All Wrapped Up and Tied with a Bow!

Wednesday, Dec 15th, we held our holiday gift packing day where we packed 1,200 gift bags for our Meals on Wheels recipients! We are so grateful to all the generous people who took up item collections for us, made monetary gifts, and the dynamic volunteers who donated hours of their time to help us with the bagging process. Special shout outs to two of our faithful community partners who step up every year to pitch in- Franklin Savings Bank, and Boston Billiards and to Peggy and Tony Trubiano who organized a huge collection AND helped us to pack! The bags were delivered just before the holidays by our drivers and volunteers and our folks were so excited to receive them. Thanks to all!

We are also deeply grateful to MiBox of Merrimack, which donated the use of a large MiBox to collect, store and transport all the items. There are no words to describe how much this contribution helped our process, nor to describe the support the company has given us over the last three years.

Simply the Best-Doug Rebidue!

Earlier this fall, Volunteer NH bestowed its annual awards to volunteers across the Granite State. With nominations from every corner of NH, our own Doug Rebidue was named the Outstanding 2021 Awardee
The official awards' ceremony was primarily virtual so Doug received his award recently at a special gathering at the Meals on Wheels site in Milford.

“Doug embodies the spirit of our mission” said Jill Pickett, site coordinator (pictured here with Doug). “The bond he has formed with clients over the years is inspiring.”

Kim, a fellow volunteer driver, has known Doug for many years. “Dougie, as I call him, is solid through and through. . .any time we need a driver, he shows up. He also has a great sense of humor and always makes me laugh!”

For his part, Doug sees the mission of Meals on Wheels as the driving force behind his 22 years of volunteer service. “People are so happy to see you, it’s a fun part of the job. You know you’re making a difference.”

Congratulations Doug! We are so happy that you finally have your award in hand!

EVENTS YOU CAN'T MISS!

A Festival of Fives is just around the corner on February 5th!! This year's theme is "Winterfest." Again this year, we will have a fun wine pull, a silent auction and be treated to the jazz sounds of Cat Faulkner and the Rhythm Boys. Five delicious appetizers, along with five wine tasting pours, followed by your choice of five desserts will be the evening’s fare. It’s back by popular demand and promises to be a fun night--- but seating will be somewhat limited again this year so get your tickets now at https://www.hcmow.org/winterfest
A Festival of Fives
Winterfest

An Evening of Wine Tasting & Jazz
To Benefit:
Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County
Saturday, February 5th, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
Labelle Winery, Amherst, NH

Enjoy:
Five Wine Pours
Five Appetizers
Five Dessert Choices
Music by Cat & the Rhythm Boys
Silent Auction
Wine Pull

Tickets:
$75.00 Per Person
www.hcmow.org
603-424-9967 or
jbarretto@hcmow.org
Milford Brunch Bingo
With delicious meals provided by Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County!

Offered by the Milford Recreation Department
Milford Town Hall 3rd floor
4th Wednesday of each month
12:00pm & 2:00pm
$2.00 for 2 Bingo Cards

Fresh, delicious meals provided by Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County for anyone 60+. Suggested donation $2. To reserve your lunch, call Carol at (603) 424-9967 ext. 404 by the 17th of each month.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, May 28th-- Step Up, our annual 5K Run-Walk returns for Year 3! It will take place at Mine Falls Park in Nashua again this year. Details are in the works, but this year we hope to add some special fun including food and children's activities. Mark your calendars-and check social media and our website for the opening of registration which should be sometime in mid-February!

EVENT WRAP-UPS!

Giving Tuesday
Our final totals are in and we were able to raise $6,000 with your help. Thank you to all of our donors and everyone who helped make this possible!

Subaru Share the Love

Our thanks to Subaru of America and Meals on Wheels of America for again giving local Meals on Wheels agencies the opportunity to be awarded funds through the generous Subaru Share the Love event. Through this event, Meals on Wheels has helped deliver more than 2.5 million meals and friendly visits to America's seniors. We won't be sure of our local donation until the spring, but please read more about our partnership with Prime Subaru in Manchester below, under "In the News."

IN THE NEWS

We are thrilled to be the recipient of the most votes in the Triangle Credit Union "Tis the Giving Season" campaign. TCU chose 3 area non-profits and opened up voting for tiered donations. Voting took place during Giving Tuesday week and we are thrilled that our supporters and followers took the time to vote and net us the Number 1 spot and a very nice donation of $1,500! Thank you Triangle Credit Union for supporting our community and to all of you for believing in us!!

Many thanks to our friends from Prime Subaru Manchester who partnered with us during the Subaru Share the Love Event. Prime hosted us for a meet and greet at their dealership and then followed up by volunteering to serve during our Holiday Lunch at the Carpenter Center in Manchester. Our gratitude to everyone over at Prime!
Left, Tanja Jutanda and Meagan Koobs from Prime Subaru, at the Subaru meet and greet, and right, Meagan pitches in to help serve a holiday lunch at the Carpenter Center!

Our dining centers celebrated the holidays with lots of fun and good cheer at their annual holiday lunches. Pictured here is the Goffstown Holiday Lunch.

Pictured above is President Jon Eriquezzo, who stopped in to share the spirit with the Goffstown Partygoers!
Meals on Wheels President, Jon Eriquezzo, addressed the Governor’s Advisory Committee on Intermodal Transportation earlier this fall. Jon spoke about how the lack of transportation can negatively impact access to food and how improved transportation can have a positive impact on social isolation. He also discussed our agency’s work with the state around transportation rate structure and our initial plans to provide increased transportation in the future. You can watch Jon's presentation [here](#) beginning at 36:15 in the video.

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**Grab N' Go**

**Pelham GNG**: Takes place twice a month on Wednesdays at the Hobbs Community Center. Call Carol at 603-424-9967 for details. Click [here](#) for information on senior programs at the center.

**Hollis Seniors’ Lunch**: Takes place Thursdays 11:00 AM-1:00 PM at the Lawrence Barn. Membership questions should be directed to David Seager, 603-882-7890. [https://www.hollisnh.org/seniors](https://www.hollisnh.org/seniors).

**Community Dining Centers** are open at the following sites:

- **The Meetinghouse**: 12 Reed St, Goffstown, M-F
- **Ronald A. Philbrick Elderly Housing at Greenville Falls**: 56 Main St, Greenville, M-F
- **Carpenter Center**: 323 Franklin St, Manchester, M-F
- **Senior Activity Center**: 70 Temple St, Nashua, M-F
- **John O' Leary Community Center**: 4 Church St, Merrimack, Monday and Thursday

Please check our [website](#) and social media for updates on other sites.

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**BOARD SPOTLIGHT**: Dr. Dan Abbis, Vice Chairman

“**This is a cause larger than myself.”**

Meals on Wheels Board Member, Dr. Dan Abbis, reflects on mission

Nearly 20 years into a cause he has been part of since coming to NH, Dr. Daniel Abbis still vividly remembers one of his first ‘ride alongs’ as a prospective Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County board member. “You learn very quickly that there is a real need out there. In many instances,
older adults are the forgotten generation...through no fault of their own, they sometimes need help.”

“You also can’t understate the importance of that social contact. Many clients literally plan their day around our drivers’ visits.”

As a board member at Meals on Wheels since 2015, Dan has seen the organization go through many changes during his tenure. “Not only am I really proud of our work, but I also love the fact that as an organization we are agile enough to respond to what’s going on in society. The staff are fantastic and always rise to the occasion.” Board service has provided him with the “big picture view” of senior hunger. “The leadership team and staff do a wonderful job in the day to day to operations. We as a board can play a role in strategy and planning.”

A Radiologist at Dartmouth-Hitchcock, Dr. Abbis and his wife-also a physician- learned about Meals on Wheels through their parish shortly after moving to NH in 2004 and he has not looked back. “I think this work becomes part of one’s personality. What the agency does is provide so much more than a meal, we are changing lives for the better.

“This is a cause larger than myself.”

**DID YOU KNOW?**

January is National Creativity Month!

Advances in healthcare and technology have contributed to an increase in longevity all over the world. It is especially pronounced in industrialized nations. People are living longer and staying active throughout their life. Older adults are actively pursuing new activities and finding a sense of purpose in their later years. Living longer also begs the question about living well. No one enjoys growing old, especially as it is often accompanied by deteriorating health. That’s why more senior communities are focused on improving the quality of life for their residents. Creative activities and workshops are one way of achieving this goal.

**5 Benefits of Creativity for Seniors**

**Improve community engagement**
Much like other community engagement events, creative workshops help older adults interact with others and reduce isolation. Creativity gives them the option of
working with others in the same room but also pursue their hobby by themselves. Shy or otherwise non-communicative seniors can also engage in creative pursuits without feeling overwhelmed. It provides an opportunity for older adults to reach out to others interested in the same activities.

**Improve mental health**
Engaging in creative activities helps with focus and concentration. It is a great way to exercise the brain and stimulate it by pursuing new activities. Arts like painting, knitting, pottery making, etc. can also slow the deterioration of cognitive function in seniors. Studies have indicated that art therapy can help senior adults communicate better. It can also alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety. Individuals diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease have shown progress by engaging in art and craft activities.

**Form new friendships**
A common hobby is one of the easiest ways to cultivate friendships at any age. But it becomes even more important for seniors for several reasons:

- Seniors are often retired and lose touch with professional colleagues
- Moving to a senior community means they lose decades-old friendships
- Their families might live far away and not be able to visit often

These factors contribute to the sense of isolation that many older adults feel. Hence, participating in creative projects can help form new friendships with like-minded people.

**Better physical health**
Many people grasp the relationship between creativity and mental health. But being creative can also lead to better physical health. Participating in art and craft activities influences the nervous system and can help stabilize
heart rate and hormone levels. It also stimulates the release of endorphins that contribute to overall well-being and happiness. A recent study showed that elderly people who engaged in art activities reported the following benefits:

- Fewer accidental falls
- A decrease in the number and type of medications they needed
- Fewer visits to the doctor

**Achieve a sense of purpose and personal growth**

A new craft hobby can provide the same sense of purpose and personal growth. If older adults practice their art regularly, they will see an improvement in their skill level. This contributes to regaining a sense of progression and growth in their lives.

Many adults put aside childhood hobbies as they grow in their careers or take care of children. They simply don’t have time. Creativity can help them continue where they left off, perhaps even decades ago! Consider a variety of options like a book club, creative writing, ceramics, knitting, quilting, sewing, collaging, etc.

Sources:
Benefits of Creative Activities for Seniors - Cōv (covcommunications.com)
Pixabay

**DONOR CENTRAL**

Our Gratitude for all of your Amazing Donations!

Central High Key Club members in Manchester created 100 ornaments for our program participants! A big thanks to Tina Haarlander, Key Club Advisor, and her group of talented and generous students for donating their time and creative spirit to make these beautiful ornaments, which were greatly appreciated by our folks! The group also made a contribution to our Holiday Gift Bag fund, for which we are also truly grateful!
Deepest thanks to the children from the Hills Garrison Elementary School in Hudson who made beautiful Holiday cards, (pictured ) for the gift bags for our MOW participants. We are grateful to Jane Nikander, Library Media Specialist, for coordinating this effort. We had numerous cards made by the Merrimack Girl Scouts and other troops from around the county, which will also be distributed.

These troops also did a wonderful job collecting gift bag items for us as well. Thank you to all the generous kids who gave their time and talents to shop for items and create beautiful cards, and to their leaders for coordinating!

Our gratitude, once again, goes out to the Amoskeag Quilters Guild. Members crafted another 2 dozen amazing quilts for our participants. Thanks to Pat Grandmaison who has physically delivered over 6 dozen quilts to us on behalf of the quilting group over the past few months. They will have good homes and bring much joy to the recipients!

A big shout out to Melissa and Phil Pelletier of Smokin' Tin Roof, who have been collecting donations for us at craft fairs where they sell their amazing homemade sauces, butters, jellies, and mustards. They
also personally contributed to the donation and stopped by to present the check. We are so grateful for their generosity!

### December 2021 Donors

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CORPORATE/FOUNDATION/ORGANIZATION SUPPORT
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Granite State Credit Union
Hannaford - Bags 4 My Cause Program
Lenovo
Manchester Central Key Club
Nashua Emblem Club
Open View
Smokin' Tin Roof
Valley of the Sun United Way
Workers Credit Union

December 2021 $500+ Donors

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Kay Bennett
Eleanor Briggs
Edna Conway
Stephen Gronberg
Heather MacDonald
Margaret McCabe
Daniel Mullen
Zoe Onsruth
Kevin Reigstad
Rodd R. Ruland
James M. Toohey
Kim White

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Greater Horizons
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Service Credit Union
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Carol McKillip
Christine Pattison
Ernest Petit
Ileana Prancan
Margaret Stashluk
Kimberly Tate-Brown

Giving Tuesday $500+ Donors

Leslie Goan

Please note that if you gave on Giving Tuesday and chose to remain "publicly anonymous" or "anonymous," your donation does not appear above.

Our heartfelt thanks to all of our donors, including those who asked to remain anonymous. Your gifts mean so much and we could not do this work without you!

We appreciate all of our donors and have taken great care to compile this list, although we do sometimes make mistakes. If you have made a donation and do not see your name on this list, or your name is misspelled, please contact Joan at jbarretto@hcmow.org.

VOLUNTEER FOR MEALS ON WHEELS!

Volunteer Spotlight: Michelle Dennis

"Michelle came to Meals on Wheels in May 2020 and quickly became a part of our MOW family. Michelle has stepped up when we were shorthanded. She always comes in with a smile. Her clients love her and she brings so much joy to their day. I am truly blessed to have her on our team." ~Jessie, Site Coordinator
"She is always here to do her route. Michelle is very dependable and we really appreciate all of her efforts!" ~ Joan, Site Administrative Assistant

"We are so grateful for Michelle's willingness to join our Manchester team, especially at such a challenging time. Since May 2020, Michelle has spent nearly one hundred hours volunteering as a driver and in our kitchen. Thank you, Michelle!" ~ Jillian, Assistant Director of Client and Volunteer Services

Michelle's bright smile, shared during each delivery, lights up the room, as can be seen in the photo above!

It's always the right season to give back to your community and get something priceless back in return!

We need volunteer drivers now more than ever, especially in the Nashua and Manchester areas.

It's an experience you will never forget and will give back to you in so many ways!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver, please email Jillian, Assistant Director of Client and Volunteer Services at volunteers@hcmow.org. You may also call (603) 424-9967 or visit our website: www.hcmow.org to learn more.

AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM

Shop online and make a difference! Register through Amazon Smile and designate Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County/ St. Joseph Community Services, Inc. as your charity of choice. Every time you shop, Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase! Give back with a smile!

STAY CONNECTED!

To keep up with our latest news and information, please visit our digital news platforms:

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Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/hcmealsonwheels/
Happy New Year!