019, 81.5% of the 2,372 clients who participated in this program had medication alerts. This means that we made a difference in 1,937 lives by following up on those alerts and working with physicians and pharmacists to reconcile their medication. With the skyrocketing cost of healthcare, ER visits create financial hardship for our clients and become a burden on local taxpayers who foot the bill for Medicare and Medicaid recipients. By addressing this important problem, we are keeping our clients safe and saving Tarrant County taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County
5740 Airport Freeway
Fort Worth, TX 76117-6005

We need your help. Please make a generous financial gift to help provide nutritious meals for those in need.

Do you know someone in need?

If you or someone you know needs assistance with home-delivered meals to be able to remain living independently, call us at **817-336-0912** or visit **mealsonwheels.org**. We are here to help you.

Our Mission

To promote the dignity and independence of older adults, persons with disabilities, and other home-bound persons by delivering nutritious meals and providing or coordinating needed services.

This 2019 Annual Report is a publication of Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County



Donate online at
mealsonwheels.org/donate

Editor: Keith Harrison. For information about this publication, please contact the editor at 817-258-6450 or send an email to keith@mealsonwheels.org.

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Navy veteran and Meals On Wheels client Henry along with the crew of the USS Fort Worth.