



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Leaves are starting to fall from the trees, days are getting shorter and the weather is changing. For some, autumn is a time of endings, but at Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, we look at this as a time of continued growth and tremendous possibilities.

As our population ages, the demand for home delivered meals and supportive services continues to grow. We believe no senior should go hungry or be isolated, experience abuse, or be at risk of falling. That's why we continue to expand our outreach with additional services delivering more than a meal!

In this edition of Special Delivery, you'll meet a veteran whose life has been made safer thanks to a grant from the Home Depot Foundation and Meals on Wheels America. You'll learn how we are expanding our Cultural Cuisine and Breakfast Bag Programs to Concord with the support of the City's ARPA funding. We will also talk about the generous matching grant from the John Muir Community Health Fund, which will allow us to expand our Outreach Initiative Countywide.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Special Delivery. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. The support of community members like you allows us to deliver meals and provide services free of charge to our older neighbors.

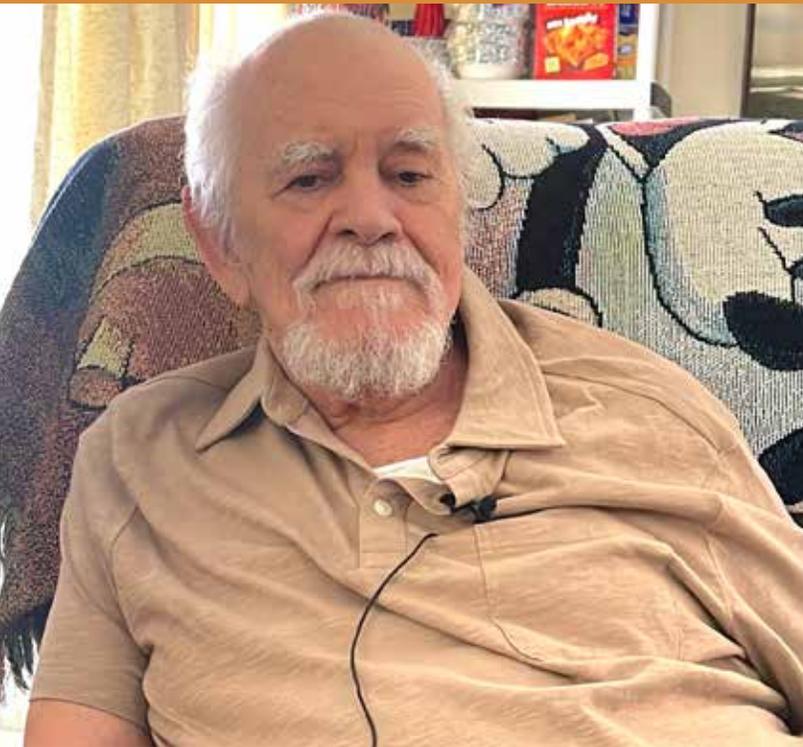


Special
DELIVERY
NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023



Caitlin Sly
Caitlin Sly
Executive Director



HE SERVED WITH **honor**

Tony has seen a lot in his 82 years, especially in the five years he served in the Air Force in the Philippines, Taiwan, and Thailand. But today, Tony's vision has seriously declined, making it more difficult to cook and navigate around the house. Luckily, a compassionate social worker referred him to Meals on Wheels Diablo Region.

Every Thursday, we deliver Tony a week's worth of meals, which gives him tremendous peace of mind. "I can depend on MOW Diablo Region," says Tony. "When they say they're going to deliver Thursdays before 10 AM, they mean it."

Also, thanks to the Helping Homebound Heroes grant from the Home Depot Foundation and Meals on Wheels America, Tony was connected to MOW Diablo Region's Fall Prevention Program. An Occupational Therapist visited Tony, conducted a home assessment, and recommended some home safety modifications that allow him to move around his house without the fear of falling.

He is proud to have served his country and he feels lucky that Meals on Wheels Diablo Region is there to serve veterans like him. "I hope that more people, especially veterans like me, realize what Meals on Wheels Diablo Region actually does," explains Tony. "It's more than just a meal, they help people live a longer life more comfortably!"

A SUCCESSFUL START TO

meet the match

We are extremely close to meeting a \$20,000 match from the John Muir Community Health Fund to expand our East Contra Costa Senior Resource Initiative Countywide. We kicked off the match in May and are halfway to meeting our goal. We have until December 31st to raise the remaining amount.

In 2021, MOW Diablo Region joined Choice in Aging, Empowered Aging, and Contra Costa Senior Legal Services to create the initiative with support from the John Muir Community Health Fund. The effort is led by Lidia Gutierrez, who works to increase connections and awareness of social services among seniors in East Contra Costa County who face barriers to accessing services. Our success in East County showed us this project needs to expand to West and Central County as well.

The sooner we raise the \$20,000, the sooner we can start providing this important resource to more seniors throughout the County. As our client Francesca says: "Without Lidia's support I'd be lost and struggling without any type of income for the rest of my life. I had no idea SSI and CalFresh existed. She also helped me fill out applications and came to Social Security to ensure I understood the process."

Help us meet the match by writing "match" on the enclosed envelope or going to <https://donate.mowdr.org/match>.



THE CITY OF CONCORD SUPPORTS seniors

For too many seniors, one meal isn't enough to prevent them from going hungry. Now, more food insecure elders in Concord will be able to take part in Meals on Wheels Diablo Region's Breakfast Bag Program thanks to support from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), provided by the City of Concord.

MOW Diablo Region recognized that some seniors were splitting their meals to have enough for lunch, dinner, and at night to take with medications. We began the Breakfast Bag Program. It delivers healthy meals, preventing seniors from being hungry, experiencing anxiety over not having enough food, and allows them to feel healthier. Breakfast Bags include fresh fruit, yogurt, hardboiled eggs, string cheese, oatmeal, salads, sandwiches, and snackable vegetables.

This funding will also allow MOW Diablo Region to expand the reach of our Cultural Cuisine Program, which offers Latin-American inspired meals. "The seniors we serve like to have choices that meet their nutritional and cultural needs, and the Cultural Cuisine Program gives them that option," says

Caitlin Sly, Executive Director. "This support from the City of Concord allows us to ensure more Concord seniors receive the food they need and the types of food they prefer to eat. We are very grateful for this generous support."

MOW Diablo Region also appreciates the ARPA funds received from the City of Oakley and the Town of Danville that expanded service last year to older adults throughout our community.



NEW FACES JOIN THE LEADERSHIP team



We are excited to introduce some new members of Meals on Wheels Diablo Region's Leadership Team. The organization welcomes Tammi Patrick as Nutrition Services Manager replacing Poonam Khiyara who was promoted to Director of Programs. Patrick comes to MOW Diablo Region having worked with seniors in her role at the Concord Senior Center. She also has an extensive background in management and logistics working for many years with the U.S. Postal Service.

Tuyet Iaconis was promoted to Health and Wellness Division Manager after the retirement of Cynthia Black. Iaconis joined



MOW Diablo Region in 2019 as a Friendly Visitor Associate and was promoted in 2022 to Assistant Division Manager for Health and Wellness. Iaconis has experience working in managing and designing health programs and studies for international organizations.

Peter Dy has joined the team as the Director of Finance. Peter has worked as a controller and auditor in both manufacturing and distribution in the Bay Area and Asia. His experience working with companies who have strong social responsibility will contribute to improving the lives of elders in our community.





MEALS ON WHEELS
DIABLO REGION

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HOW TO CREATE A LASTING legacy

Your legacy can support Meals on Wheels Diablo Region and the elders we serve for years to come. Our supporters recognize the important work we do to keep seniors nourished, safe, and socially connected, so they have included a gift to MOW Diablo Region in their estate plans to ensure they make a lasting impact. In order for you to touch the lives of those in need for years to come, we invite you to use FreeWill: an online estate planning tool that makes it 100% free to write your will, and if you choose, to designate Meals on Wheels Diablo Region as a beneficiary of your estate. Create your lasting impact now by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/aevsumur>.



Caitlin Sly, MOW Diablo Region Executive Director, recently made her will through the FreeWill online tool.