

On the Move

Providing meals to the homebound in the State College area since 1971



Fall 2012 Newsletter

www.scmow.org

Meals on Wheels Annual Fund Drive



After more than a decade of involvement with Meals on Wheels, I continue to be amazed at the strong and rock steady support for this important service. How do we survive on private donations and fundraising alone? The answer is with the loyal and generous support of individuals and organizations across the Centre Region and beyond.

Observing the delivery of meals on a route is always an eye-opener and has a way of bringing clarity to the reason we strive so hard to sustain MOW and its mission. Our clients are our fathers, mothers, teachers, and veterans—neighbors who now need a little extra help to maintain their independence and quality of life. Please consider a donation again this year—every donation stays locally to help make a difference in the life of our seniors.

A donation to MOW is fully tax deductible and there are several ways to give. You may return the enclosed card with your check or credit card information. Or you could donate directly on our web site at www.scmow.org. Just click the tab labeled “Donate Today.” Donating online also gives you the option of donating a specified amount on a monthly, quarterly, or semiannual basis. Please call me (360-6571) at any time if you need assistance or have any questions.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity!

Bill

Bill Haner
President, Board of Directors

The Winds of Change

We all know the potentially damaging effects of strong wind as seen recently in the powerful storms endured by the northeastern U.S. Similarly, change for an organization can be disruptive, disorienting, or even damaging if not controlled and embraced. On the other hand, the absence of constructive change can make an organization inefficient, stale, and eventually irrelevant.

There has been no lack of change at State College Meals on Wheels the past several years. Many aspects of the organization bear little resemblance to its 1970's roots. Of course, the mission remains the same, but rapidly advancing technology, increasing client workload, a stubbornly challeng-

ing economy, and aging plant and equipment have all demanded certain changes.

Recurring deficits in the early 2000's threatened the long-term survival of MOW.

Something had to be done to increase revenue. The old fundraiser known as “Savories & Sweets,” although well-loved, did not raise much money, especially when compared to the effort required to stage it. In 2005, the board of directors decided to establish a fundraising dinner that would hopefully plug the financial gap. The event, dubbed “A Meal that Matters,” was an instant success and garnered strong support from the community. (continued on page 2)



One of approximately 45,000 meals delivered annually

The Winds of Change (continued from page 1)

At our most recent dinner in May 2012, more than \$50,000 was raised from sponsorships, ticket sales, and extensive and exciting live and silent auctions. Today, this event is easily our most important fundraiser and a popular annual community event.

About five years ago it became apparent that MOW needed an effective web site to provide visibility, information, an online

enlisting the expertise of Hallstrom Construction, a renovation plan was developed. The plan incorporated state-of-the-art food service equipment and upgrades to lighting, HVAC, and fire suppression. After 18 months of planning and design, the project was accomplished in the summer and early fall of 2011, about the same time the larger GLC expansion project was completed. The results were stunning and were celebrated in an October 2011 ceremony honoring MOW's 40th anniversary in State College. A modern and efficient commercial kitchen is now at our disposal and will serve MOW for many years to come.

Our latest project involves the upgrade of our meal scheduling and client management software. The old system was outdated and not at all user friendly. After a brief search, the web-based and widely used SERVtracker solution was acquired. Since SERVtracker is web-based, it can be accessed from anywhere you have an internet connection. It also allows up to three users to work in the application at the same time, so a new client can be entered while meals are scheduled or account information is entered. The application also produces meal labels and route sheets. This is a vast improvement over our old system and is saving our staff many hours per week. SERVtracker has given us a comprehensive tool to manage our operation and promises to meet MOW's needs well into the future.

In 2011, MOW lost both of its long time cooks.

Recruiting new permanent staff was a task that had not been undertaken recently, but was one that demanded immediate action. Temporary cooks were brought in as a stopgap for several months. A patient and thorough search eventually paid off with the hiring of two outstanding new employees: Dale Thomas and Jeannie Peters. Their expertise and energy are a huge asset for MOW and we look forward to them being a part of our family for a long, long time.

From fundraising to facilities to software to personnel, Meals on Wheels has embraced the winds of change to efficiently provide the best possible service to our clients.



State College Mayor Elizabeth Goreham (right) greets a client

donation option, and to allow clients and volunteers to submit applications electronically. With the able assistance of Affinity Connection and their web specialists, iModules, an attractive and functional website was developed. The website went live in November 2009 and has been serving MOW with a distinctive online presence ever since.

In 2008, our client workload was approaching the capacity of our kitchen in Grace Lutheran Church (GLC). The equipment in the kitchen was 45 years old, and by any measure, was obsolete. A major renovation was in order. In partnership with GLC, and

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Notice of Registration: A copy of the official registration and financial information for State College Meals on Wheels may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania: 1-800-737-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Questions or comments about the newsletter may be directed to Newsletter Editor Janet Haner at jhaner@comcast.net.

OUR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

For the past several years, the children of the fifth grades of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School have selected State College Meals on Wheels (MOW) to be the agency for their special efforts during their “helping hands day” program.

Prior to the day’s activities, Executive Director Anna Carol Buffington spoke to the students about the work of MOW. The children are always interested in learning about the organization. This year, they watched a video of a former client, Tom, who talks about the MOW services, saying, “I can eat this meal. It is easy to chew and swallow. I have my own place, I built it, I be happy!” During the video, Tom’s small dog Clara continually barks at the delivery volunteers. The children were concerned when they learned that Tom passed away just a few days after the video was filmed. They asked, “What happened to the dog?” because they wanted to make sure that the dog has a good home.

What can children so young do for Meals on Wheels? First, they decided that they would include MOW clients in their prayers at the beginning of every school day. They also took on a special project, to create greeting cards to send to the clients to brighten their days.



Our Lady of Victory fifth graders sign the pledge tablecloth

After the talk about MOW, the children took turns signing the MOW tablecloth as their pledge to help fight senior hunger in our community.

This annual project is always a success—the children become aware of the needs of the elderly in our community and bring cheer to the clients in the form of handmade cards. These future volunteers may be the ones to deliver meals to you and me some day. MOW will be in good hands!

Volunteering—A Gift to Others and to Yourself

State College Meals on Wheels has served over one million meals since it was founded in 1971. Now, Meals on Wheels needs your help as we work on our second million meals. Volunteer drivers and meal runners are especially in demand. All you need is a vehicle, a valid driver’s license, and a willingness to commit a few hours a week to a great cause. Reimbursement for vehicle mileage is available.

Volunteering with Meals on Wheels is a meaningful way to give back to the community. You will be amazed at how a simple meal can lift the spirits and improve the life of the people on your route. And making a real difference in the lives of others can be a satisfying feeling—a gift to yourself.

To sign up or to get more information, go to the Volunteer tab on our Web site at www.scmow.org or call the MOW office at 235-8135.

Save the Date
Thursday, May 16, 2013



this year's speaker

**Penn State Football Coach
 Bill O'Brien**

call 814-360-6571 to reserve tickets



Photo courtesy of Chuck Fong, Studio 2 Photography

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Photo courtesy of Chuck Fong, Studio 2 Photography

Last year's dinner was a wonderful occasion!

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