Support Senior Suppers through Meals on Wheels

Food delivered fresh to your door isn’t always from a pizza place. For several hundred seniors, Meals on Wheels serves as their “personal chef.” Meals on Wheels serves seniors and people with disabilities. Why people choose Meals on Wheels varies. Many seniors like the convenience of having someone else decide the meal and do the cooking. Some seniors are recovering from illness or injury and appreciate having temporary help with meals. A few have issues with eyesight or infirmities that make cooking difficult.

For others on a limited income, Meals on Wheels is their lifeline, their only resource for a healthy, nutritious meal. Without subsidies from the Meals on Wheels program, these seniors are forced to choose between meals and other necessities like medications or heat. Food often loses, resulting in hunger and health issues.

“This is sad because a healthy meal every day may be all that’s needed to keep someone at home rather than in an expensive nursing home,” says Linda Lane, chief operating officer at Independent Living, Inc. Recent research from Brown University showed that access to home-based meals kept low-care seniors out of nursing homes.

To help local seniors, ILI is participating in the national March for Meals campaign. The campaign raises awareness about senior hunger, and encourages donations to support local seniors. Independent Living, Inc. is hosting a three-day “Support Senior Suppers” fundraising event in partnership with Pierce’s Market on Sherman Ave. March 27-29, patrons may donate $3, $5 or $7 at the checkout line, with all proceeds benefiting ILI Meals on Wheels.

In 2012, Independent Living, Inc. produced 38,850 healthy meals delivered in Dane County by 265 dedicated volunteers. All meals are chef-prepared fresh daily from a menu reviewed by a registered dietitian.

HOLIDAY “TRIP”Turns Physician into Patient Patient

The holidays of December are meant to be festive, not frustrating.

Yet that’s exactly what faced Dr. Kal Kunin and his wife, Bobbie Kunin. Early in December 2011, the retired ob/gyn physician tripped, heard a pop, and knew immediately that he’d torn his Achilles tendon. All he could do was hobble.

And hobble. And hobble.

The pro-active couple pursued intervention, which resulted in a recuperative stay at a local nursing facility where Kal made progress. But he knew it would come to a stop.

It was December 24. Logically, “nothing happens during the holidays,” Bobbie says. “There would be no physical therapy, so what would be the point of staying there?” Intrepid and determined,
Our Mission
Our mission is to support adults as they manage their independence by providing a variety of care services, skilled home health care and housing options to maintain health and well being.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2013

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LETTER FROM RITA

Dear Friends,

While many might acknowledge that these are uncertain times, there are certainties. We have an aging population growing in numbers. The Social Security Administration reports that by 2033 there will be almost twice as many older Americans as today, from 43.4 million today to 75.7 million. Housing and in-home services will matter more than ever. That is why programs like our evening Meals on Wheels are important. We serve seniors who want and need nutritious meals. Independent Living, Inc. has offered meals since our founding in 1973. In 2010, our Meals on Wheels program was the first in Wisconsin to earn the highest accreditation possible from the national Meals on Wheels Association of America. Our program also relies on your support to help seniors in need. Although we are a nonprofit organization, there is no federal funding for our Meals on Wheels program.

You can make a difference. One of the ways to do this is by volunteering with us to make sure our meals reach all who need this program. For seniors on a limited income, your financial support helps them receive a healthy, balanced meal. Please contribute to the well-being of seniors in our community. Donations may be sent to us in the enclosed envelope. Or go online to make a secure donation at www.independentlivinginc.org/support-our-work.html.

Thank you for your support.

Rita Giovannoni, CEO

SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY HAS NEW DIRECTOR

Jesi Hirsch, RN, joins our team as Resident Services Director at The Gardens Independent Living and Segoe Gardens, a senior housing community on Madison's near west side.

A registered nurse for 20 years, Jesi has previously worked at Meriter Hospital in Madison, Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Ga., and Independent Health Care, the home health agency at Independent Living, Inc. She served as director of health screenings and immunizations at Atlanta Health Systems, and as a home health case manager in Portland, Ore. Jesi also is a trained patient advocate and life coach, and has a wellness consulting business. She is a graduate of the RN Patient Advocates Program at the University of Arizona.

The Gardens is an independent senior housing center for adults age 62 and better; Segoe Gardens is an assisted living community. Both properties are owned and managed by Independent Living, Inc., a nonprofit organization celebrating 40 years of serving adults in Dane County.

Welcome, Jesi!
MEALS ON WHEELS MATTERS TO SANDRA

“Every aspect of this program is phenomenal,” Sandra, a client, says. Alone and living in an apartment, she says the program “is a lifesaver for me.” “It’s very difficult for me to get out and shop for groceries,” she says. Coping with several disabilities, Sandra loves the support she receives as a client of Meals on Wheels. “The menu, the food, and the staff, it’s all wonderful,” she says. “The variety and flavor are excellent. I’m never bored with the meals and have plenty to eat. Everyone is so kind, and the volunteers are great, with a good, friendly hello! It doesn’t matter if there is rain, snow, sleet. There is always a warm meal for me.”

Our Programs

We help you or someone you know remain independent at home. Thank you, Dane County community, for trusting your care to us for 40 years. We look forward to caring for you for years to come.

Call for information today 608-274-7900

Supportive Services

Caregiver Respite
Evening Meals on Wheels
Financial Management and Counseling
Home Care
Home Chore
Home Safety Modification
Home Share
Medication Management
Independent Health Care, Inc. (Medicare-certified home health care agency)

Services from Volunteers:

Telephone Reassurance
Friendly Visiting
Kibble on Wheels
Chore Corps
Health Advocate

Senior Living

The Gardens, Madison
Segoe Gardens, Madison
McKee Park Apartments, Fitchburg
Olympic Village, Sun Prairie

Your local connection to an independent life since 1973

Thank you to our generous sponsors of Meals on Wheels. Your contribution matters to the seniors and adults who come to Independent Living, Inc. for support!

Wegner CPAs
WPS Health Insurance
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MEALS ON WHEELS RECIPIENT GRATEFUL FOR DONATIONS

“I remember the day I saw the first of many Meals on Wheels volunteers. It was purely by chance. The volunteer was in my apartment building speaking with a Meals recipient, and I was curious to learn about the program. I have been receiving Meals daily since then and am very grateful,” says 83-year-old Don, who receives financial assistance with meals.

Don was born and raised in central Madison during the Great Depression. His mother became a single parent when Don was just 9 after his father passed away. When old enough, he started working to help his mother and brother. Don eventually had a sales career that kept him active in the community for many years. He was in a band that played at the governor’s mansion and at countless weddings and events.

For Don, the evening Meals on Wheels program has made a difference in his life. He speaks highly of Independent Living, Inc. and Michelle Christenson, Meals on Wheels program manager, with her ability in maintaining “the wonderful volunteer staff, their reliability, the menu the program provides, and mostly, peace of mind” that he does not have to worry about his next meal.

MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS

Venera Gashi and her husband, Ahmet, began volunteering in 2012 with Meals on Wheels. Venera started right after the New Year’s holiday. She enjoyed the experience so much that by April, she convinced her husband to join her in a weekly delivery. They average four hours a week volunteering. Together, in 2012, they donated 276 hours to the evening Meals on Wheels program.

Venera and Ahmet have three children. Ahmet has a degree in computer science and is a network administrator at Automation Components Inc. He also works for UW Health-IT department. President of the Albanian-American Community Committee for Madison, Ahmet speaks English, Albanian, Serbian and Turkish. Venera is a teacher’s assistant at Dane County Parent Council. She, too, speaks English and Albanian.

Originally from Kosovo, the Gashis moved to the United States as refugees from war. They moved to Madison with help from the U.S. government and others in this community.

“This community helped us when we first arrived here, and we feel the need to give back to this community, to try to help,” Venera says with appreciation.

Thank you, Venera and Ahmet, for your dedication to the evening Meals on Wheels program and Independent Living, Inc.!
THANK YOU, JANICE AND HUMANA!

Janice Fjellman had a great surprise not long ago when her employer, Humana, honored her good deeds as a Meals on Wheels volunteer. Janice, a consultant at their Middleton office, was selected as the quarterly winner of their Dollars 4 Doers drawing that recognizes associates who volunteer four or more hours per month in a quarter.

The Humana recognition includes a grant to the charitable organization where the employee volunteers. Janice was able to designate the Humana Foundation grant to the Meals on Wheels program at Independent Living, Inc. in the amount of $4000.

“I’m so thrilled that Humana does this, and that Independent Living got to benefit,” Janice says.

Michelle Christenson, Meals on Wheels program manager, is normally never at a loss for words. This time she admits she was caught off guard. “We’re just stunned and grateful. Thank you to both!” she says.

KIBBLE ON WHEELS FEEDS BELOVED PETS

Companion animals matter to older and disabled adults. These furry, finned or feathered friends offer proven health benefits with lower blood pressures, reduced stress and a calming presence. More importantly, animals offer a sense of well-being and security.

So it really wasn’t too surprising when Meals on Wheels Association of America released research about older adults, on limited incomes, sharing meals with companion animals to the detriment of both the owner and the pet’s health.

That’s why Independent Living, Inc. launched Kibble on Wheels in 2006. A companion program to the Meals on Wheels program, Kibble relies on donations and volunteers to deliver free pet food and supplies to clients on limited incomes.

Among the Kibble volunteers are several WPS Health Insurance employees who have gone beyond just making monthly pet food deliveries. Victoria, who also delivers evening meals once per week, worked with Volunteer Manager Deb Borcherding and several WPS marketing staff in a collaborative effort, creating an on-site collection program. WPS employees can contribute needed items such as cat litter, canned food and treats. Victoria coordinates the monthly delivery which helps to stock the Kibble closet.

Another WPS employee, Linda, with four friends/co-workers, not only have their own furry clients with monthly deliveries, they also help clients manage their pet care. Gianna helped Betty, who at age 91 no longer drives, transport her dog Sadie to the vet for a check-up and vaccinations. Another volunteer, Patti, took Sadie to the kennel while Betty went out of state to see her daughter. Deb notes that “Betty has repeatedly expressed how incredibly grateful she is for these small favors that Kibbles volunteers provide that ease her mind.”

For more information about the rewarding opportunities as a volunteer, or for information about the Kibble program, please contact Debbie at 268-9641.
NEW SENIOR COMMUNITY IN PROGRESS

Independent Living, Inc. is making progress on its plans to construct the Northside Prairie Senior Living Community on Tennyson Lane. A draft Certified Survey Map (CSM) showing boundary lines, among other information, was recently submitted to City Planning for review by the Plan Commission.

“If everything is in order, we hope the Commission will approve the survey map in March, and send it to the Common Council for final approval in April,” says CEO Rita Giovannoni.

Upon approval, detailed architectural renderings will be developed and then submitted to the Plan Commission early this summer for rezoning and a conditional use permit. The renderings will initially focus on how the buildings will be sited and sized on the land.

While the organization moves through the planning, zoning and permitting process, representatives recently met with two teachers, Susie Hobart and Kimberly Besmer, at Lake View Elementary School. The school is situated nearby on Tennyson Lane and Sherman Avenue. Discussions focused on possible intergenerational programs, ranging from residents reading with young students to planting an apple orchard as an outdoor laboratory experience for students and residents. Rita notes, “We are elated at becoming a member of this neighborhood, and look forward to developing a close relationship with staff and students at Lake View Elementary School.”

Fundraising to support the project is underway. For information about the campaign, contact Nicole Schultz, fund development director, at 274-7900.

HOLIDAY “TRIP” TURNS PHYSICIAN INTO PATIENT PATIENT (continued from page 1)

she contacted Independent Living, Inc., about arranging in-home services.

The response was immediate, Bobbie says. “It was Christmas Eve, and they made two trips that day to set up our home with what we needed. I thought it was really, really nice.” Through the Home Safety Modification program, grab bars were installed among other features. Through the Home Care program, supportive personal aides were arranged to assist with showering. And through the Independent Health Care agency, physical therapy visits were arranged.

“The physical therapist was a ray of sunshine,” Kal says. “Her personal and professional demeanor made it a pleasure to work with her. Considering that physical therapy can be quite challenging, it says something that the physical therapist was a visit I looked forward to.”

It took months to graduate from physical therapy. Kal wore a cast for six weeks, then a walking boot for a month, followed by a walker and then a cane. He and his wife understand patience, coming in part from their extensive work with patients. Kal practiced in Youngstown, Ohio, for 37 years, and taught aspiring college students, as well. He retired as associate professor emeritus from the medical school. Bobbie has a doctorate in counseling, a degree she earned later in life. She also practiced in Youngstown.

The pair met somewhat inadvertently during World War II. He was a Navy physician, stationed in Boston in 1943. Bobbie was attending college, and living at a private boarding house. Also living there was Kal’s first patient, a Marine wounded at Guadalcanal. The Marine and his wife were convinced Kal and Bobbie would make a nice pair, but had a hard time getting them together. After a couple of weeks “to take off,” the duo have been a couple ever since, even though separated for long periods during World War II.

Kal’s service included tending to wounded soldiers on the beaches of Normandy during the D-Day invasions.

“And of course I’ve always had a sweet spot for the Marine Corps,” Kal says with a grin, referring to the off-duty matchmaking efforts.

Three children and five grandchildren later, the Kunins decided to retire to Madison 24 years ago. This was followed by several years of exploring country and globe. Today, the Kunins enjoy an occasional foray to visit dear friends in Ohio and elsewhere. And a recent 92nd birthday for Kal brought family to Madison for a celebration. By this point, he had recovered enough from his holiday “trip” to enjoy the occasion.

“Independent Living was so accommodating, so helpful,” Bobbie says. “They were a real physical help and emotional help, at a time when we needed it.”
Thank you for being a volunteer with Independent Living, Inc.

With this issue of the newsletter, we recognize 234 volunteers who deliver meals for our Meals on Wheels program. Thank you so much for opening your hearts and your cars to support seniors! We appreciate what you do every day.

Volunteers are unique and important members of our team. You help us meet our mission of serving seniors and adults with disabilities. Your dedication and many hours of service matter to the seniors and adults with disabilities we serve together. Thank you!

EVENING MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS

Debra Amundson
James Amundson
Jacqueline Anderson
Austin Anderson *
Susan Anderson
Helene Androski
Cecile Ane
Jean-Michel Ane
Edward Argall
Jean Bae
Michael Baer
Benjamin Bailey
Helen Baldwin
Judy Balistreri
Jack Barker
Steve Bell
William Bender
Kathleen Benson
Colleen Berg
Nicole Biessman
Robert Billig
Lynn Bodi
Dana Boutelle
Jane Boutelle
Virginia Brenneis
Brooks Brenneis
Linda Breunig
Cindy Byczek
Cynthia Caithorn
Rick Chappell
Jon Chilson
Craig Clemons
Ralph Cohen
Starla Cook
Leslie Cox
Howard Cook
Linda Crubaugh
Mary Cullen
Kathleen Czeskleba
Joann Dary
Anne Daugherty-Leiter
Jerry Day
Rosanne Delfosse
David Dexter
Elizabeth Dressel
Sandy Drew
Suzanne Droste
Kathleen Drury Buyck
Diana DuPlixis
Tammy Earl
Cynthia English
Larry Epstein
Zach Epstein
Dorothy Ewing
Susan Ezalarab
Erin Fallon
John Feller
Peter Filandrinus
Jennifer Fjellman
Janis Fjellman
Eric Fleming
Dennis Frey
Alan Furnas
Sherry Gammeter
Danielle Gandt
Venera Gashi
Ahmet Gashi
Elizabeth Geiger
Susan Geiger
Patricia Geiger
Jeffrey Goldsby
Drew Goldsmith
Amy Gothard *
Larry Gray
Carolyn Green
Wayne Groff
Lea Groff
Maya Gurung
Veronica Guiski
Anna Hagens
Victoria Hahn
Heather Hampton
Vance Haney
Kathy Harberg Liebenow
Bruce Harville
Bonnie Havey
Jean Heinrichs
Karine Helmeid
Steve Henningfield
Sonja Henriksen
Courtney Henry
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Gary Hughes
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Alain Hung
Amy Jacobsen
Paige Janquart
Chris Jennelle
Hunter Jesberger
Autumn Jesberger
Leslie Johnson
Elaine Jourdan
Michael Kafka
Jill Kaiser
Stephen Kaiser
John Keating
Stephanie Kirker
Gregg Kissel
Jeanette Koenig
Therese Kolan
Mark Kolan
Jennifer Kolb
Nadine Konrath
Jill Kосkelin
Michael Krepfle
Naomi Kroencke
Steve Krogman
Robin Kurtz
Alexandra Larsen
Carolyn Laughter
Craig Lehnherr
Joanne Lehnherr
Lydia Lightfoot
Susan Little
Darlene Lobenstein
Jack Longt
Amy Lord
Amy Lowe
Paul Lund
Muriel Lund
Peter Luther
Michelle Markham
Sue Mautz
Connie McDonald
Kelsie McGinley
Chris McGuire
Jack McGuire
Erika Mckee
Marla McKinnon
Phillip McMahon
Jim McMillan
Dawn Meadowcroft
Steve Mellstrom
Lindsey Moffat
Maria Montello
Jason Moon
Len Mormino
Darrin Most
Lottie Most
Carmela Mulroe
Dakota Murphy
Denise Nettesheim
Rhonda Nichols
Elizabeth Nitschke
Robyn Noble
Dave Olig
Angela Owens
Bruce Peach
Heide Peickert
Marie Peppler
Ronald Phelps
Joseph Pichler
Deb Pienkowski
John Pinger
Dawn Pollard
Timothy Porter
Jason Potter
Ilba Prego
Betty Prosser
Mike Quall
Christine Quall
Erin Racca
Jim Raskob
Zach Rawson
Marilyn Rehman
Dale Redmond
Nancy Reimer
Robin Reisdorf
Kerrin Rhinesmith
Sid Richards
Pat Ring
Cathy Rotter
Joann Russell
Kathleen Ryan
Patrick Ryan
Chad Schaal
Isaac Schaefer
Kristine Schmitt
Michelle Schroeder
Kristy Schuster
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Frank Staniszweski
Noel Stanton
Kathy Stanton
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William Sterud
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Angela Troia
Melissa Tumbleson
Shelley Udell
Kimberly Upton
Claire Van Fossen
Cymbre Van Fossen
Brett Vlach
Michael Walker
Timothy Ward
Jacqueline Wealti
Holly Wegner
Rachel Wezeman
Donna Wilfong
Nancy Winter
Diane Wirkus
Tom Wolowik
Heather Wolowik
Amr Yassin
Anna Zeide
Jennifer Zuk

* also volunteers in other areas at ILI
THANK YOU!
Independent Living, Inc. is grateful to receive and recognize these special tribute gifts between October 16, 2012 and February 28, 2013.

Honoring:
Judith Alberti
Kathy Gehl

Staff member Pam L.
Carl & Myrtle Boedecker
Staff member Susan O.
Edward & Lorraine Hughes
Staff member Venessa Z
Ruth Schwenkert
The Gardens
Jeannene Mosley & Dorothy Hall

Family & Friends:
Anonymous
Remembering:
Cora Bailey
Karen Gunderson
Dan Fernbach
Donna O’Leary
Donald Butcher
Tom & Stacey Shorter
Dorothy Fisher
Darlene & Ross Willis

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Gary & Becky Thorsen
Stella Stone Berven & Bernard Mittelstaedt
Norman Berven & Barbara Mittelstaedt Berven

Celebrate a milestone, recognize someone special or remember a loved one with an honorary or memorial gift in their name to ILI. Your donation will commemorate your special occasion or cherished loved ones, and help us serve seniors and others in need.

Whether your gift comes by mail, phone or online, you will be acknowledged for your thoughtful donation. If requested, we will take special care to share your tribute with the person or family member you designate (without disclosing the dollar amount).

Thank you for your generosity by making a charitable contribution to Independent Living, Inc.