

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Volunteer Julie Sharp and Client Donald

At Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County, we are committed to serving our community with compassion and purpose. Each year, we strive to make a tangible difference in the lives of homebound seniors, individuals with disabilities, and others in need by delivering more than just meals — we deliver hope, dignity and connection. This annual report highlights the remarkable achievements made possible through the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors, and the resilience of those we serve.

In 2024 we experienced amazing highs and faced challenges that strengthened our resolve to care for those in need. Thanks to Tarrant County, we concluded our \$9.8 million ARPA-funded facility expansion, giving us the physical capacity

to serve Tarrant County residents for many years to come. We honored Carla Jutson, our CEO for the past 50 years, as she retired and entered the next chapter of her life. All the while, we faced the challenges of skyrocketing food costs and funding shortages that required us to make difficult decisions on how we would continue to provide for those whose care has been entrusted to us.

Looking forward to 2025, we see even more difficult days ahead. Funding continues to be our biggest challenge. We have been notified of a \$1.5 million cut from one funding source alone. Added to that is the ever-increasing number of people reaching out to us for help. Despite the hurdles we face, we are more optimistic about the future than ever before because we live and work in

a community defined by compassion and generosity. Time and time again, the caring people of Tarrant County have stood with us and proven that together there is nothing we can't do.

In 2024, we served 6,961 unduplicated clients and delivered 1,131,636 life-saving meals. A dedicated team of nearly 3,300 volunteers drove nearly 1.2 million miles to deliver nutritious meals and human connection.

The statistics presented in this annual report barely capture the depth of the impact we've made in the lives of our clients. While it includes financial metrics, its true essence lies in the stories of people in need and the extraordinary generosity of individuals like you who work to change lives.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in our mission to nourish lives and strengthen our community. You are the reason we are inspired to do even more in the year ahead. We look forward to creating an even brighter future together.

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Dear Friends,

I would like to begin this letter by thanking you for your support. Whether you're a volunteer, donor, advocate, or client, you are at the heart of what we do. I am incredibly proud of the work that Meals On Wheels is doing to improve the lives of vulnerable and often overlooked individuals in our community. Because you chose to stand with us in our fight against senior hunger, last year we enabled almost 7,000 clients to remain living independently in their own homes. I hope you share my sense of pride in the part you played in making that goal a reality.

I also want to thank my predecessor, Kerry Mercer, for his Board leadership over the past two years, and of course I want to acknowledge the 50-year legacy of Carla Jutson, who retired in September. After a nationwide search, the Board of Directors selected Alissa Deaton as our new CEO, and I'm delighted to be working with her as we build on the legacy of this incredible organization. While I could write pages of donor acknowledgments, I do want to thank Tarrant County for providing over \$9.8 million in ARPA funding for our much-needed facility expansion.

With my experience as a registered dietitian, long-time public health official, and a retired Navy Captain, I can attest firsthand to the dedication and efficiency by which this organization operates and the focus on improving lives through proper nutrition that guides everything we do.

In 2025, funding shortfalls will continue to be our biggest challenge. We know the extent to which our clients rely on us for something to eat, so we are working hard to find new funding sources to reinstate daily breakfast service and ensure we have the resources to serve every qualified person who reaches out to us for assistance. I humbly ask for your continued financial support, and promise that we will be good stewards of the resources you entrust to us.

In closing, I want to thank our Board of Directors, volunteers and staff for their commitment to our mission. I am incredibly optimistic about the future of Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County. With you at our side, there is simply nothing that we can't do.

Sincerely,



Ann Salyer-Caldwell
Chair of the Board



2025

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NAVY WAVES OF SERVICE

By Philip Gonzalez



It's not every day that you meet a centenarian. I recently had the opportunity to visit with Meals On Wheels client Elsie "Kitty" and talk about her experiences in WWII and what it's like to have lived for 100 years.

Kitty was born in Ellinger, Texas in 1924, one of seven children born to a father from Czechoslovakia and a mother from Texas. She recalls the difference between the two families. Her paternal grandmother was very strict and her maternal grandmother never stopped "hugging on them." Her parents both passed away in their 80s and most of her siblings have now passed. Her youngest sister, who lives in California, is in her 80s and is her only living sibling.

On December 7, 1941, Kitty was working at Kelly Field in San Antonio when news reports started coming in that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. She learned that one of her friends had been killed in the bombing. As the war continued overseas, Kitty enlisted in the U.S. Navy's WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Service) program, which was established in 1942 to release men for sea duty and replace them with women on shore assignments. "I volunteered not thinking I would ever get called," she said, "but I did and off I went. I took my first train ride to New York, and I was scared to death. I had never been on a train, or even outside Texas." In New York, the Navy taught Kitty to perform flight instrument repair. After she completed training, she was sent to work at Dallas Naval Air Station as well as assignments in Bunker Hill, Indiana and Glenview, Illinois.

While at a USO dance, she met George, the man who would become her husband of 60 years. "I was so excited that he was from Fort Worth," Kitty said. She and George married in 1946 and after his discharge from the Army, they moved to Burleson. They eventually moved to Haltom City where they raised their three children, two daughters and a son. Now 50 years later, Kitty still lives in that same house.

Throughout her 100 years, Kitty has experienced the ups and downs of life. She lost her husband in 2006 and just last year lost one of her daughters. Even with



these losses, Kitty still enjoys life. "I've always loved dancing," she said. "I remember my dad being in a band. I think that's when I got my love of dancing." As she grew older, she found that she really enjoyed ballroom dancing. Although she can no longer dance, she still taps her toes to old country and western music. "I really like Merle Haggard and Buck Owens," she added. "They have to be my favorites!"

While visiting with Kitty, her lunch from Meals On Wheels arrived. There was that familiar knock at the front door and someone called out "Meals On Wheels!" Kitty is no longer able to cook for herself and says that Meals On Wheels has been a big help to her now that she can no longer see very well. Kitty thinks the meals are good and she really enjoys chatting with the volunteers.

Ms. Kitty turned 101 on January 31st, a few days after our chat. She is still as sharp as a tack and keeps up with current events. She's witty and a great conversationalist, and she reminded me of my own grandmother. "I don't know how I do it, but I keep on going," Kitty concluded. "I'm thankful for being here this long. I think it's probably because I like sweet chocolate and dancing." Happy 101st birthday, Miss Kitty!

COMPANION PET MEALS

Jodi trained assistance dogs for over 10 years and even started a non-profit program to train shelter dogs to help people with disabilities. Now dealing with a disability herself, Jodi struggles to fight the multiple sclerosis that has taken over her body. After losing her husband and caretaker four years ago, Jodi found herself relying on her own assistance dog, Velvet. Without him, she wouldn't be able to stay at home. She is very appreciative for the meals she receives as a Meals On Wheels client, but she's even more thrilled to know that Velvet is taken care of through the Companion Pet Meals program.



This Christmas, Velvet was given a bag full of gifts, and he knew that the bag was for him as he rummaged through and found his favorite stuffed animal. "I'm so grateful for all the items in the bag. There are too many things to list. You made Velvet's and my holiday so much happier!"

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 2024, we distributed 44,811 pounds of pet food, serving 385 clients and 560 unduplicated pets.

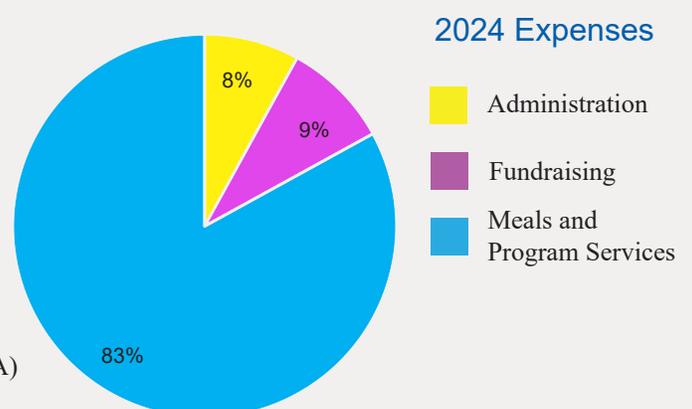
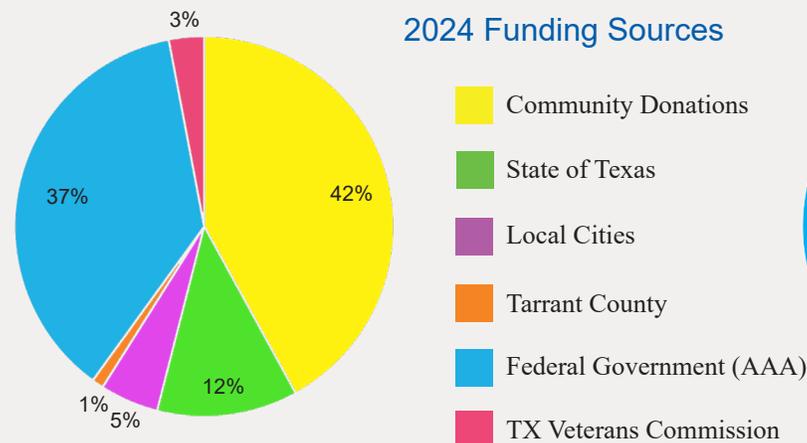
FUNDING SOURCES AND EXPENSES

Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County operates as an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization, relying on diverse funding sources to deliver nourishing meals and essential services to individuals in need.

Our funding strategy embraces a range of channels to ensure comprehensive support for our mission. In 2024, 42% of our funding was from community contributions, including generous donations from individuals, civic and faith-based organizations, corporations, foundations, and other non-government gifts. Additionally, we receive support from government grants at the federal, state and

local levels. For fiscal year 2024, our total revenue was \$12,803,610 with expenses of \$13,106,043.

We are committed to thoughtful, responsible resource management that maximizes our impact. We recognize that the meaningful work we do is only possible because of the generosity and dedication of our community—people who give their time, talents, and financial support to uplift others. Your support empowers us to create lasting change, ensuring that older adults in Tarrant County receive the care, dignity, and respect they deserve.



CASE MANAGEMENT

Our professional case managers go above and beyond to ensure every client receives the personalized care they deserve. With compassion and expertise, they conduct thorough assessments to develop service plans tailored to each individual's unique needs. But their role extends far beyond initial evaluations — our case managers serve as dedicated advocates, continuously monitoring client progress, coordinating essential non-nutrition services, and acting as a vital link to community resources.

In 2024 alone, this incredible team conducted 15,857 home visits. They processed an average of 511 new client intakes each month and conducted 8,906 wellness checks, offering reassurance and intervention when necessary. In addition, they facilitated 16,506 referrals to connect clients with critical services throughout the community.



A Driving Force

Volunteers are the heart of what we do, delivering meals and companionship to those in need. Their dedication fights food insecurity and isolation, fostering independence and a sense of community. In 2024, this dedicated team of nearly 3,300 volunteers drove nearly 1.2 million miles ensuring our clients received the nourishment and support they need, along with countless smiles.

You'll be glad to know that our clients report improvements in the following categories since receiving meals:

- 98% in nutritional status
- 72% in physical functioning
- 81% in mental functioning

Plus, 75% of clients report that our meal serves as their main meal of the day, and 95% report that Meals On Wheels helps them remain independent.

ADULT ACTIVITY CENTERS

In January, we celebrated the first lunch served at our newest congregate meal site, Cowan Place Senior Living in Stop Six. Meals On Wheels now provides lunch at 22 Adult Activity Centers located throughout Tarrant County, offering nutritious meals to individuals aged 60 and older. We are excited to welcome Cowan Place to the Meals On Wheels family!

Through our Adult Activity Center program, mobile adults age 60+ 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 2024, we served 124,124 meals to 1,656 clients at 22 centers all across Tarrant County. For more information about adult activity centers, including their locations, email AAC@mealsonwheels.org or call us at 817-258-6482.



How You CAN HELP

The cost of preparing, packaging and delivering nutritious meals to one client is only \$2,080 per year. With your help, we can be a lifeline for the thousands of homebound, elderly and disabled residents of Tarrant County.

- \$8 funds a meal for one day
- \$40 funds meals for one week
- \$160 funds meals for a month
- \$2,080 funds meals for a year!

Donate securely online at mealsonwheels.org/donate

At 63 years old, Timmy has faced more challenges than most. Living with cardiovascular disease and a brain injury, he has endured years of hardship, including a period of homelessness. Since August 2023, he has been receiving home-delivered meals while residing in a group home, working to rebuild his health and stability.

Timmy was referred to our registered dietitian after experiencing significant weight loss following heart valve removal surgery. When he first met with the dietitian in August 2023, he weighed just 135 pounds—far below the healthy range for someone his size, which is typically around 180 pounds. To help him regain his strength, his case manager and dietitian worked together to add breakfast and weekend meals to his plan, along with Ensure Plus to supplement his nutrition.

The impact was remarkable. By February 2024, Timmy's weight had climbed to 171 pounds, a 36-pound increase in just six months. Feeling stronger and more confident, he decided to reduce his reliance on Ensure Plus, aiming to sustain his progress through regular meals alone.

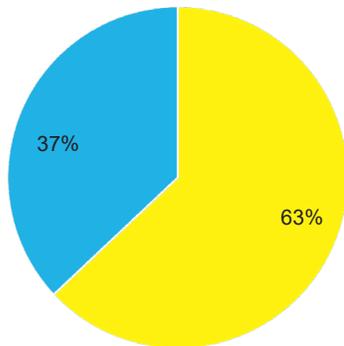
By October 2024, Timmy had reached a major milestone—his goal weight of 180 pounds! Having gained a total of 45 pounds in just 14 months, he was thrilled to share his success. His journey is a testament to the power of proper nutrition, compassionate care, and the unwavering support of the Meals On Wheels team.

Today, Timmy is not only healthier but also deeply grateful for the assistance he has received. His story is a powerful reminder of how Meals On Wheels is more than just a meal—it's a lifeline, offering hope and a path to a better future.

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

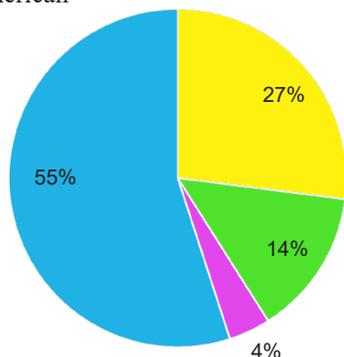
Gender

- Male
- Female



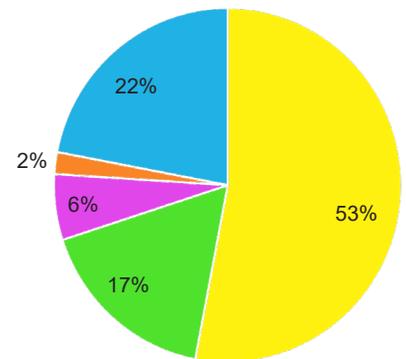
Ethnicity

- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Caucasian



Client Monthly Income

- Very Low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Not Reported



Client Age

- Median client age: 75
- Clients over age 60: 92%
- Oldest client: 105
- Youngest client: 23



CLIENT ASSISTANCE

Through our Client Assistance program, we are able to make minor home repairs and modifications that create a safe living environment for clients who have no other resources available to them. These projects are funded through donor-designated gifts, so they do not affect our ability to provide nourishing meals to our clients.

This year, we were able to enrich the life of a Vietnam War Veteran. The railing on Frank's front porch was in desperate need of repair and created a severe safety hazard for both Frank and our meal-delivery volunteers. Not only did the railing pose a fall risk for Frank, who relies on a rollator and cane, but our case manager noted the difficulty Frank had climbing the steps up to his front porch. Thanks to a grant from Meals on Wheels America, we were able to repair the porch railing and install a new wheelchair ramp. Frank is so grateful because he can now enter and exit his home without fear of falling. Plus, he no longer worries that someone will get hurt on his front porch.



In 2024, we completed 130 home-repair projects, giving our clients a sense of safety and security. In addition, we fulfilled:

- Over 650 special gift requests through our annual Silver Santa Giving Tree
- 104 window-unit air conditioner/heater installations
- 45 requests for walkers, rollators, wheelchairs, and motorized scooters
- 85 utility assistance requests
- 2,979 packages of incontinence supplies
- 11,774 pounds of shelf-stable pantry food to 345 unduplicated clients
- And much more!

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

HOME MEDS

Medication-reconciliation Program

HomeMeds is an evidenced-based medication review and intervention program that includes a computerized risk assessment and alert process, plus a pharmacist review and recommendation. Meals On Wheels of Tarrant County is the largest implementer of HomeMeds in the nation.

What We Know: Adults age 65 and older are **twice** as likely to go to the ER for adverse drug events and **nearly seven times** more likely to be hospitalized after an ER visit. The out-of-pocket costs can be devastating for low or fixed-income clients.

In 2024, 1,270 clients — 76% of clients enrolled in the program — had medication alerts. In addition, clients self-reported 402 falls and 760 episodes of dizziness, and we know that problems with medications are the number one reason for dizziness and falls for older adults.

This intervention not only keeps our clients safe and healthy, but reduces taxpayer-funded hospital ER visits and admissions. For more information, contact us at nutrition@mealsonwheels.org or call **817-258-6436**.

Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County
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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.

This 2024 Annual Report is a publication of Meals On Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County



Donate online at
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 Jesus and Volunteer Lauri Krumm