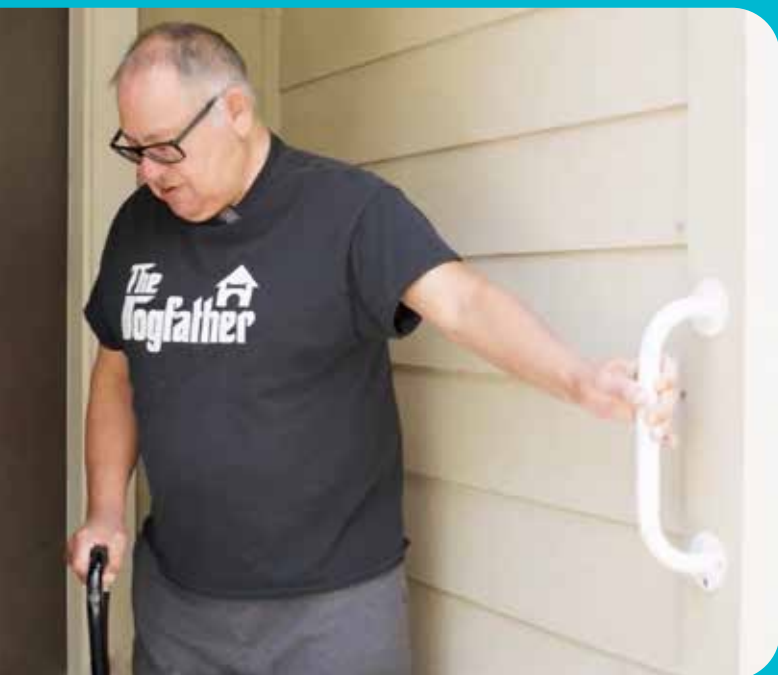


ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



MORE THAN A MEAL



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAVID LINNELL



My first day at Meals on Wheels Diablo Region was July 1, 2024, which is the beginning of a new fiscal year for the organization. The accomplishments that you will read about in this Annual Report were achieved thanks to the leadership of my predecessor, Caitlin Sly, who remains a great resource to me.

Our success over the past year was also attained because of the direction of a dedicated Board of Directors and the commitment and passion of a staff and volunteers who go beyond expectations to ensure that our clients get the meals and services they need and our mission is fulfilled. We also couldn't do our important work of providing free meals and services without our donors. Every dollar you donate truly has an impact on the lives of so many seniors. Elders in our community who depend on MOW Diablo Region didn't go hungry, were less isolated, safe and independent in their homes because of your generosity.

Over the past year, we have continued to see the demand for all of our services grow as the senior population increases, especially here in Contra Costa County. Unfortunately, rising costs and more competitive revenue streams have made our work more challenging, but if there is one thing I have learned in my short tenure, is that no matter the challenge, this well-respected organization persists!

I am proud to present this Annual Report to you and to join you in your commitment to this incredible organization!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Home Delivered Meals

Home Delivered Meals, the flagship program of MOW Diablo Region, continues to provide a lifeline to our aging neighbors. This past year, the organization delivered close to 800,000 meals, an increase of 100,000 from the previous year.

Eligibility for the program is based not on income but on factors that truly define food insecurity. Free meals are offered to seniors aged 60 or over who don't drive, have no permanent caretaker, and have difficulty preparing a meal or obtaining food.

"Food insecurity is misunderstood," says Fern Fonseca, MOW Diablo Region's Nutrition Manager. "If you can't drive to the supermarket, or have difficulty cooking, you are food insecure. With the rising cost of food and an aging population, more and more seniors in our county are becoming food insecure."

While MOW Diablo Region has been able to keep up with the increased demand, we anticipate real challenges in the coming year. Covid stimulus funding has ended, and throughout the United States nonprofits report a decrease in donations. "We are relying on our generous supporters who understand that it's important to ensure that seniors, who built our communities, remain fed and able to live independently with dignity," says Fonseca.



Breakfast Bags

The Breakfast Bag Program continues to respond to greater demand as seniors are impacted by the high cost of food and find it more difficult to supplement the meals provided by MOW Diablo Region. Now in its fifth year, the program has had a profound impact on the health and well-being of seniors faced with food insecurity. Last year, over 115,000 breakfast bags were delivered to 742 seniors. Due to a potential impact in funding, the organization hopes to be able to keep up with the growing need in the coming year. For breakfast bag clients like Jeannine, the program is a lifeline. "After my surgery I couldn't cook and I'm alone for the first time in my life," says Jeannine. "The breakfast bags are filled with fresh healthy food, and they keep me fed."



Cultural Cuisine

In its second year, the Cultural Cuisine Program has proven that there is a desire and need to provide food that is culturally relevant to seniors. Starting as a pilot program in Concord, the program this year has now expanded to Bay Point, Pleasant Hill, Antioch, and Pittsburg.

Ethel and Fred were one of the first clients on the program. They are both in their late 80's and connected through online dating. They shared a love of dancing, music, and good food, but recently, they've slowed down a bit because of health issues and needed meals. The Cultural Cuisine Program satisfied their palates, while ensuring that they were well-fed. "We are grateful for the Cultural Cuisine meals and the compassionate volunteers. It's part of the love that always surrounded us," says Ethel.

This past year, the program delivered 37,160 meals to 285 clients.

Cafés

Since our Cafés reopened after Covid, they have experienced a steady increase in attendance. Last year, the Cafés served 38,600 meals to 962 seniors, a 17 percent increase from the previous year.

Meals on Wheels Diablo Region hosts Cafés in seven communities across the county. The opportunity to enjoy a nourishing meal and social connection is an important component to keeping seniors active and engaged. Participants gather for holiday-themed parties, speakers, games and birthday celebrations. Additionally, our Cafés offer a cool respite in summer, since many seniors either don't have air conditioning or can't afford to run it.

"There's good food and good people," says Café client Robert W. "It's a luxury for us seniors. I wish more folks knew about this program because there are a lot of older people who are lonely or hungry when they don't need to be."



Health & Wellness

MOW Diablo Region's Health and Wellness Department, through a grant from CalFresh Healthy Living, promotes health and wellness through a variety of exercise and education classes. The program empowers participants by providing knowledge and skills to make healthier lifestyle choices, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes and independent living.

Kaffy attends the Walk with Ease class in Concord, and she says it has made a difference in her life. "It's nutritionally informative and keeps me motivated to move on a daily basis. I appreciate the dedicated instructors from MOW Diablo Region."

We prioritize equity and inclusion, ensuring that all physical activity and nutrition programs are accessible to every older adult in the community. Last year, 12,105 seniors participated in one or more of our 1,042 Health and Wellness classes held across the county.



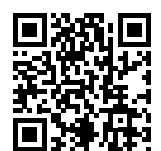
Friendly Visitors, Callers, and Helpers

Loneliness has a direct impact on health. Studies have found that the negative effect of isolation on seniors is equivalent to smoking 17 cigarettes a day. That's why MOW Diablo Region strives to counter isolation with its Friendly Visitor, Friendly Helper, and Friendly Caller program. This past year the program conducted 5,887 hours of visits, 2,957 calls and completed 564 errands.

As the population continues to age, more and more people are becoming homebound and alone, having outlived their spouses, siblings, friends, and sometimes even their children. A visit, a call, or help with an errand is meaningful to our clients and our volunteers, who are matched based on similar interests.

Shadi Agoughi, a member of Meals on Wheels Diablo Region's Finance team, became a Friendly Visitor to two Farsi-speaking clients. "When I immigrated from Iran, it was exciting, but it could be lonely, too," says Shadi. "It helps to be able to talk to someone in your own language."

For more information about our programs and how you can help MOW Diablo Region, visit our website at mowdiablregion.org or scan the QR code.



Grocery Bags

The term food insecurity, once hardly spoken, became part of people's vocabulary during the Covid crisis as we watched cars in line at food banks. But what people didn't see were the "hidden hungry" – seniors who are homebound and were unable to get to a food bank.

To help those very vulnerable seniors, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region partnered with the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano to reduce hunger among seniors in the Diablo Region by creating The Grocery Bag Program. Twice a month, this pilot program delivered healthy groceries and fresh produce to homebound seniors who can cook simple meals but are unable to travel to the Food Bank. "We soon realized that this was a program that was needed after people stopped sheltering in place," says Poonam Khiyara, Director of Programs. "There were seniors who had been battling food insecurity before the pandemic, and many more after because they couldn't afford groceries and couldn't get to the Food Bank."

When the Grocery Bag Program first started it delivered 48 grocery bags twice a month to 12 clients in 4 cities. This fiscal year, 5,696 bags were delivered to 204 clients in 20 cities.

Fall Prevention

The demand for Fall Prevention increased alongside a population that continued to age and become frailer. Because funding for these needed services did not keep pace, MOW Diablo Region appreciates the support it received from individual donors, the John Muir Health Foundation, and the Home Depot Foundation.

Our client Samuel faced significant health challenges, including spinal surgery and a blood cancer diagnosis that made it difficult for him to safely navigate his home. Thanks to the Home Depot Foundation Helping Homebound Heroes grant, MOW Diablo Region was able to provide Samuel, a veteran, with essential safety modifications, including grab bars, ramps, and a shower chair.

This year, MOW Diablo Region provided 1,162 home modifications to 288 seniors. Additionally, we conducted Fall Prevention awareness presentations and evidence-based exercise classes for 401 participants, in which we promoted good balance and strength, key elements to preventing falls.



Care Management/Outreach

The Care Management/Outreach Team expanded its services to begin working with clients in West Contra Costa County. "We knew there was a need countywide, and we also knew Meals on Wheels Diablo Region could meet that need," says Lidia Guterrez, Care Management and Outreach Manager. The team is now helping even more clients find resources and solutions to enable them to remain independent with dignity.

This past year, the program helped 712 people find services that improved their lives. Our Elder Abuse Prevention Specialist worked with 263 seniors who were experiencing physical, verbal or financial abuse, including scamming. Additionally, thanks to a successful doorbell drive, the team collected hundreds of donated doorbells to distribute to clients. Many seniors were missing their meal delivery because they couldn't hear or didn't have a working doorbell. "Sometimes the solution to preventing hunger is as simple as installing a doorbell that can be heard from anywhere in the home," says Gutierrez. "Other times the solution is much more complicated. But now seniors can be assured that we are there for them, no matter where they live in the county."

2024 AT A GLANCE



5,696

Grocery Bags Delivered



755,487

Meals Delivered



204

Elder Abuse Interventions



5,887

Friendly Visits



2,957

Friendly Calls



564

Friendly Helpers



1,162

Homes Modified

FINANCIALS



63%
Government

\$6,518,238
Total Operating Revenue

21%
Individuals



10%
Foundations
+ Corporations



6%
Events
& Other



\$6,518,238
Revenue

\$6,247,581
Expenses

\$270,657
Increase in Net Assets

97¢

of every dollar goes
to providing services

OUR MISSION

WE ENHANCE
the lives of older adults by
**DELIVERING
HEALTHY MEALS**
and providing an array of
**SUPPORTIVE
SERVICES**
that empower seniors to live
**INDEPENDENTLY,
SAFELY, AND
WITH DIGNITY.**



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We'd like to thank our foundations and corporations for their generous support!

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YEH Family Fund



MEALS on WHEELS
DIABLO REGION

1300 Civic Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

ANOTHER GREAT EVENING



We held our 3rd Annual Dining to Deliver Gala and Auction on June 8th at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville. Each year, this event grows in popularity and in the amount of funds we raise to help us deliver meals and services to our homebound seniors.

The evening's success was made possible thanks to our 310 guests, a community of 200 small businesses and individuals who donated silent and live auction items, and our generous sponsors. As our Diamond Sponsor for the third year in a row, the Martinez Refining Company (MRC) continued to show its commitment to ending the food insecurity and isolation that impacts too many of our older neighbors.

"The Martinez Refining Company believes in the vital work of MOW Diablo Region," says Ann Notarangelo, MRC's Community Relations Manager. "We're dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable community members, and we're proud to partner with MOW Diablo Region to help address the particular needs of our aging population."

The 4th Annual Dining to Deliver Gala will return to the Blackhawk Museum on June 14, 2025. Please contact snadworny@mowdr.org or visit our website at mowdiableregion.org/upcoming-events if you would like to sponsor the event, donate an auction item, or purchase tickets.

