Evening Meals on Wheels is on a roll (pardon the pun)

Late afternoons, anywhere from 125 to 150 seniors in the greater Madison area open their doors to volunteers delivering a hot meal and warm smile.

Our long-time Evening Meals on Wheels program has capacity to serve even more, now that it’s rolled into new quarters at Tennyson Senior Living Community. The first-class commercial kitchen there was underwritten in part by a generous grant from the Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Foundation. Food Services Director and Head Chef Diane Lueck oversees preparation of mouth-watering meals for both Evening Meals on Wheels clients and residents of Tennyson and The Gardens Retirement Community.

Also making the move to Tennyson was the EMOW staff. They include a small, elite corps of paid drivers who help pack the meals into thermal totes and deliver those bags to seven distribution sites. Volunteers pick up the bags and cover 14 routes every day, Monday through Friday. If weekend meals are ordered, those are sent cold with Thursday or Friday hot meals.

The warm hearts of volunteers are the backbone of the program. They are a human lifeline for homebound seniors. Volunteers can tell when something is amiss and are trained to follow a protocol for help.
To keep the program rolling, Independent Living strives to keep the program affordable. Meals cost $8.40; slightly more is charged for special diet meals like gluten-friendly, diabetic and 2-gram low sodium. To ensure nutritional value, menus are analyzed by a UW Health registered dietitian. The quality of the Evening Meals on Wheels program has been recognized with the highest level of accreditation awarded by Meals on Wheels America.

Inquiries for meals are most welcome. Call 608-204-0923 or write to meals@independentlivinginc.org.

Client Likes Having Someone Else Do the Cooking

**Betty Garvey knows what she likes.** Travel, philanthropic ideals, art, staying connected with family and friends . . . and good, reliable meals.

A client with the Evening Meals on Wheels program, Betty easily lists what she likes about the program.

- Vegetables are colorful and appetizing.
- Great desserts with all the meals.
- Volunteers who deliver are very friendly.
- Menus for the month are sent to me so I can easily cancel delivery of meals that I don’t like or won’t be home to eat that day.
- I don’t have to be at home waiting for a meal delivery. I just leave a cooler on the stoop (and volunteers place the meal in the cooler).

Also a practical person, Betty likes the affordability of the EMOW program. “This saves me a lot of money. Each meal is less than the cost of eating breakfast at my favorite breakfast place, which is at least $15!,” she says.

Betty and her husband, Ed, chose to participate in the meals program due to health and convenience. Ed, who passed away in 2017, had Parkinson’s disease. Due to the disease, Ed began to experience falls.
“We used to cook quite often, both of us. We were quite passable cooks,” Betty says. “Ed preferred to grill, but then one day, Ed announced that he’s not grilling anymore. Well, I’m not cooking anymore, I said. That’s when we started to eat out a lot more, and had meals come in.”

Betty, still a capable cook, rarely chooses to cook now. She explains, “I stay with the (EMOW) program because it’s good.”

$3200 Grant Awarded to Evening Meals on Wheels!

Our program received a $3200 grant from the Subaru Share the Love campaign. Subaru’s annual holiday promotion shares proceeds with several national charities including Meals on Wheels America which, in turn, selects recipients based on certain criteria. We were one of seven Meals on Wheels programs in Wisconsin to qualify!

Please Donate Today!

Donations are essential to the affordability of the Evening Meals on Wheels program. In addition to writing grants, ILI is a partner with United Way of Dane County. Funding is never enough to meet the needs of eligible seniors, however. You can make a difference with your financial gift. Please donate today. Independent Living is grateful for all contributions!

Another way to make a lasting difference

As a local nonprofit serving Dane County, Independent Living, Inc. welcomes inquiries about making gifts through estate planning, charitable rollovers, appreciated stock and other forms of support. Please let Brian Miller, CEO, know that you would like to discuss options with him. Call 608-274-7900 or email bmiller@independentlivinginc.org.

Independent Living works round the clock to change lives.

We are a local nonprofit organization helping seniors and adults with disabilities maintain a sense of independence through in-home services and senior living communities in Madison, Fitchburg and Sun Prairie.

From evening meals delivered by friendly volunteers to an in-home installation of grab bars, or from compassionate personal care to the ease of living in a senior community, Independent Living can help.