



*Special*  
**DELIVERY**  
NEWSLETTER

**SPRING 2024**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Dear Friends,

As Chair of the Board, I have worked closely with Caitlin Sly, our Executive Director who recently left MOW Diablo Region to become the President and CEO of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. Caitlin has been an outstanding leader who helped build the organization and helped us meet growing needs during trying times. It is always difficult to say goodbye, but we know that she will always remain a champion of improving the lives of seniors in our community and of the many programs our organization provides. We are currently searching for a new Executive Director who embodies these values.

Caitlin has put the agency on a secure financial footing with an excellent leadership staff and Board who will ensure the next leader has a strong foundation to build upon. Meals on Wheels Diablo Region remains more committed than ever to meeting the growing needs of our older neighbors.

This edition of Special Delivery illustrates the importance of our services and the impact they have on our senior neighbors, like one who wouldn't be able to remain independent without our Fall Prevention, Friendly Visitors, and Friendly Helpers programs. You will find out about a new program to help adult children of aging parents who are juggling careers, families, and elder care. You will learn about the expansion of our Cultural Cuisine Program, and the fourth year of our Feed the Soul campaign.

We hope you enjoy reading about our ongoing effort to improve the lives of our older neighbors!

*Tim Argenti*

Tim Argenti  
Board Chair



## THESE SNEAKERS ARE MADE FOR walking

Elizabeth always loved to walk. When she worked as a receptionist, she walked 6 miles a day. Now at 92, Elizabeth can't do those long treks around her Richmond neighborhood. But she still makes it a priority to get her steps in thanks to her MOW Diablo Region Friendly Visitor, Sonia. "When Sonia asks, 'what would you like to do today?' I tell her, walk," laughs Elizabeth.

Initially, Elizabeth didn't think that Meals on Wheels Diablo Region was for her because she still cooks for herself. But she was worried about falling and needed some extra help and companionship. She learned about MOW Diablo Region's supportive services and was matched with her Friendly Visitor, Sonia. Fall Prevention also installed a railing on her front porch so she can safely go in and out of her home. She will soon be matched with a Friendly Helper to assist her with running errands. "What I've learned is Meals on Wheels Diablo Region isn't just meals, it's MUCH more than that!" says Elizabeth.

Elizabeth remains upbeat and feels, no matter what age you are, it's important to live your best life. "We live to get old! I went from one stage of life to another, and I'm grateful for all of it. It's important to get plenty of rest, exercise, and be willing to accept help when you need it."

# It's personal & professional

Elder care is one of the major reasons people either leave the workforce or shift to part-time. Meals on Wheels Diablo Region has started a program called Helping Employees of Aging Parents to assist employees who are responsible for elder care. **This program is free, as are all our services.**

This program provides information about MOW Diablo Region's home delivered meals and other supportive services that can help your employees as they navigate caring for their aging parents. MOW Diablo Region can send brochures and literature to distribute to employees or we can make presentations over Zoom or at an in-person staff meeting, lunch and learns, and benefits fairs.

If you are an employer or HR professional and would like to receive information or schedule an in-person or Zoom presentation, contact Sherry Nadworny, [snadworny@mowdr.org](mailto:snadworny@mowdr.org), 925-239-2487.



## AN EXTRA DAY TO make a difference

For many seniors, the extra day this Leap Year was another day without enough food to eat. But for Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, it was one additional day in our Feed the Soul campaign where we raise \$1,000 every day in February to support the Breakfast Bag Program. Leap Year allowed us to increase our goal to \$29,000 giving donors an extra day to make a difference in a vulnerable elder's life!

The Feed the Soul Campaign's success was made possible thanks to the support of Chevron Corporation, NBC Bay Area, and Telemundo 48. "Feed the Soul began when we started the Breakfast Bag Program," explains Sherry Nadworny, Director of Development and Community Relations. "Our sponsors were with us from the beginning and continue to demonstrate their commitment to helping nourish hungry seniors."

The elders we serve often divided the meal we deliver to have food for lunch, dinner, and to take with medications. The Breakfast Bag Program delivers a week's worth of fresh fruit, yogurt, cereal, oatmeal, string cheese, hard boiled

eggs, snackable vegetables, sandwiches, and salad. "Adding breakfast to the senior's daily meals makes the difference between hunger and good health," says Nadworny. "Our donors and sponsors help make a difference in the lives of older adults thanks to their support of Feed the Soul."



## CULTURAL CUISINE PROGRAM expands

Meals on Wheels Diablo Region began the Cultural Cuisine pilot program in Concord last year. Funded by the City of Concord, the Program allows Concord seniors to choose Latin-American inspired home delivered meals if they wish. The Program is so popular it has now expanded to Antioch, Bay Point, Pittsburg, and Pleasant Hill.

The Program began serving a few dozen people and has grown to currently serve 125 seniors. With the expansion beyond its Concord roots, MOW Diablo Region's Director of Programs, Poonam Khiyara, believes many more people will be interested in this option. "We have a diverse population of clients, and the foods that are appealing to some people's

palates are not appealing to others. With the Cultural Cuisine Program, we ensure that the people we serve remain nourished with the foods they prefer to eat."

Cultural Cuisine meals, like all of MOW Diablo Region's services, are provided free of charge. We hope to secure additional funding that will allow us to expand to even more communities.





**MEALS ON WHEELS**  
**DIABLO REGION**

1300 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

## WE NEED volunteers!

We are always in need of volunteer for all our programs: Home Delivered Meals, Cafés, Friendly Visitors, Callers & Helpers, and Fall Prevention!

If you are interested in volunteering, please apply online at [mowdiablregion.org/get-involved](https://mowdiablregion.org/get-involved) or contact our Volunteer Recruitment Specialist at [volunteer@mowdr.org](mailto:volunteer@mowdr.org).

