



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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



Celebrating 50 years of service to the homebound and elderly residents of Tarrant County.

Just about everyone loves turning the page on the calendar to a new year of hope and opportunity. It is also a time when many re-evaluate priorities and plan for the future. For us, 2023 marks a significant milestone in the history of our agency — 50 years of serving those in need!

No doubt we will spend considerable time reminiscing on the past as we plan celebration events throughout the year, but don't be fooled, we are laser focused on the future.

This year, we will be reviewing our service offerings from top to bottom to ensure they align with the needs of our community. We will evaluate our technology needs and research ways to better connect with our clients and volunteers. We will break ground on a significant facility expansion that will position the agency to meet the demand for services well into the future. However, one thing that won't change is our commitment to those we serve and the human connections we foster along the way.

Throughout this annual report, we hope to highlight the compassion and care for which we are known and on which our clients depend. It is not necessarily a story of financial statistics, although those are important, too. It is an account of people in need and how others give of themselves and their resources to improve lives. In short, it's the story of the compassion and connectedness that define Tarrant County.

In 2022, we improved the lives of 6,702 people in need by delivering 1,365,086 life-saving meals. Nearly 4,900 of you volunteered over 250,000 hours to serve others, driving almost 1.3 million miles just to ensure someone else had a nutritious meal to eat.

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. With that in mind, let's get this party started!

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am excited to serve this outstanding organization as its chairman for the next two years and look forward to celebrating our 50th anniversary!

As we exit the pandemic, we are looking at the future of our organization and how we will maintain the tremendous growth we have experienced throughout the pandemic. We'll work tirelessly to make certain that we have the capacity to serve the people of Tarrant County who are in need.

Over the past couple of years, we have seen explosive growth in the number of people we serve through our Home-Delivered Meals, HomeMeds and Companion Pet Meals programs, and continue to be committed to never turning away a client who needs assistance.

The next two years will see us progress through a building expansion, led by our previous chairman, Todd Webster. This expansion will double our freezer and refrigerator space, expand our sally port to house more delivery vans, increase our administrative office space, and enlarge our storage space for food, toiletries, etc. We will complete this while continuing to deliver over 1.5 million meals to our clients this year.

We have just completed significant technology upgrades to bolster our capacity and increase security of our client data. We plan to add five new locations to our Adult Activity Center program in 2023, returning that program back to full capacity after the pandemic shut down these centers.

In closing, we want to thank you, our supporters, for your continued trust and belief in our mission to serve those in need in Tarrant County. I also want to thank the Board of Directors, volunteers and staff for their unwavering commitment to our mission and the clients we serve.

Sincerely,



Kerry J. Mercer
Chairman of the Board



2023

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TWO MEN WITH SOMETHING IN COMMON

MEALS ON WHEELS HAS CHANGED THEIR LIVES

By Philip Gonzalez

Being around for 50 years, we've served a lot of clients — tens of thousands of them — but one man stands alone as being on the program longer than any other. Charles has been a Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County client for 31 years! He joined us in 1991 and has been with us ever since.

Charles was born in Cleburne, TX in 1944. His parents had him later in life and were horrified when Charles contracted polio as an infant. In those days, a polio diagnosis left families and entire communities paralyzed with fear. Little was understood about the virus and without a vaccine, public hysteria was similar to the early days of the COVID pandemic. Charles' parents knew that he was going to have to live with this crippling disease his entire life and had to make the difficult decision whether to send him to an asylum, which was common in those days, or keep him at home and try to treat the disease on their own. Thankfully, his parents decided to keep him at home. When Charles was about 14-years old, he and his family moved to Haltom City. Although most of his family is gone now, he still lives in that same house.

Charles is able to get around with the help of a motorized wheelchair. He has a tremendous outlook on life, which he attributes to his strong faith. He is a member of two large churches in Northeast Tarrant County and although he is unable to actually attend church services, he gladly welcomes church members into his home as they “bring church to him,” as he likes to say.

Along with his friends and family, Charles really looks forward to seeing the volunteers from Meals On Wheels. He said that the volunteers who come to see him were made just for him. “They're cheerful and happy and honor me when they come into my home,” he added. Charles also looks forward to the nutritious meals he receives.

Kurt Kulpa has been volunteering at Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County for over 35 years! Kurt started delivering to Charles in the mid-'90s and over the years Charles has come and gone off his route as the Volunteer department tweaked things to even up delivery routes. “What's funny is that Charles remembers my wife, Patty, and my two youngest daughters, Mary and Alyssa,” Kurt said. “A couple of years ago Charles was put back on my route. I couldn't believe he remembered not only me, but Patty and my daughters! Despite his physical limitations, he has a great sense of humor and is always so upbeat. He's a remarkable man!”

Charles is a constant reminder of why Kurt has delivered meals for so many years. “It's really all about people like Charles,” Kurt said. “I am just one of many who have delivered to him. Hopefully we've made a positive impact on his life.” Well, Kurt, according to Charles, that wish is his reality and he is grateful for your service.

All of Kurt's clients are appreciative of the work Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County does in the community, but according to Kurt, Charles is probably the most vocal. “He always says thank you and tells me that he would never be able to have the quality of life he enjoys or be able to stay in his home without the services of Meals On Wheels,” Kurt said. “I'm so thankful that I get to be a part of this great organization and part of Charles' life. I just want to encourage others to get involved, too.” Charles and Kurt are just one of the thousands of human connections we make possible and we are thankful they are both longtime members of our extended family.



Kurt (left) and Charles

Companion Pet Meals

The wag of a tail can brighten the darkest of days. It is often said that dogs and cats love unconditionally and that's just what the doctor orders for many of our clients who have no family or friends with whom they can visit on a regular basis. The Companion Pet Meals program was started to address the problem of clients sharing meals with their pets, but it has grown into something much more important.



Social isolation is a reality for many of our clients. In our 2022 Client Satisfaction Survey, 18% of our clients reported never having visitors other than the meal-delivery volunteer. Another 68% only occasionally have visitors. That means that companion pets are essential for the happiness and 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 through donor-designated gifts.

In 2022, we made over 1,900 pet food deliveries, providing 22,164 lbs. of dog food and 10,211 lbs. of cat food!

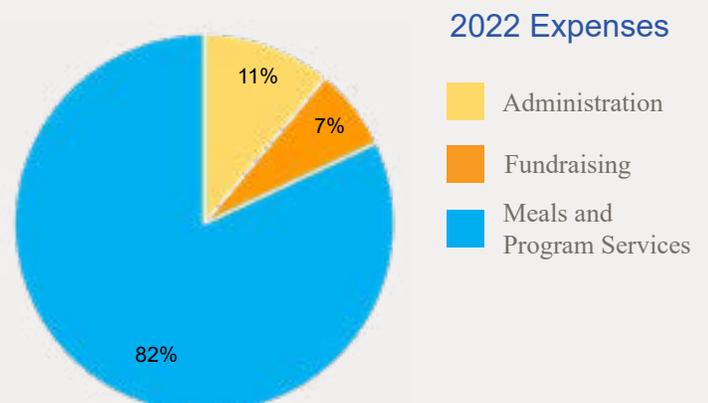
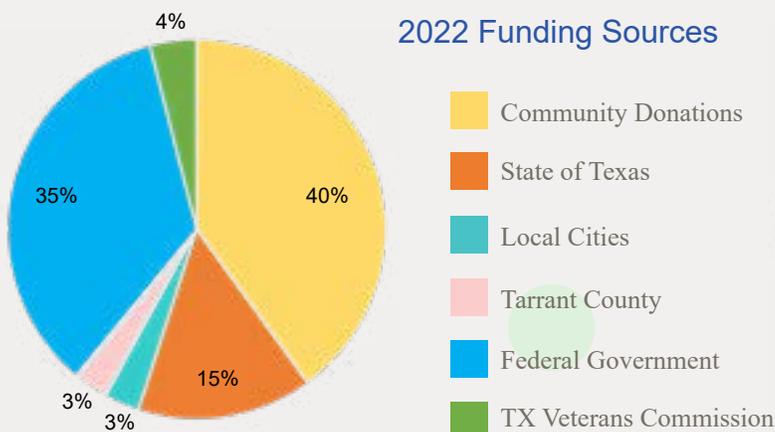
Funding Sources and Expenses

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. In 2022, 40% of our funding came from community contributions, including donations from caring individuals, civic and faith-based organizations, corporations, and foundations. We also took advantage of a variety of government funding sources at the Federal, State and Local levels as outlined below.

In 2022, our expenses totaled \$12,107,369. You will be glad to know that 100% of the money raised stayed right here in Tarrant County to meet that need.

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. Regardless of the part that you play, 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.



ADVOCATES

Our professional case managers caringly assess our clients to tailor a service plan to fit their individual needs. Case managers routinely monitor the clients' progress, coordinate other non-nutrition services and advocate for the client with other agencies and service providers.

In 2022, our case managers made 11,752 home visits. They processed an average of 433 new client intakes each month, made 8,913 wellness checks, and made 11,589 referrals for other services within the community.

This team of dedicated individuals is committed to helping those in need, and in doing so, is changing lives for the better.



ACTIVE ADULTS

Through our Adult Activity Center program, mobile adults age 60 and over can enjoy planned activities that stimulate the body and mind and improve their overall well-being. In addition to a delicious lunchtime meal, participants benefit from social interactions with friends, which help combat senior isolation and loneliness. If an individual is interested in visiting an adult activity center, but lacks transportation, he or she may qualify for limited transportation assistance.

In 2022, we served 54,890 meals to 1,202 clients at 17 centers located throughout Tarrant County. Plus, we provided 18,456 one-way trips to 223 center participants. For more information about adult activity centers, including their locations, email AAC@mealsonwheels.org or call us at **817-258-6482**.



Forest Hill Activity Center

We offer several meal options to meet the individual needs of our clients:

- **Hot Meals** — Hot noontime meals are delivered each weekday by caring volunteers. Lunchtime meals consist of an entree, two side dishes, bread, dessert, and a beverage.
- **Weekend Meals** — Clients who need additional nutritional support may qualify for weekend meals. These frozen meals are delivered on Friday along with the regular hot-meal delivery.
- **Breakfast Meals** — Many clients need a greater level of care and qualify for breakfast meals in addition to our regular noontime meal. Breakfast meals are refrigerated and intended to be eaten the following morning.
- **Frozen Meals** — Some clients cannot be home for a hot-meal delivery and will receive a weekly delivery of frozen meals. This option is designed to offer flexibility for clients who have regularly-scheduled dialysis or other medical procedures. Food insecure clients may also benefit from this option.

How You CAN HELP

The cost of preparing, packaging and delivering nutritious meals to one client is only \$1,950 per year. With your help, we can be a lifeline for the thousands of homebound, elderly, disabled and food-insecure residents of Tarrant County.

- \$7.50 provides a meal for one day
- \$37.50 provides meals for one week
- \$150 provides meals for a month
- \$1,950 provides meals for a year!

Donate securely online at mealsonwheels.org/donate

MAKING FRIENDS

The Friend to Friend program was developed to combat the loneliness and isolation experienced by so many of our clients by encouraging volunteers to build meaningful friendships with lonely clients. Having volunteers make weekly in-home visits allows clients to share stories, wisdom, and life experiences. Program volunteers constantly tell us they get more out of the program than they put into it. The Friend to Friend program is just another way we are making human connections and improving the quality of life for our homebound clients.

To learn more, contact Belinda at **817-258-6475** or **belinda@mealsonwheels.org**.

"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."

— Carl W. Buechner

VOLUNTEERING

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.

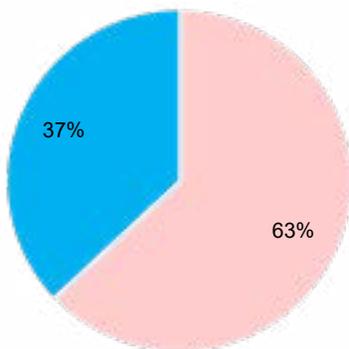
These kind individuals do more than just provide a meal and a friendly home visit. They are trained to contact our office if the client does not answer the door or if they notice something out of the ordinary. This daily safety check gives many of our clients and their families an added peace of mind.

In 2022, nearly 4,900 unduplicated volunteers logged over 250,000 hours of volunteer service and drove almost 1.3 million miles delivering meals!

Client Demographic Data

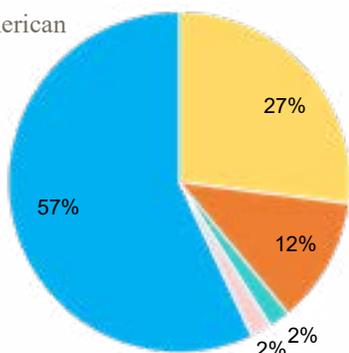
Gender

- Male
- Female



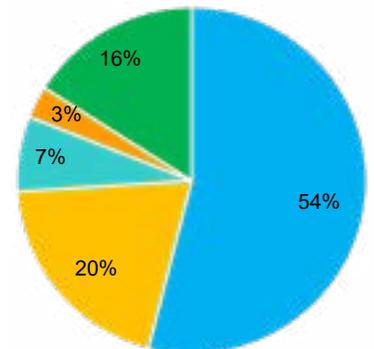
Ethnicity

- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Other
- Caucasian



Client Monthly Income

- Very Low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Unknown



Client Age

- Median client age: 75
- Clients over age 60: 90%
- Oldest client: 105
- Youngest client: 12



CLIENT ASSISTANCE

How many of us have called a plumber when the hot water heater goes out or we smell gas? What about a roofer when the roof springs a leak? It might be a carpenter to replace some rotted steps. As annoying as these things are, most of us are able to manage these repairs in one way or another. These are just some of the problems 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.

We are also able to provide needed items like lift chairs, hospital beds, rollators, walkers, window-unit air conditioners, portable heaters, and so much more! We install grab bars (and peace of mind) in slippery showers, replace broken window panes, and countless other projects, all at no cost to our clients. We provide toiletries and personal hygiene products like toilet paper and adult incontinence supplies. These projects and items 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 2022, we completed over 2,219 projects with more than \$289,400 in donor-designated and grant 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 and dignity.

To learn more about our Client Assistance program, visit mealsonwheels.org/client-assistance.



Annette receives a new hospital bed.

HOMEMEDS

Medication-reconciliation Program

Medication errors happen at an alarming rate among older adults who often get confused when it comes to taking their medications. Given that almost half of our clients suffer from some level of dementia, it's no wonder that keeping track of all those pills is overwhelming. 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 — the largest HomeMeds program in the country — was established to prevent falls and hospitalization due to medication errors and adverse drug effects by identifying serious drug reactions, including duplicate therapies and ingredients, as well as inappropriate medications and dosages.

In 2022, 76.3% of the 1,929 clients who participated in this program had medication alerts. We intervened in 1,472 cases by working with pharmacy technicians and consulting pharmacists to reconcile these medication alerts, helping those clients avoid a trip to the ER.

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

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*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.

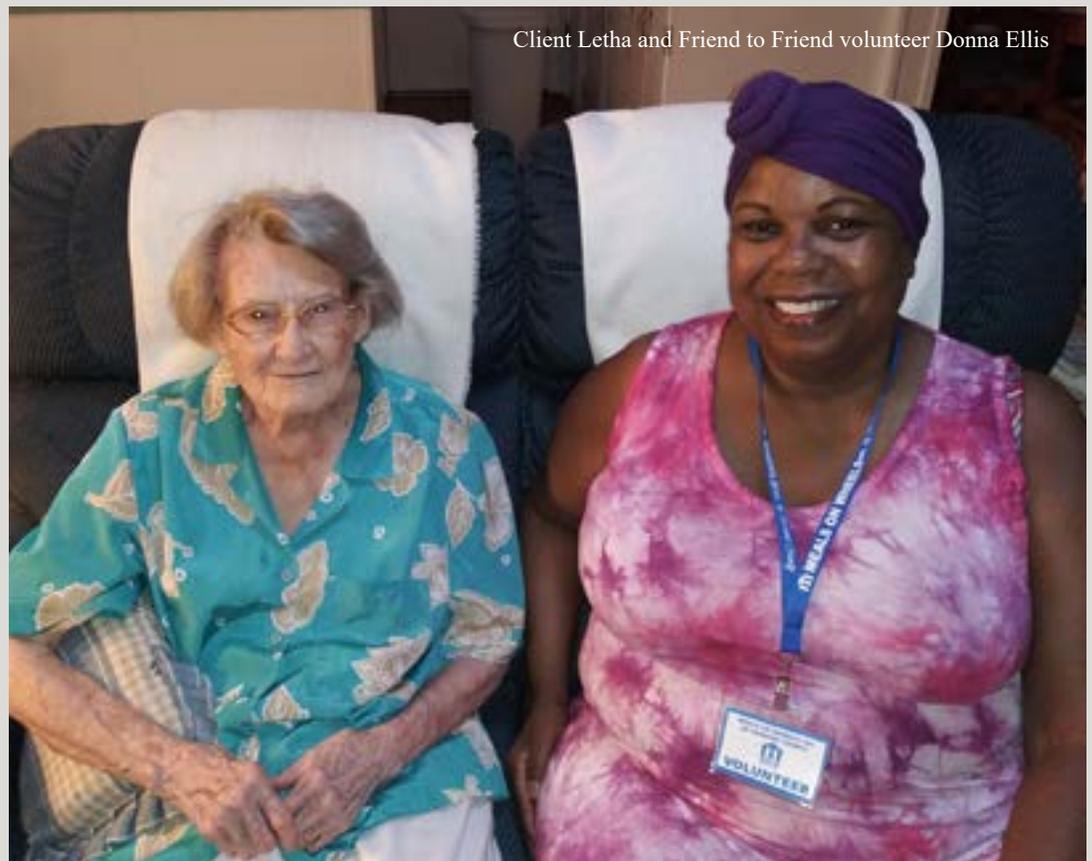
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mealsonwheels.org/donate

Editor: Philip Gonzalez. For information about this publication, please contact the editor at 817-258-6441 or send an email to philip@mealsonwheels.org.

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Client Letha and Friend to Friend volunteer Donna Ellis