

Sun City Meals On Wheels

Sun City, Arizona 85351

THE GENESIS OF SUN CITY MEALS ON WHEELS

May 16, 1973

It was a hot summer day almost two years ago that Rena Williams happened to meet me crossing 107th at Peoria Ave. Since we were not well acquainted, I was pleasantly surprised when she invited me to have a coke with her at the near-by ice cream parlor.

If I had known Rena better, I would have realized immediately that this was to be no idle afternoon tete-a-tete. It quickly became evident that Rena's philosophy of living included a strong emphasis upon making the world a better place for those around her.

As the result of a recent letter from a friend in Indiana who was wholly dependent upon a service there called Meals-on-Wheels, Rena was now challenging me as incoming chairman of the Sun City Woman's League to discover whether that organization might logically be expected to sponsor such a service in Sun City.

This, then, was the beginning of a long road of exploration which ended some nine months later at the kitchen doors of Wilcrest Restaurant and Boswell Hospital. This winding road included many curves and bends, each one promising a clear view just around the next corner, but each in turn possessing some roadblock preventing implementation of Rena's idea. A less determined person would have permitted this idea to pass into oblivion, but with true missionary zeal Rena continued her efforts, making contacts and holding meetings with any and every individual or group who conceivably might be capable of contributing to this kind of service.

Late in the summer of 1971, Rena invited Jane Gerrard, wife of a Phoenix Episcopal minister to meet with a small committee. Mrs. Gerrard was, at the time, President of Mobile Angel Meals Service which was operating from St. Luke's Hospital in Phoenix, and she was able to explain in detail their method of operation. From the beginning, our committee had hoped to persuade the Boswell Hospital Board that such a service was needed in our community, and if they would provide the meals we would provide the volunteers to deliver them. Mrs. Gerrard kindly consented to go with Rena, Gretchen Bergman and ^{me} to meet with hospital personnel. However, at this meeting, it became apparent that Boswell Hospital was not then able to accept this responsibility, so our attention then turned to other alternatives. Due credit must be given Mrs. Gerrard for her explanation of the technique of such a service and her encouragement to us to explore all potential means of bringing it to fruition here.

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THE GENESIS OF SUN CITY MEALS ON WHEELS (cont. p.2)

During this same period, Rena also had been consulting with ^{Gretchen Bergman} Jean Phillips and Laura Mathis, and on Oct. 4, 1971 the first meeting was held at which minutes were taken, its purpose being "to discuss ways of getting Meals-on-Wheels type of service off the ground and into actual service." Those attending were Rev. Thistlethwaite, President of Sun City Sunshine Service, as Advisory Chairman; Rena, Chairman; Jean Phillips, Co-Chairman; Gretchen Bergman, Secretary pro tem, Laura Mathis, Treasurer; and Edna Von Pischke, Secretary. Other committee members present were Eleanor Buckman, Marie Wilson and Margaret Forbes, the latter representing the First Presbyterian Church women who had had under consideration the same idea of community service.

At this meeting it was decided that Jean would compose a letter explaining the intent of the committee which would be sent to all doctors affiliated with Boswell and Valley View Hospitals; a similar letter would be sent to all local clergy. These letters would attempt to ascertain whether these two professional groups would cooperate in referring to our committee potential clients of the service who were known to them. Marie Wilson and Eleanor Buckman were to contact catering services in Phoenix, and Rev. Thistlethwaite would explore with the Sunshine Service Board the possibility of having its office used as the Meals-on-Wheels telephone contact.

The next meeting, held Nov. 1st, introduced Opal Iverson, professional social worker, who has done outstanding service in screening potential clients, and Pat (Hazel) Simon, professional dietitian, who has given generously of her time and energy to the establishment of professional standards for meals served to clients.

By Nov. 11th, Clarice Bouton, another professional food service person, was added to the committee. She also gave unstintingly of her service in establishing professional standards and exploring potential catering services.

At this point it was hoped that delivery of meals could begin on Dec. 6th, and that the Sun City Woman's League, the local churches and service clubs would lend their support. However, this proved impossible of implementation, and Rena was almost convinced that the job simply could not be done.

However, with the coming of the New Year, another meeting was called at the home of Jean Phillips, and we were introduced to another new-comer, Pearl Coulter, ^{Dean} ~~Professor~~ Emeritus of ^{the School of} ~~Public Health~~ Nursing, the University of Arizona, Tucson. Since joining our committee at that time she has given invaluable assistance to the organizing and implementing of Sun City Meals-on-Wheels Service.

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THE GENESIS OF SUN CITY MEALS ON WHEELS (cont., p.3)

Soon after this meeting, Boswell Hospital was again approached, particularly in the interest of having any special diet meals prepared in its kitchen; but at this time it became clear that in order to fulfill legal considerations a wholly new organization would have to be established which then could become a part of the hospital's community service family.

At the same time, Pat Simon and Clarice Bouton were exploring other possible sources of catered meals for potential clients requiring normal diets. After several weeks of investigation, and by happy coincidence, they made contact with the Armour Frozen Foods department at about the same time that Mr. J.W. Willis planned to open his Wilcrest Restaurant at the then new Le Ronde Shopping Centre in Sun City.

Things were now really beginning to fall into place. On March 24, 1972, Jean submitted to him a letter of agreement saying that he would provide for Meals-on-Wheels clients two meals per day, one hot and one cold, totalling not less than 1500 calories, the hot meal deriving from the Armour Co. kitchens, the cold one from his own. This letter was signed by Mrs. Willis, and the committee was truly grateful for his willing cooperation. It was agreed that service would begin on Monday, May 1st (1972).

Our thoughts then turned to some kind of celebration to mark this long-sought goal. A kick-off luncheon was planned for April 22nd at the Wilcrest Restaurant. Among the sixty-four people attending the affair were Mr. Scholsser and Mr. Nason representing Armour Foods who were thanked heartily for the generosity of their Company; it had donated all of the hot lunches served ^{that day} in addition to several styrofoam cartons to be used later for delivery purposes. The local newspapers gave good publicity to our fledgeling organization, and on May 1st Sun City Meals-on-Wheels Service made delivery to its first seven clients.

Meantime, other valuable members were added to the committee. Mildred Freeman who joined us in February 1972, became a most efficient chairman of Volunteers and still serves in that capacity. Margaret Gilbert, our devoted Business Manager, plus Betty Ankeny and Edna Baldwin who do the routing and supervising of drivers joined us in June, as did Marty Maxon, a valuable member of the Nominating Committee and now serving as Chairman of the Service Committee. Betty and Edna, with Margaret Gilbert, deserve special commendation for the time and attention given daily to their respective responsibilities.

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THE GENESIS OF SUN CITY MEALS ON WHEELS (cont. p.4)

In October, Kay Ewan attended our committee meeting and has since become a most helpful assistant to Margaret Gilbert. The next month Roberta Coffman, Head of Volunteer Services at Boswell Hospital, kindly consented to join us as our liason person there.

During the latter months of 1972 we were saddened by the death of Eleanor Buckman who had been so conscientious in her support; also during this time, and much to our regret, Jean Phillips, Marie Wilson and Clarice Bouton found it necessary to withdraw because of unforeseen circumstances. It is a great pleasure to have you with us today, and we want you to know that we have missed you all.

By November 1972 a viable organization with the necessary officers and committee chairmen had been established, and a set of By-Laws was submitted to and accepted by the Boswell Hospital Board of Directors. This action admitted Sun City Meals-on-Wheels Service to the hospital's family of community services and provided the legal protection necessary for the volunteer workers. This brought Rena's dream to full fruition, and we all were most grateful for the success we had achieved.

Publicity by the Sun City News-Sun which included an excellent feature article with telling pictures, as well as faithful support by the Sun Citizen, helped immeasurably to bring Meals-on-Wheels Service to the attention of the community during this first year. Also, a feature article by Thelma Heatwole in the Phoenix Republic resulted in several calls by interested persons.

So, from a beginning of serving 7 clients, and fluctuating widely from one to 18, Meals-on-Wheels Service has continued day-by-day until at the end of the first year's operation 4,126 meals had been delivered.

Ten churches and religious congregations have supplied most of the volunteers, but there are those who volunteered privately. All are welcomed most enthusiastically to this grass-roots effort of community concern.

In conclusion, perhaps we could say that Meals-on-Wheels was an inevitable development for Sun City. However, until some individual would take the initiative for its organization and implementation it would remain only a dream.

So today, we celebrate not only the completion of the first year of successful operation of Sun City Meals-on-Wheels Service, but also we pay tribute to the vision, determination and loving concern of Rena Williams for her fellow citizens.

Eana H. Vos Preslike
Publicity Chairman

Wheeled meals take cheer to SC homebound

APRIL 15, 1978

By MARY DUMOND
Staff Writer

The man picked up his phone, dialed a number and spoke quietly into the receiver.

He had dropped a pebble into a wide communications pool. The ripples would spread out rapidly and he knew it.

So when his doorbell rang, he was not surprised. He had summoned up enough strength to deal with his visitor.

NO — THIS is not the beginning of a suspense story, but of the chain of actions that lead from a request for service to delivery of that service.

The service: Meals-on-Wheels.

The chain, says president Barton Fitzgerald, has 13 links.

It's not a service that just wheels up into your driveway with hot food if you don't happen to feel like cooking.

BUT IF you're a lone invalid, just home from the hospital after surgery — and nobody's available to cook for you — or you're handicapped and alone, the ear on the other end of that first phone call probably is tuned in to you.

Our fictitious gentleman may have come home to recover from surgery. Let's say he's a widower with nobody available to get his meals. He needs hot food, is on no special diet and his doctor tells him he should feel fine in about a week. Usually, he's a pretty good cook

himself.

But right now he's ready to collapse in to bed for a nap just to recover from the trip from the hospital. He knows he's not able to whip up even a lukewarm meal.

He may have called Information and Referral Service, 974-6205, or, if he's been told about the service, he may have called the Meals-on-Wheels number, 974-9430, directly.

SOMEHOW, IN Sun City, if this service is what our man needs, this is what he'll get.

Let's follow his phone call and see how the organization works:

1. Mr. X calls for M-on-W service. The agency's answering service (Information and Referral) records the call.

2. M-on-W interviewer, who checks twice daily, gets his name and address.

3. **THE INTERVIEWER** calls the prospective client.

4. The interviewer visits him to see that he is eligible.

She finds that the man indeed does need the service and he is able to pay for it himself — \$3 per meal, delivered hot at lunchtime from the Greenbrier.

5. She calls the coordinator for the regular diet section of the M-on-W operation, gives him the new client's name and address and starting day and date for service.

6. **She** also puts all pertinent information at the disposal of the applications section, which records the new client and his dietary needs.

7. **SHE** informs the business manager that the outfit has a new customer.

8. The coordinator calls a person he's appointed to call the Greenbrier delivery drivers, giving him the new client's name, address and starting day and date.

9. The coordinator also visits the cafeteria to add the new client's name to the working list and check on his meal.

10. **THE PERSON** who calls the drivers, calls those who will work during the time the new client is served and gives them his name and address.

11. The coordinator also goes to the cafeteria to assist the driver as he (she) loads the car.

12. **THE DRIVER** — almost the final link in the chain — goes to Greenbrier to pick up meals for the day. By now this includes our caller.

13. Last step — the driver delivers hot meal to the new client.

"I DON'T really know too many people in the organization," said Lucy Faber, who, with husband Milton, makes up a driving-delivering team. "All we do is deliver meals on Tuesdays."

The Fabers, who live at 9450 Brokenstone Dr., are typical of 24 drivers — a different set daily — for four different routes.

The coordinator tries to keep the routes within comfortable distance of the drivers' home neighborhood if possible.

"SOMETIMES IT doesn't work out that way," said Mrs. Faber.

On a typical early spring day the Fabers delivered seven hot meals, all cordially received by the clients.

This is the "civilian" branch of Meals-on-Wheels.

Another, somewhat similar branch, takes care of clients with special dietary needs. These clients are referred by their doctors, said Fitzgerald.

MEALS, supervised by dietary experts, are prepared in and delivered from Boswell Memorial Hospital.

According to Fitzgerald, the other separate but equal route has the same number of drivers and routes to take care of the more specialized diets.

The Fabers and others on the general diet route use two styrofoam containers to keep hot things hot, cold things cold during delivery.

BOSWELL'S containers, explained Faber, are somewhat more elaborate, are sterilized and must be returned daily.

Here's a rundown on staff members — all volunteers — that make Meals-on-Wheels move smoothly:

— **BOARD MEMBERS** and other committee members number 40:

— Day chairman — the group has five.

— **HOSPITAL** drivers number 24, as do regular route drivers. That's 48 more people, plus 10, more or less, on standby in case a regular driver conks out.

Every Friday drivers collect their meal money for the week from each client. Regular drivers take the money

to the volunteer business manager's home.

Hospital drivers take their payments to the hospital, where a volunteer picks up the money and delivers it to the business manager.

EVERY MEAL-on-Wheels volunteer pays for his or her own gasoline, time and effort. The \$3 goes straight from the client to the food preparer, either Greenbrier or Boswell.

Most clients pay for their own meals — either seven or five a week, at \$3 each.

However, if a real need shows up, other sources are available, said Fitzgerald. Relatives, the court, or others may pick up the tab in individual cases.

"The Community Fund has offered us money," he said, "but we don't take it as a rule."

IN 1977 the organization delivered 6,066 meals from the hospital and 6,746 meals from the cafeteria — a total of 12,812 meals.

Once a year members of Meals on Wheels get together at an annual luncheon — "but you have to pay your own way," said the president.

Board members include William Dinklage, vice president; Gretchen Bergman, secretary; Laura Mathis, treasurer; Jean Phillips, assistant

treasurer; Margaret Gilbert, business manager, and Kay Ewan and Gwen Hoffman, assistants.

Meals on Wheels needs drivers

Homebound residents rely on the kindness of volunteering strangers

By MAMIE LIMERICK
Staff writer

Every day of the year except Sundays, Myra hears a knock at her door around 11:30 a.m. Reliable as any mail carrier, it is a Meals on Wheels volunteer, bearing one hot and one cold meal.

Myra has lost much of her eyesight and rarely leaves her home in Youngtown.

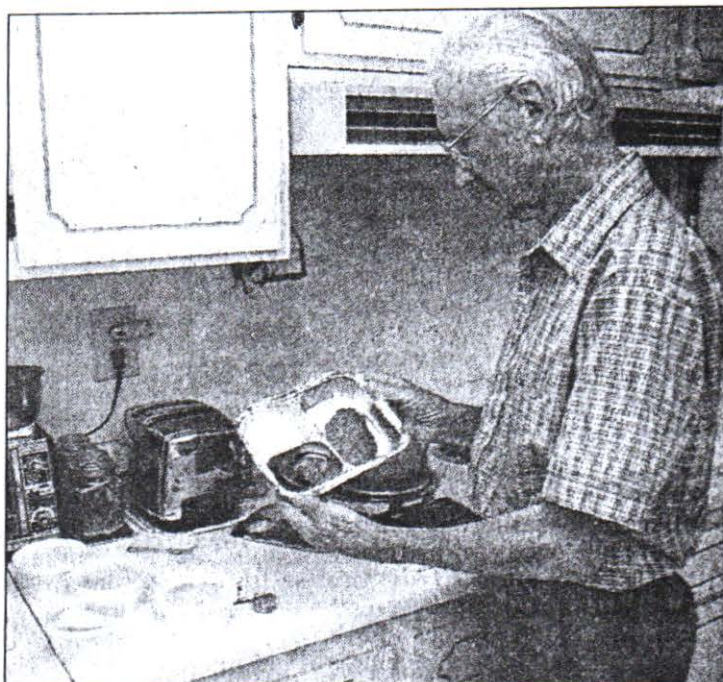
She greets me cordially, holding a packet. As I present her with chicken salad, fruit, braised beef tips over rice and milk, she hands me a "care package" in appreciation. Inside are frosted molasses cookies and bite-size Snicker bars.

My driver, Vivian Schroeder, the Monday chairwoman for the program, tells me there is no point in declining Myra's bag of goodies. She gives cookies to all of the delivery people, even a reporter who is filling in for the regular Monday volunteer.

"Sometimes our volunteers are the only people our clients see," said Jenny Meola, one of the program's coordinators. "Our clients are basically homebound because of vision problems or other physical impairments. They are unable to shop and cook for themselves."

The Meals on Wheels program, based at Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital in Sun City, has delivered meals to the homebound in Sun City and Youngtown for nearly 25 years. The unsubsidized program purchases the meals from Boswell at a cost of \$5.70 for both meals and charges clients the same price, Meola said. Some clients are subsidized, with their meals paid for by private donations from churches and other organizations.

The program is in desperate need of volunteers this summer, as many of the regulars have migrated to cooler climates for the season or are on vacation. "You don't need to know how to drive a car to volunteer for Meals on Wheels," said Schroeder. "You can ride along with the driver and deliver the meals to the door." While the pool of volunteers has dwindled for the



Steve Chernenk/Daily News-Sun

Frank Kazamek opens one of the hot suppers he receives every day from Meals on Wheels. Many of the program's regular drivers are away for the summer and Meals on Wheels is seeking additional volunteers to take their place.

summer, the demand has increased so much that a 13th route was added, Meola said.

Volunteer drivers use their own vehicles and pay for the gas they use on their delivery routes. As is true with any volunteer work, the rewards of the task lie elsewhere. "You get up in the morning thinking about other things you have to do," said volunteer Monnie Fouts. "And then you get to that first front door and realize it's worth it. Fouts and her husband Clark have participated off and on in the program for the last nine years.

There are no menus per se at the program, Meola said. Vegetarians and clients with diabetes, high blood pressure or allergies may request special diets by

► See Program targets, A5

■ From A1

prescription from their doctor. Monday's cold lunch consisted of chicken salad, three slices of whole wheat bread, a plum, prune juice, milk and bread pudding. The hot meal included braised beef tips in gravy over rice and green beans.

To sign up for the program, a potential client first calls Meals on Wheels coordinator Jenny Meola. An interviewer is dispatched to the individual's home and interviews him or her, completing an application which is reviewed for eligibility.

People who don't want to cook or just don't know how are not appropriate for the program, Meola said. "We encourage them to eat out with friends or join a church or organization that might offer meals at a low cost."

"We get calls from people in Flagstaff, Chandler and Glendale asking for meal delivery," Schroeder said. "But we only deliver to the Sun City and Youngtown areas."

For service in other areas, call Maricopa County Senior Adult Independent Living (SAIL) at 681-8733. To volunteer for meal delivery, call Jenny Meola at 974-9430.



OCT 31 1972

Republic photo by Thelma Heatwole

Mrs. John Ankeny, right, directs Mrs. Elsie Kiersnowski and Mrs. Kay Quigley as they deliver "Meals on Wheels" to Sun Citizens.

Meals on Wheels aids helpless

By THELMA HEATWOLE

SUN CITY — An elderly woman left the hospital here sufficiently recovered for dismissal but unable to prepare her own meals.

An 88-year-old man, partly blind, was not able to regulate his cooking stove for meal preparation.

And another senior citizen was so crippled with arthritis she could not open food containers.

Others due to illness and age are unable to get to the store to shop for their meals. Some are in wheelchairs. Others need special diets. They live alone, but are not indigent.

Meals on Wheels, a new service here, helps them face their dilemma.

"We don't have abject poverty," said MOW worker Pearl Coulter, "but we have old age. There are people who are unable to prepare for their meals, but they are able to pay for them."

Mrs. Virgil Williams, chairman of MOW, pointed out that many came here in retirement and do not have their families with them.

In some instances concerned neighbors could prepare meals, but many Sun City residents do not want to impose on their neighbors.

"They would rather be independent," Mrs. Coulter said.

Last spring a committee got the "Meals on Wheels" project on the road. Members, including retired nutritionists, social workers, a nurse and business administrators, made arrangements for a hot meal and a sack lunch to be delivered at noon, five days a week. The cost is \$3 a day.

Regular meals are prepared by the Wilcrest Restaurant and the special diets, as ordered by doctors, are prepared at Boswell Memorial Hospital.

Delivery to the door of the patron is made by volunteers

from five Sun City churches. Those who deliver on Friday determine if the client wants the service continued and collect the cost.

Last week the service was provided for six. Altogether, the women have served 554 meals to 45 clients since May. MOW workers believe there are people here who are unaware of the program, and they want to find those who need the service.

To date income from the meals pays for the service, and no client has been unable to pay for the meals. The Sun City Community Fund has provided some resource money for the project.

Mrs. Coulter and Mrs. Reuben Iverson take requests for the meal service and screen applicants.

"I think it is a wonderful community service," said a client who has "graduated" from the service. "It eliminated the worry of shopping. I live alone and when I returned from the hospital I was on a bland diet. Thanks to MOW, I got the proper food."

Another couple, in their 90s, were left alone at home when their son and daughter-in-law went on a trip. Before they left, however, they made arrangements for the Meals on Wheels. Each day the nonagenarians set the table in anticipation of the arrival of the meals.

That is another plus for MOW—the anticipation of a pleasant visitor and a chance to chat a bit.

B • Section

Charitable efforts enable Meals on Wheels to work

By BRET McKEAND

"I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again..."

—William Penn

...

Meals on Wheels, a non-profit organization delivering specially prepared meals to area residents unable to prepare their own meals, is a strictly all-volunteer association.

And it has been that way since its very beginning, except for the position of coordinator, which in the past has been a salaried position.

The organization is now, however, 100 percent fully volunteer operated, thanks to the gratis efforts of its three new coordinators: Al and Martha MacCorkell and Ann Lett.

The job of coordinator is an extremely time-consuming and complicated position. Their

responsibilities include scheduling client applications and cancellations with Boswell Hospital, billing clients for the delivered meals, scheduling drivers and deliveries, as well as keeping all records for the institution.

It is not easy to convince a person to undertake such a position without accepting payment in return.

But in the case of the MacCorkells and Lett, nobody convinced them at all — they just simply refuse to take money for their efforts.

"I just didn't want the money," says Lett. "I just really enjoy the work and enjoy the satisfaction I receive from helping others."

Originally from Germantown, Ohio, Lett and her husband Fred moved to Sun City in 1980.

They first became involved with Meals on Wheels as drivers. Her involvement with the group steadily increased until she finally became one of three coordinators, overseeing operations on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

And although her coordinator

chores keep her busy three days out of the week, Lett stills finds time to participate in other local activities.

She is also a member of the Sundial Lapidary Club, Silvercraft Club and Bell Shuffleboard Club.

A former specifications writer with General Motors, Lett's artistic and engineering abilities have allowed her to create a number of uniquely handcrafted items.

Her current pet project is building a miniature house complete with miniature furniture and a roof comprised of more than 2,000 small pieces of tile.

The MacCorkells serve as the organization's coordinators Thursday through Sunday. Starting out as drivers, the two have been associated with Meals on Wheels for more than three years.

"It's a job that we really enjoy," says Al MacCorkell.

"The people we work with are top-notch and they are great to work with."

"We wouldn't take the job for pay," says Martha MacCorkell.

Originally from California, the

MacCorkells moved to Phoenix in 1962 and opened their own business.

They were frequent visitors to Sun City since Al's mother was a resident of the community.

After moving to Sun City in 1978, the two became involved with the American Red Cross.

Serving as Red Cross drivers, the MacCorkells were required to service the areas of Tolleson, Litchfield Park and Goodyear.

Rising at 4 a.m. each day, Al and Martha would pick up their clients and deliver them to hospitals in Phoenix.

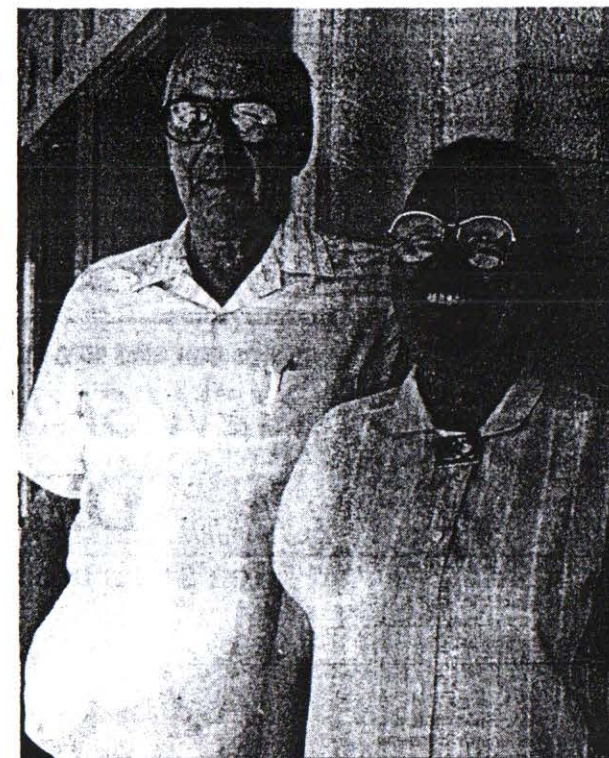
In fact, one day the couple logged an amazing 209 miles. And now, after accumulating more than 5,000 miles for the Red Cross, the MacCorkells have cut down their activities to only two days a week in order to concentrate more on their efforts with Meals on Wheels.

Martha MacCorkell says anyone can be a part of Meals on Wheels, and that no special training is necessary.

"It's the cooperation of the entire group, especially the volunteer drivers, that make it work and work successfully."



ANN LETT



Al & Martha MacCorkell

Volunteers live slogan: 'We deliver'

Pair are among many to feed elderly, infirm

By ROBERT BARRETT
Northwest Valley Bureau

SUN CITY — Ken Esse opened the door slowly, stepped into the home and yelled, "Hello! The food's here."

There was no answer, so Esse and his wife, Justeen, walked through the kitchen and into the living room, where an elderly man was watching television.

"Oh, I didn't see you pull up," yelled Dietz Lusk, who is almost deaf. "I didn't hear you. Of course I didn't hear you."

Justeen placed the container of food on the counter. Lusk, using a cane, walked to it, tapped it and yelled, "I know, I know. Don't eat it all at once. Save some for tonight, right?"

"That's right," Justeen yelled back. "We'll see you next week."

Ken and Justeen are volunteer drivers for Meals On Wheels. The couple deliver the meals in about an hour. They have done it once a week since they moved to Sun City in 1979.

"We do this because you've got to do something for somebody," Ken said as he drove to the next house. "You don't do it for pay, you just do it to be doing something for someone."

Ken Esse, 72, was a salesman for a stainless-steel fabricating company in Minneapolis. He said he heard about Meals On Wheels from a neighbor. The couple volunteered as relief drivers and shortly thereafter took over Route 11, in Phase 1, the oldest section of Sun City, which is south of Grand Avenue.

"Most of our clients are just old," Justeen, 69, said as they pulled up to another home. "This client is Alice Ohr. She's probably close to 90 years old. She's not our oldest client, but she's so sweet."

Ohr met them at the door, took the delivery and went inside.

Earlier that morning, the couple had reported to the cafeteria at Boswell Memorial Hospital, where all food for Meals On Wheels is prepared. They picked up nine meal packages consisting of one hot meal (for example, one meal might include chop suey with rice, green beans, cottage cheese and pear salad and butterscotch pudding), a brown-bag meal, such as an egg-salad sandwich, a peach, skim milk and apple juice that is intended for breakfast. Meals for those requiring special diets, such as no-salt or low-cholesterol, also are available.

The clients pay \$5.70 a day for the service, if they can afford it.

"We have 71 routes a week, and each has a maximum of 12 stops," said Ruth Jameson,

general chairman of the volunteer drivers for Meals On Wheels. "We deliver them seven days a week, although not everyone takes it that often."

Carol Barenbrugge, Meals On Wheels president, said the organization delivers an average of 100 meals on weekdays and an average of 80 on weekends.

To receive the food, Barenbrugge said, a client must take a minimum of four deliveries a week.

"The hospital (Boswell) sets the price," she said. "We don't have anything to do with that."

To receive Meals On Wheels, a Sun City resident must call the Sun City Information and Referral Service first. An interviewer from Meals On Wheels is sent to the home to determine need.

"Some of them have just come home from the hospital and are unable to get out and do their own shopping," Barenbrugge said. "Some of them have eye problems or they are very elderly, unable to drive and shop and cook for themselves."

Those residents unable to pay for the service may receive it free. In those cases, Meals On Wheels pays the hospital for the food.

"We currently have 14 clients who are subsidized," Barenbrugge said. "That costs us about \$20,000 a year."

The only other expenses are for stamps and office supplies, she said. Meals On Wheels is 100 percent volunteer operated.

"We survive on donations from sources such as the Community Fund and donations from individuals," she said.

Drivers use their own vehicles. Ken said he averages 15 miles on his car each Wednesday when he does Route 11.

"This lady is our oldest client," he said as he pulled up at the home of Lois Smith.

"We don't know, but we think she's well over 90," Justeen said.

After giving Smith her food, Ken said, "As near as we can tell, she has no one to help her. Many of our clients have no relatives out here. It's funny, we've been married 50 years and I was bragging about it at my Kiwanis Club, and I found out I was just a kid."

Justeen laughed and said, "That's why we like it here, it makes us feel young."

At the next stop, Ken left the food in a box outside the door. The client had called ahead

and told him she had a doctor's appointment and would not be home.

"You can only leave food if the client has told you to leave it," Justeen said. "You can't just leave it if they don't respond. You are obligated to find out where they are."

She said they usually ask the neighbors and, if they don't know where the client is, they report the non-delivery to the Meals On Wheels coordinator at the hospital. If they feel something is wrong, they will call the Sun City Sheriff's Posse.

"This way, we actually check on them as well," Justeen said as her husband finished the last delivery.

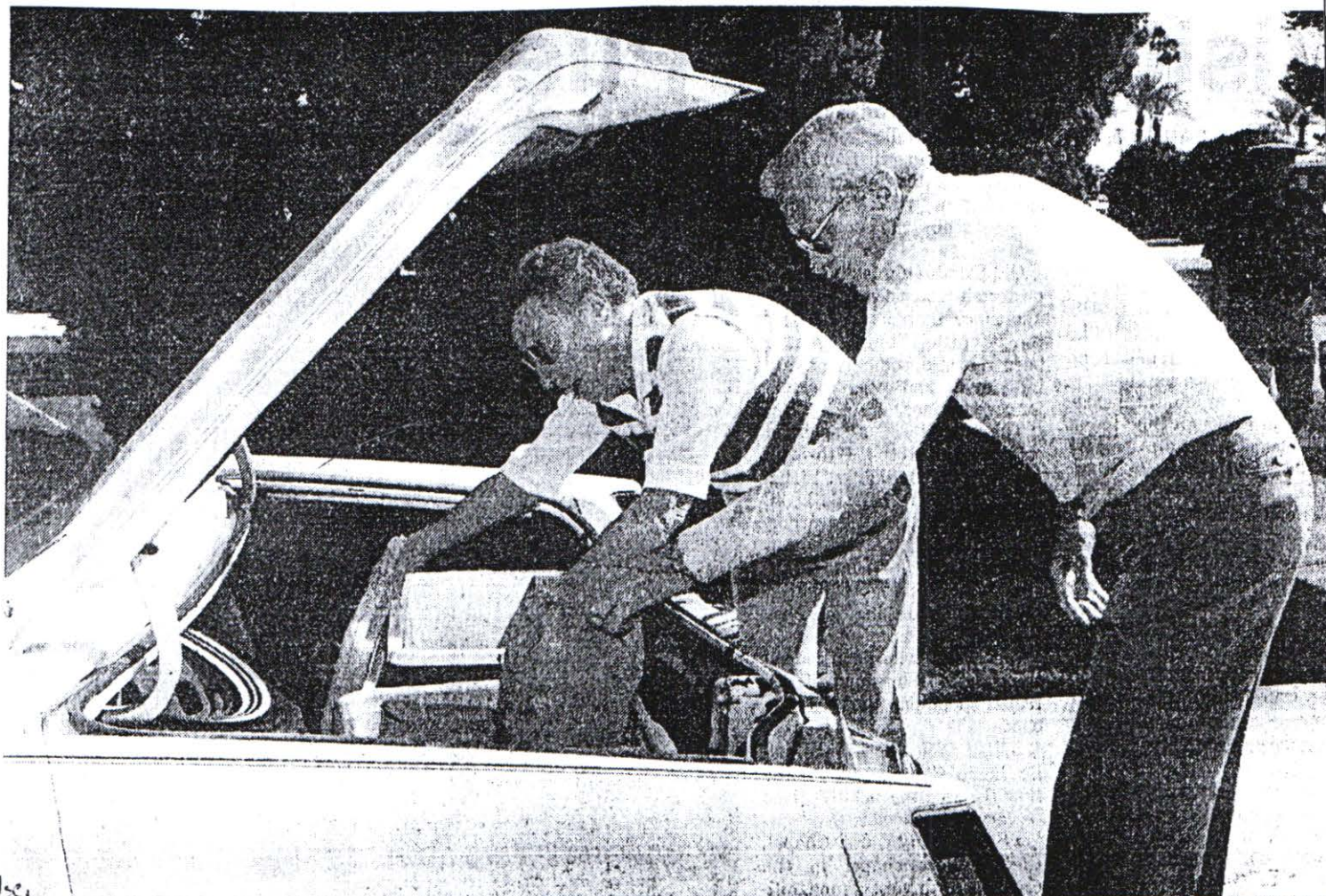
Kent said the drivers for Meals On Wheels work in teams, but not all of them are husband and wife.

"People do this because they care," Justeen said.

"All our clients are nice people, too," Ken said. "Before they got that old, most of them probably did some volunteer work in Sun City."

Justeen nodded her head. "Ken and I call this paying the rent."

OVER



else.

Justeen and Ken Esse unload a meal from their car on their volunteer delivery run for

the Meals On Wheels program in Sun City. Justeen and Ken average about 15 miles

when they deliver the meals, which are prepared at Boswell Memorial Hospital.

Tom Story/Republic

Meals on Wheels board seeks to refine service

By ROSE LARSEN

Special to the News-Sun

SUN CITY — Area residents see posters labeled "Meals on Wheels" (MOW) in the rear windows of the drivers' vehicles and assume that deliveries are the sum total of MOW's operation.

But delivering meals is merely the visible culmination of extensive preparation that changes weekly.

Of its 274 volunteers, the 20 members of the board are the most active. They constantly seek to find Sun Citians who require proper nourishment and strive to refine the service to them.

President Carol Barenbrugge, addresses the problems and keeps the organization running smoothly. She understands each facet and steps into any place where someone is needed to replace an absentee.

Vice President Jane Freeman, inaugurated the "Search Program" in which all members interviewed priests, ministers and rabbis with the hope that these leaders would know of people in their congregations who needed proper food and would be eligible for MOW's subsidization program.

Directors Dr. Charles and Mrs. Ruth Terhune are the Driver Committee Chairmen. They are in constant contact with the 148 regular drivers and the 126 substitute drivers. There's a seven-day a week responsibility to keep the delivery routes moving as "the meals must go on!"

Director Helene Contryman is the Service Committee chairman.

She contacts clients to ascertain their eligibility for subsidization and investigates MOW's clients' need for possible additional help from other service organizations.

Directors Gene and Kay Dickerson, are the Application Committee chairmen. Their staff of workers are the first interviewers for prospective clients. They describe the service to the new applicants and see if special diets are to be ordered.

Director Mary Callahan is Nutrition chairman and visits the clients' physicians to determine if the prescription diets remain as originally ordered.

All members of the board assist these committee chairmen. Many deliver meals, act as day chairmen, interview clients, keep the accounting records. In 1986, 56,788 meals were delivered with a total of \$161,623.50 remitted to Boswell Memorial Hospital for providing the meals and special diets.

William Tritton, MOW's treasurer, is accountable for the accurate records. Ex officio board members Anne Lett, Al and Martha MacCorkell are the coordinators. They compile an updated list of clients each week, assign the clients to the proper route categories, submit the listings to the driver day chairman and work with the appropriate hospital personnel to coordinate the number of meals with the delivery service.

Until 1985 the coordinators were on salary. Now, Meals on Wheels is a 100 percent volunteer organization.

Rose Larsen has served for the past three years as Director of Publicity for Meals on Wheels.



Volunteer team fill life through selfless giving

By YOLANDA MUHAMMAD
Sun Cities Independent

A frail and infirm woman, 82, was due to accept a delivery at noon.

When the driver knocked at the door and received no answer, he went straight to the nearest telephone.

Al MacCorkell took the call. First he tried to contact a neighbor and then he called Philadelphia to reach the woman's daughter. Still no answers.

So he was in his car in a flash to check on the woman. He was at first relieved, then a little irritated to find that she had gone shopping and forgotten the appointment.

But he smiled and reassured her that he would deliver the meal himself in a short while. "Just don't forget tomorrow, okay?" he said as firmly as he could, softened by the look of remorse in her eyes.

Al and Martha MacCorkell are the coordinators for the Meals On Wheels program in Sun City.

It is their job to organize the delivery of the 125 meals that go to the homes of housebound residents seven days a week.

The MacCorkells will be among those honored at a ceremony being held Jan. 16, at Sundial Auditorium.

The event is part of the 30th Anniversary of Sun City, to thank the many volunteers who keep community services flowing smoothly.

Al and Martha have been with Meals On Wheels for eight years — four years as drivers and four years as coordinators.

Before the MacCorkells, it was a paid job, but when they took over as coordinators they felt they wanted to volunteer their services as the others do.

"A phone call starts it off," Martha MacCorkell says.

Mr. MacCorkell adds, "They call 974-9430 and say they want to get on Meals On Wheels."

It's a 24-hour line, seven days a week.

From there an interviewer contacts the inquiring party.

"We don't just deliver meals to anybody," Mr. MacCorkell says. "We are not a restaurant or a catering service."

"They have to be on a special diet, they have to be homebound and they have to be unable to prepare their own food, for medical reasons."

Sun Citian

Profile

Portraits Of Our Residents

It is the job of the interviewer to make sure these criteria are met.

The meals are purchased from Boswell Hospital and Meals on Wheels charges the customer the same price that the hospital charges.

"If a person cannot finance the meal, we subsidize them," Mrs. MacCorkell says.

"We get no funds from state, county or federal government — it all comes from donations," Mr. MacCorkell says proudly.

All the money comes from local donations: civic clubs, corporations, churches and individuals, even wills.

Over 700 meals a week are ordered from the hospital. Cost is \$5.70 for two meals, one hot and one sack lunch.

At Christmas and Thanksgiving "little extras" are added to the meal by Boswell kitchens, which the customers appreciate.

Kiwanians donate fruitcakes to give out as gifts at Christmas.

Clubs at Bell Recreation Center make favors to place

on the trays for all the holidays.

The MacCorkells find their work gratifying because Meals On Wheels provides a balanced diet and keeps many of their clients from having to go into a nursing home.

"One lady called the other day," Mrs. MacCorkell says, "to tell me that when she started Meals On Wheels she was malnourished and now the doctor says she is in very good shape."

The MacCorkells also drive for the Red Cross on Monday. "We don't play golf or cards," Mr. MacCorkell adds.

"We are second generation Sun Citians," Mrs. MacCorkell says.

They first came to visit Mr. MacCorkell's mother, who lived in Sun City, in 1962.

"We have been retired for over 20 years, since 1966," they say.

They were involved in manufacturing in California and had a vending business in Phoenix and Tucson.

Then they spent seven years on a boat sailing the coastal waters of the continental United States and Mexico.

"We got tired of that and we bought a motor home and travelled around the United States for seven more years," Mr. MacCorkell says.

"We are very fortunate. We have done it all. We have done as much as we wanted."

"People ask us why we never take a vacation. Well ... where is there left to go?"

"We retired from hard work," Mrs. MacCorkell says, laughing, but after enjoying 14 years of retirement, they went back to work volunteering their time to fellow Sun Citians.

"We enjoy doing this. Meals On Wheels is a great organization and everyone does a great job. We are happy to be a part of it," Mrs. MacCorkell says.

Motivated by the desire to help others, Al and Martha MacCorkell are dynamos; and the force of their giving hums as sweetly as the song of a bluebird.

Meals on Wheels celebrates 20 years

Neighbors-helping-neighbors spirit continues to guide volunteer organization

By **BRET McKEAND**
Sun Cities Independent

Twenty years ago, a small group of Sun City neighbors met over coffee to discuss a wild new idea: Development of a program to prepare and deliver meals to those who were unable to cook for themselves.

That idea eventually became what is now known as Sun City Meals on Wheels. And although the original purpose was to help neighbors, today Meals on Wheels serves thousands of meals a year and the list of clients continues to grow and grow.

The organization will celebrate



Gretchen Bergman, left, and Laura Mathis, two of Meals on Wheels' six founders.

"There were people who needed help. Rena (the founder) knew there would be a need for a service like this in Sun City."

—Gretchen Bergman.

its 20th anniversary with a luncheon April 1 at the Lakes Club. During the event, volunteers who have served Meals on Wheels for more than 10 years will be honored.

"It was neighbors helping neighbors," says Sun Citian Laura Mathis, one of the six founding members of Meals on Wheels. The other five were Rena Williams, Gretchen Bergman, Jean Phillips,

Edna Van Pischke and Rev. Duane Thistlethwaite.

According to Mrs. Bergman, it was Rena Williams who initiated that first meeting. All of those in attendance lived on the same block.

"She called us all up one day and invited us over for coffee," recalls Mrs. Bergman. During the meeting Mrs. Williams described a similar program operating in her hometown of South Bend, Ind.

"She pointed to each person and said, 'you be secretary, you be treasurer,' etc.," recalls Mrs. Mathis.

The first meeting was held Oct. 4, 1971. Sun City was still an infant — only 11 years old. The community's northern-most boundary was Grand Avenue.

"But there were people who needed help. Rena knew there would be a need for a service like this in Sun City," says Mrs. Bergman.

Mrs. Williams was an "outgoing person and always wanted to do something for

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MEALS

people," recalls Mrs. Bergman. She was persistent and wouldn't let the idea drop.

Finally, on May 1, 1972, the new organization delivered its first meals. Seven clients were served on that first day — but by the end of the first year that number would swell to 4,126.

Mrs. Bergman recalls how those first routes were developed. The group knew where Boswell Hospital was to eventually be built. Using that spot as a center, they mapped out a five-mile delivery area that included Youngtown.

"That's really as far as we thought we'd ever go," says Mrs. Bergman.

Over the years, meals were prepared by several local restaurants — Wilcrest Restaurant, Greenbriar Cafeteria and Duff's Cafeteria — before the kitchens at Boswell assumed full control of meal preparation in 1980.

And, although the number of people served over the years continues to grow, the basic

premise of the operation remains the same: To deliver nutritious meals to any person in Sun City and Youngtown who is unable to prepare his or her own food.

Meals on Wheels is an all-volunteer organization and accepts no government funds. The operation is funded entirely by contributions from residents, local clubs and churches.

Residents are asked to pay a modest fee for their meals. Twenty years ago the cost for a hot meal was \$2.25. Today, that meal costs \$5.75 and, in some cases, Meals on Wheels will subsidize the cost for those unable to afford the meal.

James Hauer, president of the organization, attributes the continued success of Meals on Wheels to the work of its volunteers.

"We have had incredible success with volunteers," he says. Meals on Wheels has survived its first 20 years and will continue another 20 years because of the "quiet dedication" of volunteers.

Mr. Hauer feels the next 20 years will be as difficult, if not more difficult than the first 20 years due to the aging population and the ever-increasing demand for the service.

"We see a change coming about,"

says Mr. Hauer. He says Meals on Wheels is receiving more applications than ever before, "especially from Youngtown and the southern part of Sun City where there are many people living at the poverty level."

Meals on Wheels

Founded: Oct. 4, 1971. First meals delivered May 1, 1972.

Goal: To deliver nutritious meals to any person in Sun City or Youngtown who is unable to prepare his or her own food.

Cost: \$5.70 per day for hot dinner, cool supper and milk and fruit for breakfast.

In 1991: MOW delivered 77,408 meals at a cost of \$220,612.

To apply: Contact Meals on Wheels at 974-9430. An application committee reviews all applications and interviews prospective clients to determine eligibility. Coordinators then prepare delivery routes and schedule 170 regular drivers and 50 substitute drivers. In all, there

are 270 volunteers on file with MOW.



Wheeling meals is an eye-opener for these volunteers

"Our busiest time is in the summer. In the winter, all the relatives come in and cook meals, but nobody visits in the summertime."

Al MacCorkell
Coordinator
Meals on Wheels

By Julia Jones
Staff writer

SUN CITY — You see 'em all in 18 years, Foofie Harlan said.

For 18 years, she and her husband, Bud, have been working with Sun City Meals on Wheels Inc., in recent years as interviewers.

"Most of the time, people really need us," Foofie Harlan said. "People are just out of the hospital, and they need some help so they can stay in their own homes."

But sometimes, following up on applications, things come to light.

"We called one woman on the phone, and she said, 'I can't see you today because I have a golf date,'" Harlan said. "It was easy to tell her she wasn't eligible anyway."

"We're not Domino's," said Al MacCorkell, who coordinates operations at Meals on Wheels. "We don't deliver to just anyone."

The interviewers, drivers, coordinators and all the other volunteers who staff Sun City Meals on Wheels are marking its 20th anniversary this week. The organization started in 1971, when five residents arranged to deliver food

to seven clients. By the end of that first year, they served 4,126 clients.

In 1991, 270 volunteers arranged for 77,408 meals prepared by Boswell Hospital to be delivered to clients at a cost of \$220,612.

It's a job that just gets more involved, MacCorkell said.

He and his wife, Martha, with some help from Nancy Bellin, pull together details of who gets what where and when, then stick red dots on route maps for driving teams to follow.

"We have about 160 drivers, and it's a different driver every day," MacCorkell said. "We run 12 routes each weekday, and nine routes on weekends. The job takes about 30 hours a week apiece, and, no, they don't use a computer."

"We've looked at it, but we have route changes not just daily but hourly, so for our purposes, it's just simpler to go by the ledger book," MacCorkell said. "If they all decided to get meals five days a week, our whole job would be simpler." Then for a certain number of recipients, an out-of-state relative will pay by the month, but coordinators must be sure that

only meals actually delivered are charged for.

Ordered meals that can't be delivered can be the first signal of trouble, said Mary Randel, a veteran of 19 years of volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

"Wednesday is our day to drive, and (Margaret Cole and I) have been running this route in Youngtown for years, so these people are almost like family," Randel said. "Most of them look forward to getting that meal, so they don't want to visit too much." The two women drive and deliver for about 90 minutes before noon.

That's why, if a participant doesn't answer the doorbell, more bells go off in drivers' heads, Randel said.

OVER

"Sometimes, they're just gone to the doctor and forgot to call," she said. "But we try to follow through with the neighbors, do a little checking because we can't leave the meals on the doorstep."

And then there's the next step: notifying the coordinators.

"We'll call and then we'll go out to the house," MacCorkell said. "I've found two people dead and seven on the floor; some of them had been on the floor all night. That's the reason we check."

The MacCorkells have coordinated the program for about seven years, after delivering meals for three years.

"We've got it down to a pretty smooth system now," he said. The meals, prepared in Boswell Hospi-

tal's kitchen, MacCorkell said, are "good, real good. We deliver 130 meals on a weekday, and you're not going to please 130 of the people who live out here, but they do a good job."

"If nobody's home, we can't deliver it, and the hospital won't take it back, so we take it home," Randel said. "They're very well planned, and they're hot, too hot to eat when we pick them up."

And they're big, Randel said. There's the hot dinner of meat (not fried) and vegetables, and then there's a sack lunch with a sandwich, fruit, salad, dessert and soda. Enough for three meals, really, she said, for \$5.70 per day.

It's enough, often, to keep people living in their own homes.

"We have one dear, little old lady, who can't see, and can't hear very well, but she's not in a nursing home, God love her; she's staying at home," Randel said.

Word spreads when things go right, and business continues to pick up.

Calls, in fact, have come in from California and New York, seeking Meals on Wheels help.

"Well, that's not exactly reputation," MacCorkell said; "we're just

the only ones in the phone book. If someone wants Meals on Wheels for their parents in San Diego, they call us first."

Although other groups provide home delivery, MacCorkell said, Meals on Wheels prides itself on receiving no subsidies, providing no free meals (although donations cover some expenses for some clients), delivering seven days a week as long as clients need the service, and staying on the job all year long.

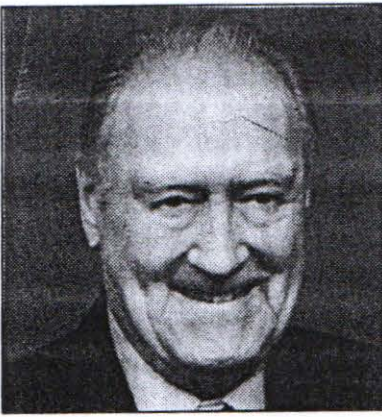
"Our busiest time is in the summer," MacCorkell said. "In the winter, all the relatives come in and cook meals, but nobody visits in the summertime."

And every last application is checked out and followed by a home visit.

"We had one man who asked us to come while his wife was away," Foofie Harlan recalled. "So we went to visit, and when we fought our way through the smoke, there he was at the poker table with some friends."

"I said, 'Are you sick?' And he said, 'No, I just don't want to have to cook,'" Harlan said.

"I guess it takes all kinds."



Glenn Sanberg

Wheelers keep meals in motion

Home delivery of meals is big business in Sun City. Any morning seven days a week you can see Meals On Wheels in motion over at Boswell Memorial Hospital. Pairs of volunteers covering twelve well-mapped routes take off with carefully-identified hot and cold packaged meals. Some 140 Sun Citians will be waiting. For many it will be the most important social contact of the day, for others a lifeline without which they would be in serious trouble.

The other Friday Jean Peterson, driver's chairman for Meals on Wheels, introduced me to some of the drivers waiting to deliver their brown-bag lunches and hot food containers.

Feeding 140 people their main meals of the day takes careful planning and precise execution. The fact that this operation is accomplished by some 300 dedicated Sun City volunteers commands more than casual notice.

Meals On Wheels is pretty much a self-sustaining operation. Except in the very few cases where undue financial hardship exists, recipients pay Boswell's charge of \$5.70 a day for two meals. Drivers collect each Friday. Other incidental expenses of Meals on Wheels' frugal budget comes from contributions. "We do not receive community fund support, nor

do we conduct fund drives", Mrs. Peterson said. But she quickly added "We do accept contributions."

Meals On Wheels has no paid employees. The operation relies on 150 volunteer drivers and an additional 150 people who keep the organization ticking. Mr. and Mrs. Al MacCorkell, are a case in point. With the help of Nancy Bellin three days a week, they have been coordinating the book keeping for several years. Working at home they make changes and additions to the delivery schedules and keep the financial records as well.

To keep the wheels moving smoothly Day Chairmen and Co-Chairmen must be on duty even during summer months which sometimes poses a problem. Jane Freeman, Sunday Day Chairman manages to maintain schedules in spite of Sabbath's routines. "People get hungry on Sunday as well as any other day," one driver quipped.

To qualify for Meals On Wheels a personal interview is required. Reasons for eligibility are clearly established. Certain rules apply. Meals are never left outside. Special diets require a prescription from a doctor and must be updated every three months.

Drivers are trained to be alert to special situations that might arise. They are not permitted to move, lift or feed a recipient, and must report any unusual circumstance. There have been several cases in which serious trouble has been averted.

How fortunate we are to have a caring organization like Meals On Wheels working

See Volunteers keep, C2

Thursday, April 9, 1992

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Volunteers keep wheels and meals rolling

there as will Martha Moyer, Public Relations Director, Del E. Webb Communities — a real chance to rub elbows with living history.

Glenn Sanberg, who lives in Sun City, is retired from the American Society of Association Executives.

the author of that splendid book, "Del Webb — A Man, A Company", will be yours at the Annual Spring public Meeting of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 2:00 p.m. next Monday, April 13, at the Community Center, Sun City West.

Margaret Finnerty will be

— From C1
quietly and without ostentation these 20 years. I propose a royal 21-gun salute to all Sun City Meals On Wheelers. Without their added caring touch, Sun City could not claim its reputation as a retirement paradise.

A golden opportunity to hear

Meals program on a 20-year roll

By MIKE GARRETT
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Meals on Wheels keeps rolling along, doing what it has been doing for the past 20½ years.

"We're a day-to-day operation seven days a week," said Meals on Wheels spokesman Bob Burns. "We're there for people around the clock."

From a small beginning on May 1, 1972, when the first meals were delivered to seven clients, the volunteer organization has grown to serve nearly 130 people daily in Sun City and Youngtown.

The non-profit, strictly volunteer organization's only aim is to deliver nutritious meals to people who are unable to prepare their own food.

Last year 77,408 meals were served at a cost of \$220,612, Burns said. Of

that total, Meals on Wheels paid \$12,956 in donated subsidies.

The meals are delivered by 170 regular volunteer drivers and 50 substitutes.

"We're just continuing to perform," Burns said. "I really don't know anything outstanding that's different about us except that we've got a group of dedicated people who organize everything in cooperation with Boswell Hospital, which furnishes the meals."

"Many clients have reached a poverty level of income," Burns said. "We're supported entirely by contributions."

He said Meals on Wheels charges \$5.70 a day for meals. But those unable to meet the cost of the meals delivered to them are subsidized by

the amount they are unable to pay by local service clubs, area churches and individuals. The organization receives no federal, state or city funding.

Before the wheels really start to turn, MOW volunteers interview prospective clients each week in their homes or area hospitals to determine their program eligibility and whether any physician-prescribed diets are needed.

Since 1986, area churches and synagogues and medical personnel have been contacted to locate deserving people needing supplementary help.

As for the future, Burns said, "we will keep on doing what we've been doing."

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Tuesday, April 27, 1993

Meals on Wheels keeps rolling

Area volunteers celebrate 21 years of service



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Catherine Pierce, a 13-year volunteer with Sun City Meals on Wheels, loads her car with meals for area residents at Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital. The Sun City Meals on Wheels delivers meals to between 120 and 130 clients each week. Last year, 36,428 deliveries were made.

By BRITT KENNERLY
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — When Mary Randel and Margaret Cole became drivers for Sun City Meals on Wheels, they had to take their own containers and pick up the food at an area restaurant.

Twenty years later, as Sun City Meals on Wheels celebrates its 21st birthday, the two women are still teamed up and delivering meals to the needy.

Things have changed in 21 years — the meals are

now prepared at Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital, and it takes more volunteers than ever to keep things flowing.

But the aim of Meals on Wheels is the same — to provide low-cost, nutritious meals for those who, for whatever reason, are unable to prepare them.

"Volunteering is our way of paying back a little of all the good in Sun City," Randel said. "We see some sad things, some funny things, but everyone appreciates the service."

Randel and Cole, nurses who worked in a veteran's hospital in Cleveland before retiring to Arizona, are just two of almost 300 volunteers who keep Meals on Wheels running.

Fifty-three of those volunteers were honored today at Meals on Wheels' annual spring luncheon, but it takes team work by everyone involved to keep the organization on its toes.

In Sun City and Youngtown, the Sun City Meals on Wheels area delivers each week to between 120 and 130 clients. Last year, 36,428 deliveries were made, with two meals dropped off at each stop.

See Service delivers A5

**Special
Volunteer
section
inside**

OVER

Service delivers nutrition to area residents

—From A1

The process begins when a potential Meals on Wheels client, either on his or her own or through a doctor, contacts Meals on Wheels and expresses interest in receiving meal service. Many are just out of the hospital and receive the meals during recuperation; some are at an advanced age and simply incapable of cooking.

Each day, volunteers who serve as interviewers call the main switchboard, give their personal code number and are in turn told the names and numbers of people who desire help.

"I then call them and find

out if they want to be signed up or just want to ask questions about Meals on Wheels," said Erma Ferguson, who has worked as an interviewer for five years. "If they want to be signed up, I make an appointment with them, and go to their house to interview them."

After a client is signed up, information about them is dropped off at Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital, where the meals are prepared and picked up by drivers.

Each day, those drivers pick up two meals for each client at about 11 a.m., delivering them before 12:30 p.m.

One meal is a hot meal, in-

cluding a meat and vegetable; the other, a cold sack lunch, contains bread and butter, a sandwich, fruit and a drink.

The cost? Five dollars and seventy cents per person, per day.

It's a good meal for a good price, said Ferguson, a former hospital dietitian who taught at Iowa State University.

"When we interview them, if they appear to be indigent or it seems like raising \$5.70 would be a hardship for them, we have a social worker who can go out to see them," she said.

Every Thursday, Don and Dorothy Heffelfinger, who live in Sierra Winds, deliver nine or more meals in two hours

with Meals on Wheels.

Former residents of Youngstown, Ohio, they became Meals on Wheels Volunteers 17 years ago.

Don, who has had a stroke, has trouble moving around, so he sits in the back seat, arranges the meals and reads the map while Dorothy drives.

"She says I tell her where to go," he said.

Married for 56 years, the Heffelfingers thrive on their Meals on Wheels adventure.

"It's something we really enjoy," said Don. "You get acquainted with some of the people, and sometimes, you're the only person they see all day."

DOERS PROFILE

Evelyn Bucknam

Vita Attended business college; insurance underwriter and claims superintendent for 28 years.

Hometown Wichita, Kan.

Valley home Sun City, 27 years.

Marital status Widowed



Self-portrait I like people and try to help others.

Motto People are more important than things.

Greatest feat My good, happy marriage. I cherish the memories I have.

Walter Mitty fantasy I don't have one; I'm very comfortable with who I am and what I have.

Inspiration My mother. She was a very special person.

Good/bad habits I keep up on world events through newspaper, TV and radio. My bad habit is not accepting my limitations.

Favorite food/drink Chicken/water.

TV programs "Jeopardy" and the news.

Books at bedside Light reading to put me to sleep.

Vacation spot/luxury: England; I don't have a luxury.

Key to longevity Stay healthy; proper diet and exercise.

Last words You have to do something with your todays or your tomorrows will be filled with empty yesterdays.

Bucknam looks back on service

After dedicating 21 years of volunteer service to Meals on Wheels, Evelyn Bucknam retired this year.

Bucknam, a 27-year Sun City resident, is a charter member of the non-profit organization, which rolled into action on May 1, 1972.

"One of the founders was the co-founder of my church," she said, referring to the Rev. Duane Thistlethwaite, who also helped establish First United Methodist Church in Sun City.

Meals on Wheels provides people who cannot cook for themselves with two meals a day.

The cost is \$5.70 a day, but the agency will pick up the tab for clients who cannot afford to pay.

Many of the clients are visually impaired, bedridden or just home from the hospital, Bucknam said.

"This saves a lot of them from having to go into care homes," she added.

When it started 21 years ago, Meals on Wheels had seven clients. Last year, Bucknam said, it delivered 78,000 meals.

Bucknam started out as a driver and later transferred to the application office, where she interviewed prospective clients.

"I got involved because I wanted to do something to help in Sun City, and certainly there was a need. People in Phoenix have the idea that we're all wealthy out here, golfing and going to parties all the time," she said. "That's not true. We have people out here who cannot afford the \$5.70 a day for two meals."

Bucknam said she felt "guilty" when she retired, and still feels a longing to help others.

"But my bad habit is, I don't accept my limitations," she said.

Looking back on 21 years of service, Bucknam said it was very rewarding.

"I never did it for recognition; it's been very gratifying."

BUCKNAM, EVELYN

Meals on Wheels keeps rolling

Area volunteers celebrate 21 years of service



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

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See Service deliveries 45

**Special
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inside**

Service delivers nutrition to area residents

—From A1

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Each day, those drivers pick up two meals for each client at about 11 a.m., delivering them before 12:30 p.m.

One meal is a hot meal, in-

cluding a meat and vegetable; the other, a cold sack lunch, contains bread and butter, a sandwich, fruit and a drink.

The cost? Five dollars and seventy cents per person, per day.

It's a good meal for a good price, said Ferguson, a former hospital dietitian who taught at Iowa State University.

"When we interview them, if they appear to be indigent or it seems like raising \$5.70 would be a hardship for them, we have a social worker who can go out to see them," she said.

Every Thursday, Don and Dorothy Heffelfinger, who live in Sierra Winds, deliver nine or more meals in two hours

with Meals on Wheels.

Former residents of Youngstown, Ohio, they became Meals on Wheels Volunteers 17 years ago.

Don, who has had a stroke, has trouble moving around, so he sits in the back seat, arranges the meals and reads the map while Dorothy drives.

"She says I tell her where to go," he said.

Married for 56 years, the Heffelfingers thrive on their Meals on Wheels adventure.

"It's something we really enjoy," said Don. "You get acquainted with some of the people, and sometimes, you're the only person they see all day."

Meals program faces funds crunch

By IAN MITCHELL
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Sun City Meals on Wheels has been losing \$400 a week since April, and the president of the food-delivery service said his non-profit organization can't absorb sustained losses.

Jim Hauer said he has been tapping reserve funds to keep the group's \$240,000 budget balanced.

"I can go a year on what I got," Hauer said.

"We're going to be OK, but I'm looking to a year from now — we could be a disaster," he said. "We just don't want to get to the point

where we would ever say 'we can't do it' or have to turn it over to a government agency."

Meals on Wheels, which has been operating in Sun City since 1972, delivers more than 100 meals a day to homebound residents of Sun City and Youngtown.

About 190 volunteer drivers, who generally work one day a week, donate their time and gasoline to serve meals to their neighbors.

"I get more out of it than I give, because the people are so appreciative and so nice," said Ruth Cromer, a volunteer driver since 1983. "It makes my whole day."

Mollie Tuttle, who's been serving meals for 16 years, said drivers often serve up friendship as well as a hot and cold meal for Meals on Wheels clients.

"They want to talk, talk, talk," she said. "There's a lot of people where we're the only people they see all day."

Hauer said Meals on Wheels is losing money because more clients can't afford the \$5.70 a day it charges for food costs. The organization will subsidize residents who can demonstrate financial need, he said.

About 10 percent of the service's clients are subsidized, Hauer said.

The retired trust officer and attorney blamed rising medical costs and inadequate pensions for leaving many older residents without the funds needed to afford the meals.

Hauer said he rode along with a volunteer making deliveries on a route where the average client age was 92. "It was remarkable, when you think of people that age happy, taking care of themselves and being responsible," he said.

The Meals on Wheels service enables otherwise-healthy people who might not be able to prepare their

See Expenses eat, A5

Expenses eat up food budget

—From A1
own food to remain independent, Hauer said.

The organization reviews participants before beginning meal service and determines financial need through a rigorous evaluation process, he added.

Meals on Wheels does not accept funds from the government or from the Sun City Community Fund, but relies on donations from local residents and organizations.

Hauer said he plans on sending a test mailing of 100 letters to residents next week to explain the group's need and ask for help. Local churches, many of which already support the program, may also be a source of funds, Hauer said.

"I really think that Sun City people want to participate," he said. "If they knew the need was there, they'd participate."

Contributions to Sun City Meals on Wheels may be sent to P.O. Box 1825, Sun City, 85372. For information or to sign up for the service, call 974-9430.

Volunteers keep program rolling

By J.J. McCORMACK
Staff writer

SUN CITY — In the volunteer circle that drives the Sun City Meals On Wheels program, a "longtimer" is defined as anyone who has given at least 10 years of continuous service.

Based on that strict definition, 45 of the 250-member Meals On Wheels volunteer corps are longtimers. That select group will be honored when the meal-delivery program marks its 23rd anniversary Wednesday during

salute to volunteers

April 23 through April 29

For more information on volunteering with Sun City Meals on Wheels or to sign up for service with the organization, call 974-9430.

its annual spring awards luncheon in Faith Presbyterian Church.

Among those on hand will be Elizabeth Smith, a 20-year veteran of the organization, and Mollie Tuttle, who has been delivering meals to homebound Sun City and Youngtown residents for 17 years.

The circumstances under which Smith and Tuttle got their Meals On Wheels name tags are different, but the reasons they're still wearing the tags are largely the same.

Smith, a retired physical therapist, was recruited into the ranks by a pair of nurse friends. She applied for an

interviewer's job, a position that entails interviewing prospective Meals On Wheels clients to assess their eligibility and dietary needs.

"The clients are interesting and I love it because it makes me feel good," Smith said.

Twenty years ago, the meals cost \$3 per day and were prepared at a local restaurant, Smith recalled. Today, the hot meal and brown-bag lunch are prepared at Walter O. Boswell Hospital and cost \$5.70 per day. Many clients cannot afford the seven-day-a-week

► See SC women, A3



Mollie Tuttle of Sun City has been a volunteer driver for Meals on Wheels for the past 17 years.

Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Elizabeth Smith conducts a telephone interview with someone who wants to receive Meals On Wheels. The Sun City woman has volunteered her services for the past 20 years.

SC women reach out

■ From A1

service but receive the meals anyway thanks to a subsidy program.

"Meals On Wheels never wants anyone to go without food," Smith said.

Unlike other non-profit organizations in the Sun Cities, Meals On Wheels does not require volunteers to log every hour they work. That appeals to Smith, who doesn't see the need to accumulate volunteer hours.

"You don't have to sign in and out. You do it because you want to do it," she said.

Smith goes out on interviews on an on-call basis two Mondays a month. She uses her own car, sometimes crisscrossing Sun City to conduct eight interviews in a day.

The people Smith connects to the Meals On Wheels lifeline are the reason she has reached the 20-year volunteer milestone. They are her inspiration, she said.

"They can have all these problems and they live alone," yet they have "a lot of fortitude and a lot of pride," she said.

Smith often is amazed at how some people survived before they were referred to Meals On Wheels. In most cases, neighbors have been

their saviors, she said.

Tuttle said she too is inspired by the people she delivers meals to once a week and derives a great deal of personal satisfaction from the volunteer job she read about in a church newsletter.

"It does as much for you as it does for them," she said.

Tuttle said often a Meals On Wheels delivery person is the only human contact a client will have all day. She said she lingers as long as she can to chat.

"I enjoy it. I think it's fun. The people are fun to talk to," she said.

Tuttle puts about 15 miles on her 10-year-old car every delivery day.

"It's been good to me. It's still running." She and 200 other volunteer drivers delivered 36,570 meals in 1994.

A cheerful disposition and sense of humor prevent Tuttle and Smith from getting too emotionally involved in their clients' lives. Both said they are heartened by the fact people in need aren't going without food.

"Meals On Wheels is one of the finest services there is," Smith said. Both women said they plan to keep their volunteer jobs indefinitely.

"I figured when I got to be 80 I'd quit. But I'm over 80 now," Smith said.

Meals on Wheels delivers with care

By MICHAEL P. HEGARTY
Staff writer

Sun Citian James Hauer wasn't surprised to learn that the Meals on Wheels program in Chicago helped save lives during the heat wave that is blamed in the deaths of more than 400 people in the Midwest.

After all, that's what the program is designed to do.

"We pay attention to who we're serving, to the physical condition of the client," said Hauer, president of Sun City Meals on Wheels Inc. "These are people the volunteers are quite intimate with."

Meals on Wheels programs serve Sun City, Sun City West and Youngtown.

When Chicago volunteers delivered meals to the elderly people in its program, they found several people in need of medical attention from the unusual heat.

Sun City volunteers have run into the same types of situations.

"We're there just a few minutes, but we serve the basic inquiries," Hauer said. "We always ask if everything's OK and the clients are pretty honest."

The participants are just as interested in the volunteers.

"They are taking care of themselves. ... They are happy, considerate people, who inquire about a volunteer's trip or how their wife is doing," Hauer said.

There are 190 volunteers who help deliver more than 80,000 meals a year in the retirement communities. Since the organization assists homebound people 365 days a year, the volunteers divide up the work. The program delivers two



Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Volunteer drivers for Sun City Meals on Wheels Inc. wait to collect the hot meals at Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital where the food is prepared.

meals a day — one hot, one cold — to 110 stops daily. The two-person teams serve meals on 12 routes.

"Even though there's a different person each day, they get a feel for what their needs are," Hauer said.

He said heat is not a problem in the Sun Cities, since most people are accustomed to it. But volunteers have encountered residents experiencing strokes, shortness of breath or falling and injuring themselves.

To prepare the volunteers for any type of emergency the participants may need, the homebound person is required to leave the name and number of a person to call in case of an emer-

gency, instead of just 911, Hauer said.

"It's not always something that serious," he said. "We can call and get a person over there and wait until they're there to take care of them."

"It takes a judgment call, but we have the clients prepped on a procedure of what's going to happen, who to call. It works out pretty good."

Hauer said emergency units sometimes have to be called. He referred to an incident in Sun City when he went to a door, heard the person unlock it, then fall.

"We pushed the door open and the gentleman was lying on his back," Hauer said. "He had a stroke. We checked the vital signs and called 911."

Meals on Wheels volunteers follow up on clients when they have to receive medical attention, Hauer said. And, since nearly one-third of Sun Citians do not have any children to check up on them, the community helps keep an eye on one another.

"Sun City people are survivors. They've already taken care of themselves," Hauer said. "They have a buddy system through the hospital or Meals on Wheels or their neighbor. There are very few people who are isolated. They have an understanding and compassion for their neighbors."

"The concern and care comes quite frequently from the incredible caring and loving consideration of Meals on Wheels workers."

Cost of the program per client is \$5.70 per day, with most of the funding coming from local churches, organizations and private donations. Anyone in Sun City or Youngtown interested in receiving meals or volunteering for Meals on Wheels should call 974-9430. In Sun City West, people may call 214-4233.

Daily News-Sun • Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2000

Meals-on-Wheels could use some spares

SUN CITY WEST: Demand for service increases demand for volunteers

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

For 15 years, Bob and Norma Cameron of Sun City West have stopped by Del E. Webb Hospital regularly, picked up a couple dozen prepared meals, and delivered them to participants in the Meals-on-Wheels program.

They recently were joined by Leonard Henry, now in his second month as a volunteer with the program.

"I use my own car and right now I have 11 customers," said Henry as he checked a load in the cafeteria kitchen at the hospital on a recent Wednesday.

"It takes me about an hour, and I do it just one day a week."

Jan Heidman, who heads up the volunteer group, would like more folks like Henry and the Camerons, and soon.

Her program is in jeopardy as additional volunteers aren't

turning up.

"We are in trouble. We desperately need drivers, coordinators and interviewers," Heidman said.

"If we're unable to fill all those slots, we may have to stop accepting new recipients, and perhaps cancel delivery of meals on Saturdays."

Increasing numbers of clients have prompted the need for more volunteers, she said. The community is aging and weekly deliveries have continued to increase.

The rewards are psychic, not monetary. Drivers even pay for their own gas, and most travel in pairs since it's easier to stop, unload and carry meals, and greet residents at the door, Heidman said.

Those benefitting from the service pay \$6.40 daily for the meals, which provides a cold lunch and a hot dinner, all prepared in the hospital kitchens. Drivers collect the money on Fridays.

On a recent day, lunch was a submarine sandwich, fruit cup or

juice, and a cookie.

But dinner was lavish: roast turkey with cornbread dressing, mashed potatoes, broccoli Normandine, cranberry sauce, spinach salad, carrot cake and a roll with margarine.

Volunteers pick up the meals, ready-prepared and in containers, and pack them in hot cases, cold cases or other containers, then deliver them on a regular schedule starting at 11 a.m. Two meals, lunch and dinner, go to each house.

But as recipients change or leave town occasionally, the route

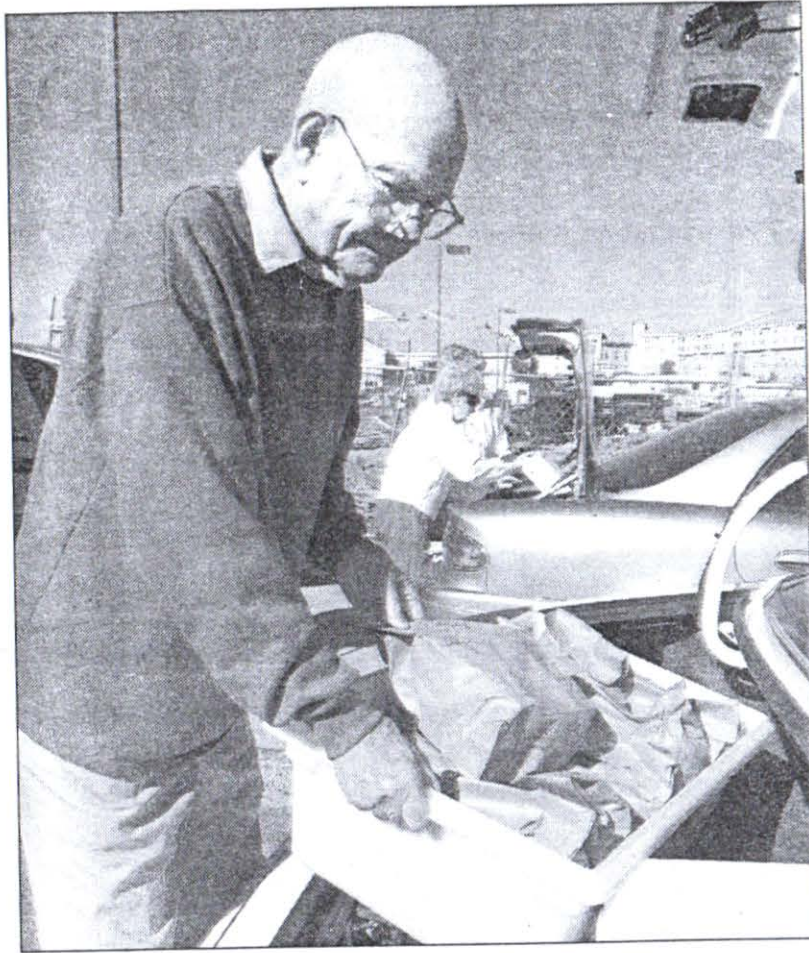
is varied, one reason why a navigator in the starboard seat is handy.

Drivers participate only every other month, making it easy on those who vacation, take trips to see the kids or just don't want too regular a schedule.

The Sun City West program now serves about 40 people each week, and may soon have more clients. It started in 1984, with just four customers.

Prospective volunteers may call Heidman at 546-0632, or Kay Grossman at 546-4598, for details.

(over)



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

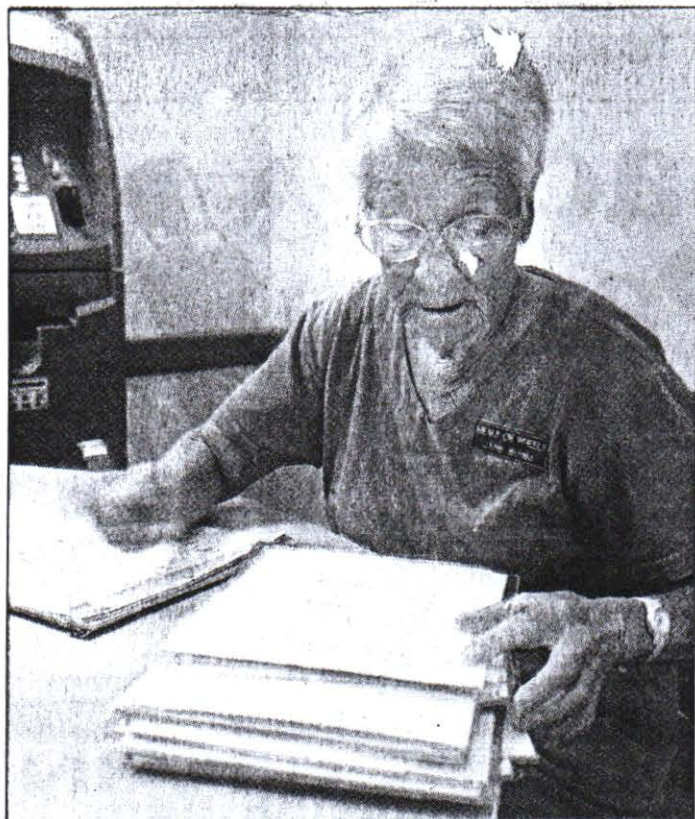
Leonard Henry loads his car for Meals-on-Wheels deliveries in Sun City West.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jan Heidman, left, coordinates Meals-on-Wheels at Del E. Webb Hospital, where Elizabeth Lamar, center, and Doris Utroske get ready for delivery.

Wheels keep life in motion



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jane Burki, president of Meals On Wheels, readies routes.

DRIVE: Many Sun Citians cite Meals on Wheels service as source of sustenance

HAYLEY RINGLE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Martin Merson said without the Meals on Wheels service, he would starve.

The 93-year-old said his wife did all the cooking, and since she died, he relies heavily on the food service.

"It's been a lifesaver," said Merson, a 17-year Sun City resident who receives the service seven days a week.

Meals on Wheels is a non-profit organization operated by volunteers. The service provides a hot and cold meal 365 days a year to residents in Sun City and Youngtown who are unable to prepare their own meals.

The cost is \$6 per day for the two meals, and volunteers drive

to homes and deliver the meal every day at lunchtime. Financial assistance is available for those unable to pay.

"They're really wonderful," said Marie Chapman, 92, one of the original Sun City residents who gets her meals delivered five days a week. "I couldn't go along without them, because I don't have any transportation for shopping."

The food is prepared at Boswell Hospital, and meals such as Salisbury steak with mashed potatoes and corn are brought to the residents by and freshly made in aluminum containers.

People with a doctor's prescription may receive meals for their special diets, such as one for diabetics or those on low salt diets, said Jane Burki, president of Meals on Wheels.

The cold sack meal includes a sandwich, salad, roll, fruit and a dessert, with milk and juice.

See Volunteers keep, A5

From A1

There are two set menus that alternate, with hot meals, including beef stew and cornbread, roast turkey and London broil.

Meals on Wheels helps 100 residents in the Sun City and Youngtown area. Customers can choose which days they want the meals, and can start or stop service at any time, with a 48-hour notice.

"Cooking for one person is foolish," said Alma Johnson, 94, who gets her meals four days a week. "I'm very well pleased with the service."

Johnson said her only complaint is the size of the food servings. She is a light eater and sometimes can't eat the entire meal.

Twelve drivers — each with a runner — go out each day at around 11 a.m., driving their own cars to deliver the meals according to routes organized by Ann Osburn, the only paid person on staff.

"I've found that being alone you don't bother fixing a meal, and some of them, especially some of the men, aren't used to cooking," said Monty Langhamer of Sun City, a runner who has volunteered for a couple of years one day a week. "They're so appreciative."

"It's fulfilling because you're helping people who need help," said Robert Craft of Sun City, a volunteer runner for two and a half years. "Many don't have anyone else and you learn a lot from them."

Osburn spends about 40 to 44

hours a week determining the routes for the drivers, handling the constant turnover of customers and taking cancellations. The Meals on Wheels volunteers also check up on the person to make sure they are OK. For some of the customers, the volunteers are the only company they may have all day.

"It's really hard to get people out here to give us an emergency phone number just in case something happens," said Burki, who tells the drivers to monitor them as best they can. "It's a safety measure, and it's good for someone to check up on them."

Meals on Wheels can be reached at an answering machine at 974-9430. The organization is always accepting new customers and volunteers are needed.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Robert Craft, left, a volunteer for Meals on Wheels, delivers a sack dinner and a hot meal to Martin Merson, 93, of Sun City, who uses the service seven days a week.



Photo by JULI NESSETT/Independent Newspapers

Officials from Sun City Meals on Wheels and Olive Branch Mobile Meals met Feb. 6 in hopes of diffusing confusion in the community over what agency is delivering their meals. From left, Ann Osburn, coordinator of Sun City Meals on Wheels; Jane Burki, president of Sun City Meals on Wheels; Jackie Larkin, Olive Branch Mobile Meals coordinator and assistant cook; Larry Long, head chef at the Olive Branch Senior Center.

MILES OF MEALS

Confusion arises over meal deliverers

By JULI NESSETT
Independent Newspapers

Officials from Sun City Meals on Wheels and Olive Branch Mobile Meals met Feb. 6 in hopes of diffusing confusion in the community over home delivery of meals.

Both organizations are concerned about the large numbers of call being received from residents who are confused over who is delivering their meals.

Although both agencies deliver meals to homebound residents, Sun City Meals on Wheels and Olive Branch Mobile Meals are two separate entities.

For those with questions regarding Sun City Meals on Wheels call 974-9430.

Residents with questions receiving meals from Olive Branch Mobile Meals or Olive Branch home-delivered meals, which are delivered by a Red Cross van,

should call 974-6797.

Those who have questions regarding which agency is delivering their meals, should ask the volunteer delivering the meals for the name and phone number of the agency.

Sun City Meals on Wheels is a non-profit organization serving residents of Sun City and Youngtown. The agency operates 365 days a year and serves meals seven days a week.

Meals are prepared in the kitchen of Boswell Memorial Hospital and can be prepared to accommodate special diets.

All prospective clients are interviewed by staff members to determine eligibility prior to placement in the program.

Meals are delivered between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Both a hot and cold meal are provided for \$6.50. There is a minimum requirement of four days a week, which the

clients choose.

Clients of Sun City Meals on Wheels are provided with a refrigerator magnet, stating the organization's name and phone number.

Olive Branch Mobile Meals also is a non-profit organization, which delivers meals Monday through Friday at a cost of \$7. Olive Branch's program has been operating since November 2000.

Meals from Olive Branch are delivered between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and are prepared by Chef Larry Long and volunteers of the Olive Branch Senior Center.

Clients of the Olive Branch program are given a purple brochure, which gives the organization's phone number and lists other pertinent information.

According to Ivy Wixson, Olive Branch center manager, clients will soon be receiving refrigerator magnets with the organization's name and phone number.

Daily News-Sun • Thursday, Aug. 23, 2001



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Trace, 91, eats lunch Wednesday at the Olive Branch Senior Center in Sun City, where he teaches beginning computer classes and eats lunch every day.

Host of options serves up hearty meals for seniors

THOUGHTS ON FOOD: Challenge to stay well-fed increases with age

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Two years ago — with his wife's health unexpectedly failing — John Trace found a new way to simplify meal preparation while maintaining good nutrition.

The then 90-year-old Sun City resident turned to community groups that provide food services to the homebound and seniors in need.

"Her death was sudden," Trace said. "I used to pick up meals (at Olive Branch Senior Center) and then they started delivering meals to us for the last year she lived, like Meals on Wheels. When she died, I started coming here to eat."

Five days a week for the past 12 years, the Olive Branch Senior Center in Sun City welcomes more than 100 residents for lunch, but is not the only option for those in need. Meals on Wheels programs — which deliver meals to homebound residents 365 days a year — operate in Sun City with service to Youngtown, and in Sun City West.

Locally, Meals on Wheels

in Sun City operates out of Boswell Hospital and has 240 volunteers serving 200 meals daily in Sun City and Youngtown. The Sun City West Meals on Wheels serves about 80 meals per week, prepared at Del E. Webb Hospital.

While Meals on Wheels is laudable and the only option for some, mobile seniors might not want to use the service as an excuse to stay home all the time. Those who can get out of their houses for a meal with others are likely to find new friendships and companionship. As for Trace, a change in eating habits was part of a new mission in life. Now 91, he is teaching between one and five classes a week at the Olive Branch. He teaches beginning computers, e-mail and Internet courses.

"Oh, my class is expensive, all of \$5 for three sessions or \$2 for one session," quipped Trace, a former school administrator in the American territorial islands in the Pacific.

Trace ticked off items in Olive Branch's balanced meal he had eaten for lunch Monday: tossed salad, orange juice, milk, ham with pineapple, carrots, rice, an apple with strawberries, and "the finest cake you ever saw."

Trace also has met a lady friend at Olive Branch who fixes a light evening meal for the two of them. For breakfast each day, he eats light, "just fruit, a donut or a roll, and coffee."

Bebe Turgeon of Sun City, who is taking Trace's class, also is a volunteer at Olive Branch and eats lunch there on the day she volunteers. When eating out, though, Turgeon and her husband eat only in places that offer discount coupons in the newspaper.

"More restaurants should offer coupons for seniors," Turgeon said.

Also taking Trace's class is Birtie Owens of Sun City, who is single, still cooks for herself and "eats out a lot at Luby's and Mimi's," two senior mainstays. Owens said she sometimes takes home leftovers because the two restaurants serve portions big enough for a second meal.

Meanwhile, Donald J. Mack of Glendale hops onto his electric-powered three-wheeler each day for the six-mile round trip to the Olive Branch.

"I don't use my oven, stove or dishwasher anymore," Mack said. "I use my microwave. On Saturday and Sunday I have eggs and coffee. I might have soup or a couple of sandwiches at night. This is my main meal of the day. Everybody is wonderful here."

Mack's buddy, Clarence Deitmeyer of Sun City, also visits the senior center's lunch room regularly since his wife of 61 years, Kathryn, died last November.

"She taught me how to do the dishes, but she didn't teach me to cook," Deitmeyer said. "I don't cook much. I used to fry a few eggs."

A study by Cornell University researchers published in the May issue of the Journal of Nutrition found that older people who could not obtain adequate food because of poverty and social isolation

OVER



MOLLIE J. HOPPE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Irene Glischinski serves seniors lunch at Sun Health's Olive Branch Senior Center in Sun City Wednesday, where a communal meal is served for seniors at 11:30 a.m. Monday through-Friday. Only a donation is requested for a complete hot lunch. Many people who no longer cook for themselves patronize the center.

consumed far lower amounts of nutrients such as protein, iron and zinc. As many as two-thirds of senior citizens who live by themselves have poor nutritional habits, according to the American Dietetic Association.

Senior citizens may not like how certain medications alter the taste of their food, or they may resist diet restrictions because they don't want to forgo the pleasure of eating their favorite foods in exchange for lower blood pressure or blood sugar, said Heidi Reichenberger, spokeswoman for the association.

"The big thing most of them miss out on tends to be protein because they may rely on cereal or toast. A lot of older people will have tea and toast for breakfast. But even a peanut butter-and-jelly sandwich and a glass of milk is better than having just chicken noodle soup," Reichenberger said.

Aside from a Meals on Wheels program or a communal meal at a senior center, there is another option for seniors who no longer cook for themselves. Retirement homes can provide balanced meals that take the burden off those who don't want to or can't cook, but some seniors don't want to move into such facilities even if the only other option is staying home alone.

Sun Cities Meal Programs

- Sun Health's Olive Branch Senior Center, 10765 W. Peoria Ave., Sun City, offers communal lunches as well as a home-delivery program. Call 974-6797.

- The El Mirage Senior Center offers communal lunches and a home-delivery program. Call 937-0500.

- Interfaith Services offers a communal meal served by volunteers once a month in the Sun City West Community Services building, 14495 RH Johnson Blvd. Call 584-4999.

- Red Cross provides transportation to both senior centers. Call 934-4256.

- Sun City Meals on Wheels. Call 974-9430.

- Sun City West Meals on Wheels. Call 214-4233.



JEANNE WINOGRAD/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Donald J. Mack of Glendale, left, drives three miles each way in his battery-powered three-wheeler to get the daily lunch at the Olive Branch Senior Center. Pal Clarence Deitmeyer eats and volunteers at the center because, he says, he knows how to do dishes but not cook.

DAILY NEWS-SUN

FRIDAY, NOV. 28, 2003

Longtime Sun City service rolls out meals for shut-ins

ERIN REEP
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Nihla Harrell emerges from the back seat of a Honda sedan, her arms weighted down by a covered foil plate of fragrant hot food and a white paper sack of cold sandwich fixings.

Bonnie DeToffol and her dog Mandy greet Harrell at the front door. Harrell hands DeToffol her two meals for the day.

At 82, DeToffol is not able to get out by herself and she does not cook. The Sun City woman wears thick glasses and is not able to drive. For her, the Meals on Wheels program is a necessity of life — helping her to live at home and remain independent.

"Meals on Wheels is really a godsend, I'll

tell you," DeToffol said. "It's my way of eating healthy."

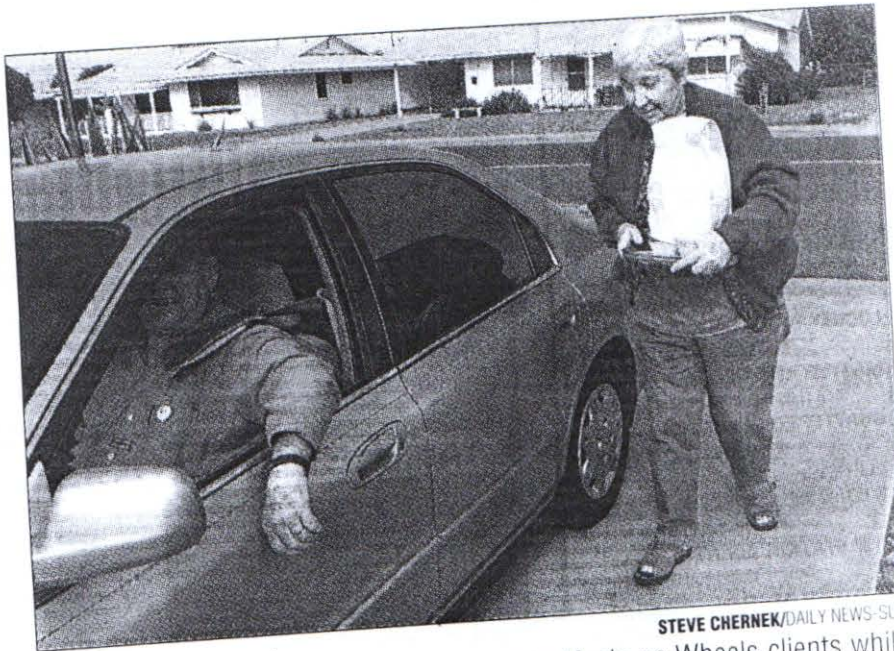
Prior to receiving the meals twice a day, DeToffol had begun living on peanut butter sandwiches — to the point that she now avoids the peanut butter jar. The Meals on Wheels program provides her with the good daily nutrition and sufficient vitamins she needs.

"When you're alone, you can get really lax about cooking for yourself," DeToffol said.

Meals on Wheels is a non-profit 501 C-3 organization operated by volunteers whose mission is to deliver nutritious meals to

See FOOD, A3

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Nihla Harrell delivers hot and cold meals to Meals on Wheels clients while her husband, Kent, waits in the car.

DAILY NEWS-SUN

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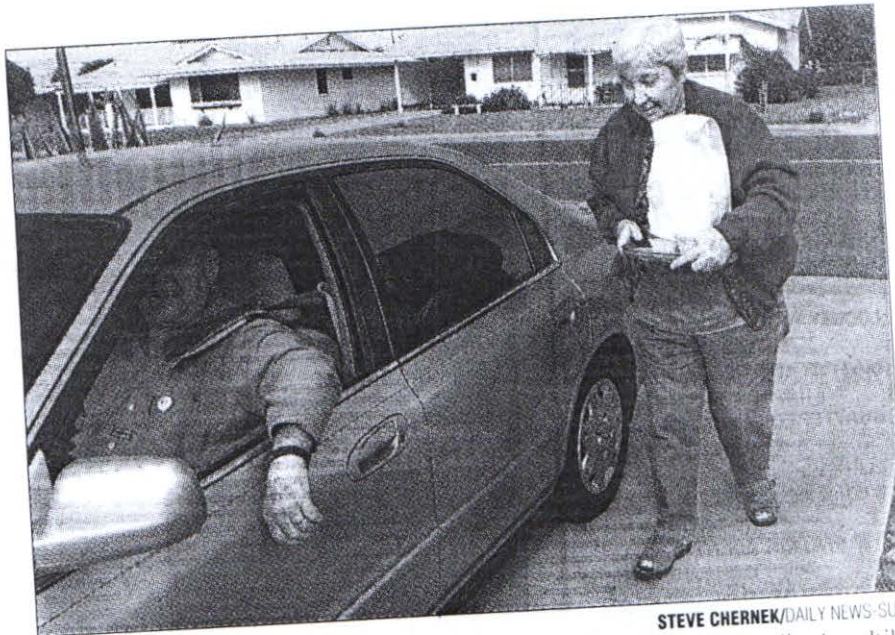
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STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Nihla Harrell delivers hot and cold meals to Meals on Wheels clients while her husband, Kent, waits in the car.

eligible Sun City residents unable to prepare their own meals, and have no one to cook for them.

Meals are delivered between 11 a.m. and noon, seven days a week, to eligible Sun City and Youngtown residents. To qualify, a person must be 55 or older, and unable to prepare meals.

The meals consist of a hot dinner and cold sack lunch, with special diet meals (such as low sodium or diabetic meals) available with a doctor's prescription. The cost is \$6.50 per day.

At 10:20 a.m. on a recent Tuesday, 22 volunteers gathered in the south cafeteria at Boswell Memorial Hospital, waiting for the prepared meals. Meals on Wheels contracts with Boswell to cook and prepare the lunches, said Meals on Wheels president Paul Graff.

"We purchase the meals from the hospital at about the same price as we charge customers," Graff said. Other costs incurred by Meals on Wheels include printing and office costs for the organization.

Graff said Meals on Wheels' operating costs are partially paid for through donations. "We do not get direct subsidies from the government," he said.

Volunteers waited at tables, drinking coffee and gearing up for the morning meal run. They include pairs of "drivers" and "runners." The drivers directed their cars, following detailed maps of the community, while the runners carried the meals to the customers' doors.

Meals on Wheels has divided Sun City into 12 routes, Graff said. Each runner carries about 10 meals per run. The total number of customers who receive Meals on Wheels is 120, though that number varies from day-to-day and can be significantly less on weekends and holidays, Graff said.

As the prepared meals came out of the kitchen,



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Meals on Wheels volunteers Pearl Johnson, left, and Jo Anne Spalding load cold meals into their car before making their rounds.

drivers and runners loaded the food into their cars. Metal carts contained plastic bins of sack lunches, and blue coolers kept the hot food steaming hot.

Each shift has a daily chairperson — like Jane Freeman of Sun City, who is in her 24th year of volunteering for Meals on Wheels, or Elda McGovern, who oversaw the routes on Tuesday. "I see that all the meals match the route sheets, that we have the right meals for the right routes," said McGovern describing her job.

Meals on Wheels was conceived in 1970 by a prominent group of Sun Citians who thought such a service was needed in the community. They formed an organization and began serving food in 1972, according to Jubilee, the 25th anniversary history book of Sun City, co-authored by Freeman and Glenn Sanberg.

Over the years, meals have been prepared by Wilcrest

Restaurant, Greenbriar Cafeteria and Duff's Cafeteria, with Boswell Hospital furnishing the special diet meals. In 1980, Boswell began preparing all the meals.

The volunteers take on a variety of jobs besides just delivering meals.

"One nice thing is, these drivers are sometimes the only people these (shut-ins) see all day long," Graff said.

Volunteers often chat with the customers, check up on them and aid them in getting their food ready to eat.

The Harrells said as volunteers they watch out for the meal recipients, as they get to know the patrons on their route. Volunteers travel in pairs so that if they encounter a person with a medical emergency, one person may go for help, the second may stay with the individual.

At one Youngtown apartment, a woman receiving her meal gave Nihla a hug. At another residence, Nihla

usually cuts the food for the woman because she is blind.

"Sometimes you come, and you knock on the door, and no one answers," Kent said. "Then you find out the ambulance came and took them off."

One woman on the Harrells' route was hospitalized last week, and was back Tuesday with a grateful smile for Nihla as she received her food.

More than 180 people volunteer with Sun City Meals on Wheels on a regular and substitute basis. The program is always seeking volunteers, especially during the summer months when winter visitors return home.

"It's easy," Kent Harrell said. "If you want to volunteer, and want to do something easy, you can do this."

For information about Sun City Meals on Wheels, or to donate to the program, call 974-9430.

Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or at ereep@aztrib.com

Seniors deliver food, friendship

Program provides safety net, support for seniors

By Zach Colick
Independent Newspapers

Every morning at 10, a group of Meals on Wheels volunteers meets at Boswell Memorial Hospital to pick up meals prepared for those who are unable to buy food or cook for themselves.

Both a cold lunch and a hot dinner are prepared for the elderly as part of the Meals on Wheels program by Sun Health hospital staff and delivered to area homes by 170 active volunteers — around 24 per day, including a runner and driver.

Volunteers said the program

"I'm so impressed with the organization because I've seen the meaning it has brought to many people's lives. You just feel really good helping people out."

— Linda Smith,
publicity coordinator for Sun City Meals on Wheels

is important for Sun Citians as it provides a safety net for seniors to support their independence and well being.

"I'm so impressed with the organization because I've seen the meaning it has brought to many people's lives," said Linda Smith, publicity coordinator for Sun City Meals on Wheels, 13000 N. 103rd Ave.

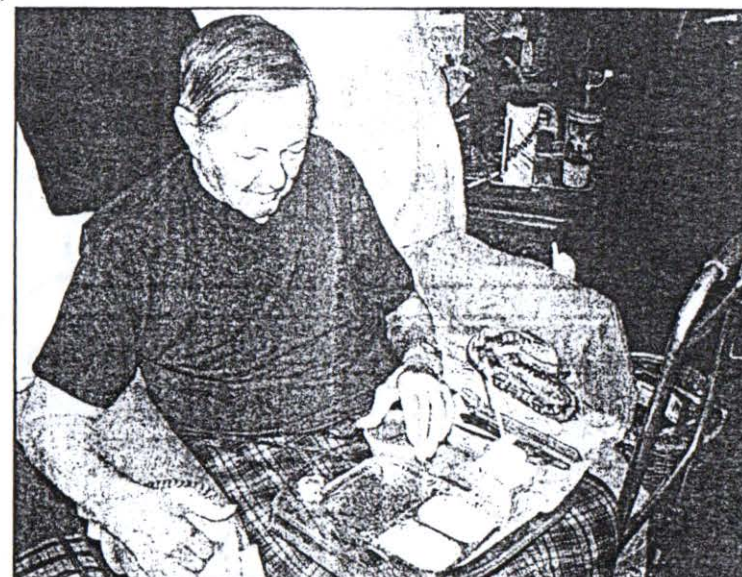
Ms. Smith has been a volunteer since October. "You just feel really good helping people

out."

More than 120 Sun Citians take advantage of the Meals on Wheels program that has a steady volunteer staff who delivers meals to 10 to 12 residents each.

"All our volunteers feel good about giving back and helping their friends and neighbors," Ms. Smith said. "We provide nutritious, low-cost food that

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Independent Newspapers/Zach Colick

Sun Citian Barton Blockwood sits to enjoy a meal prepared by Sun City Meals on Wheels volunteers. Mr. Barton, who has Parkinson's disease and cannot prepare meals, said he is appreciative of the volunteers who deliver lunch and dinner to his home Monday through Friday.

Meals

Continued From Page 1

allows people to stay in the comfort of their home no matter their condition."

The operation runs yearlong, but during the holidays, Meals on Wheels slows down.

Fewer meals are delivered as its customer base travels to visit family and friends during Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's, Ms. Smith said.

Despite the holiday dropoff, volunteers got into the holiday spirit by providing gifts — a handmade bookmark — to loyal customers who remained in Sun City over Thanksgiving.

Many seniors depend on the \$6.50 daily service for months or years after their initial personal request or referral from Sun Health, Ms. Smith said.

Sun Citian Barton Blockwood has been a recipient of Meals on Wheels for more than 18 months after hearing about the service from friends.

Mr. Blockwood, who has Parkinson's disease and an aching back, cannot use a stove or easily make a sandwich. He is appreciative of volunteers who deliver and prepare two meals to his home Monday through Friday.

"The meals are all very professional, well presented and proportioned, and tasty," Mr. Blockwood said.

The daily food menu is on a 14-day cycle so participants are likely to enjoy a different meal every day, said Carl Nichols, assistant director of food services at Boswell Hospital, 10401 W. Thunderbird Blvd.

Lunch and dinner is prepared in a full-service kitchen at Boswell, a partner for more than 24 years, Mr. Nichols said.

How to help

Meals on Wheels donations can be mailed to PO Box 1842, Sun City, AZ 85372.

Call 974-9430 to volunteer or become a recipient.

"This is just one more way for Sun Health to reach out to the community and transition (residents) back to independence," he said.

For lunch, the daily menu typically includes an egg salad or tuna salad sandwich, fruit, a cookie and juice. During Thanksgiving, customers were provided ham and turkey sandwiches, cranberry sauce and fruit.

The dinner menu can include beef stew, London broil, meatloaf or macaroni and cheese as an entree with varying side dishes. The Thanksgiving dinner included Salisbury steak.

To be eligible for Meals on Wheels, a customer must request the service four days per week for a two-week period, Ms. Smith explained.

Many who utilize the service require medical attention or are down on their luck, needing to get back on their feet.

Ms. Smith's husband, Mike, who is retired and has been with Meals on Wheels for more than five years, said it feels good to give something back to the community, especially after hearing the praise of those who benefit firsthand.

"Our customers will continually say 'God bless you, God bless you' the minute or two you are in their house," Mr. Smith said. "They are really appreciative of our services."

Because Meals on Wheels purchases meals from Sun Health for \$6.40 and charges its customers \$6.50, they depend on donations from the public.

Donations can be mailed to PO Box 1842, Sun City, AZ 85372.

Call 974-9430 to volunteer or become a recipient.

Meals on W

Rising food, fuel costs fail to curb local programs

ERIN TURNER
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Despite the sagging economy and inflated fuel and food prices, the Sun City and Sun City West Meals on Wheels programs are doing surprisingly well, program officials said.

The programs involve volunteer driver teams who deliver a hot meal and a packed cold meal to seniors who are homebound and cannot prepare meals on their own. The cost of the hot lunch and packed meal is \$7, something that Mike Smith, treasurer of the Sun City program, said he was shocked has remained constant in the face of such an economic downturn.

"I'm surprised, but we're coping very well," he said. "We're doing quite well."

The Sun City program has the capacity to provide for 124 people per day, seven days a week, for qualified residents of Sun City and Youngtown. About 100 clients utilize the service.

The Sun City West program, which has about 50 clients, delivers meals Monday through Saturday.

Both programs utilize the food preparation service of the Sun Health hospitals, which prepare the meals each day along with meals

for hospital patients. The partnership allows the programs to get food for a much lower rate than they may be able to otherwise because the hospitals buy such large quantities of food, Smith said.

"Boswell (Hospital) charges \$7 a meal and prices remain the same for clients," he said. "Boswell hasn't raised prices yet and we will keep them at \$7 as long as we can."

Betty McKenzie, chairwoman of the interviewers for the Sun City West program, said she was grateful the \$7 price tag has remained the same for at least the last three years.

"We have (our food) at cost," she said. "It's up to Sun Health (Del Webb Hospital) to either raise or lower the price and it's been stable for three years, maybe. So far so good."

Both programs rely on volunteers to run the food delivery routes because neither program has sufficient funds to hire drivers. The \$7 per meal cost is only enough to cover the price of the meals and donations provide for program administration costs, Smith said.

And as fuel prices climb to record levels, the volunteer-based

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Wheels keeps rolling



Reeve Barker, above, of Food Services at the Sun Health Boswell Rehabilitation Center carries food for the Meals on Wheels program to Hal Lundberg's car. At left, Jack Smith loads up his car with prepared meals outside the rehab center in Sun City. Rising fuel costs haven't deterred the volunteer drivers from delivering meals to seniors in Sun City, Youngtown and Sun City West.

PHOTOS BY MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

MEALS: Sun City willing to take on more clients

FROM A1

delivery programs have been fortunate as well. Luckily, or perhaps due to the kindness of the volunteers, not one of the more than 200 Sun City volunteers or 70 Sun City West volunteers has stopped delivering because of higher fuel prices.

"Our volunteers pay for their own gas and nobody has quit, saying they can't afford to deliver," Smith said.

McKenzie said the Sun City West program has fared equally well.

"So far our drivers have not complained at all about the gas," McKenzie said. "Our routes are not as extensive as Sun City. We're just within the walls (of Sun City West) and it's only about 30 to 45 minutes per route."

In the face of cutbacks and more expensive operating costs, Smith said the Sun City Meals on Wheels pro-

gram can even afford to take on a few more clients, with a decline in numbers during the summer months.

"I find it hard to believe that the price is keeping people from signing up," Smith said. "I don't think there's anybody less than us. We're down clients and we've been wondering why."

Donations are needed to help with operating costs for both programs. Donations may be mailed to the Sun City Meals on Wheels program at PO Box 1842, Sun City, AZ 85372. For information, call 623-974-9430.

The Sun City West program can be reached at 623-214-4233. Donations may be mailed to Sun City West Meals on Wheels at 14502 W. Meeker Blvd., Sun City West, AZ 85375.

Erin Turner may be reached at 623-876-2522 or eturner@your-westvalley.com.



Friday's Meals on Wheels volunteers, top row, from left, Judy Cicotte, Wednesday and Friday chair, Patti Payne, Marge Sommerness, Cindy PoPe, Susan Edwards, Naomi Taylor, Jennie Timberlake and Jim Lyons; second row, from left, Linda Walker, Ursula Beyer, Linda Hall and Gail Mathis; sitting, from left, Martha McCorkel, Jennie Scalise, Gracie Miller, Kate Harris and Ann Baker. Ms. Harris delivers at 97-years old.

Non-stop Service: Meals on Wheels delivers 365 days a year

By Charlene Bisson
Independent Newspapers

People who use Sun City Meals on Wheels will find reliable service. The group delivers one hot and cold meal each day to participants 365 days a year.

"We've been doing this over 42 years and have never missed a day since we've began," said publicity chairwoman Judy Cicotte.



The group has more than 200 volunteers who spend their time and gas money on helping those who cannot grocery shop or are unable to stand long enough to prepare a meal. People who are temporarily disabled, such as those recovering from a surgery, may also use the affordable service.

Volunteers meet daily at Banner Rehabilitation Center, near Sante Fe and 107th Avenue. Meals are delivered between 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Banner sells the two nutritious meals to

the group at \$7.50, which is passed on to the client.

"We need clients," Ms. Cicotte said. About 80 people use Meals on Wheels service, which includes residents of Youngtown. People interested in receiving meal delivery service should call 623-974-9430.

Volunteers deliver in twos just in case of an emergency, Ms. Cicotte said. "If someone is down, one runner stays and calls 911 while the other continues on the route," she said.

Volunteers can be: Interviewers, to assess the potential need and registration of clients; Drivers, to deliver to clients on an assigned route; Runners, who accompany drivers to deliver meals to the home; Supporters, volunteers who help with administration and management of the programs.

Sun City Meals on Wheels relies on donations to meet operating expenses. Donations for the 501c3 nonprofit can be sent to PO Box 1842, Sun City, AZ 85373.

Meals on Wheels

10404 W Coggins Drive

Sun City, AZ 85351

623-974-9430

About

The group provides two nutritious meals

seven days a week, 365 days a year. Special diets with a doctor's prescription are also allowed. Service is provided as long as it is needed.

Clients

Meals on Wheels is always looking for clients.

Please call for more information.

Volunteers

Those interested in helping the program may volunteer their time and talent.

Donate

People can donate to the 501c3 nonprofit by sending to PO Box 1842, Sun City, AZ 85373.

12 June 7, 2017 | Sun City Independent

MEALS ON WHEELS

Keeping the meals coming

Volunteer agency celebrates 45 years of service

By Rusty Bradshaw
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Some Sun City residents have counted on them for 45 years to make sure they had at least one good meal per day, and they can go on counting on the volunteers of Meals on Wheels.

The agency just completed its 45th year of service and

there are no plans to stop now. The first meals were delivered May 1, 1972, according to Pam Kohnken, Meals on Wheels publicity chairwoman.

"Currently, about 20,000 meals are delivered annually to clients," she said. "We deliver seven days per week, 365 days per year, including

holidays."

The service, operated entirely on donated funds and clients, depends on volunteers for delivery to 12 routes in the community. Each two-person delivery team takes meals to an average of 10 households per delivery.

"We have more than 200 volunteers available to deliver," Ms. Kohnken said.

Volunteer motivation varies, but most are in it to help others.

"It is a way I can give back now that I am retired," said Gail Mathis. "When you work, most times you don't do these kinds of things."

Arlene Schindler has been a Meals on Wheels volunteer

for 33 years, 17 of those in Sun City. She sought out the agency in every community she has lived in that time.

"I always look them (Meals on Wheels) up," she said.

In addition to helping others, Ms. Schindler believes her volunteer efforts help her accomplish another of

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Meals

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her own goals.

"I meet a lot of new people," she said. "There are a lot of really nice people doing this."

Ms. Mathis enjoys spending time with the clients during deliveries.

"I like the one-on-one time with the clients," she said. "It is really positive and it appeals to me."

During meal deliveries, Ms. Mathis said clients like to talk to those who bring their meals.

"They like to talk and that is positive for them," Ms. Mathis said. "Some of them are lonely and like to visit with us."

She added clients are also appreciative of the service, designed to deliver meals to those who are homebound or not physically able to cook for themselves.

"They are always glad to see us," Ms. Mathis said.

Meals on Wheels volunteers deliver both hot and cold meals to clients in Sun City and Youngtown.

"We look forward to delivering meals for many more

years to our friends and neighbors," Ms. Kohnken said.

The service was originally funded by the Sun City Community Fund and donations from churches, service clubs and individuals. Now, Meals on Wheels survives solely on donations and bequests, according to Ms. Kohnken. Donations fund the service office. Meals are paid for through a \$7.50 charge per meal to clients, she added.

The agency has speakers available to provide information to clubs and organizations interested in more information about the service. Call 623-974-9430.

Meals on Wheels in Sun City originated from discussions in 1970 by Sun City residents Rena Williams, Gretchen Bergman, Laura Mathis, Jeans Phillips, Edna Von Pische and the Rev. Duane Thistlewaite. A formal organizational meeting was conducted Oct. 4, 1971. Ms. Williams was named president while Ms. Bergman was secretary and Ms. Mathis treasurer of the first board of directors.

"Patronage growth the first year was phenomenal



Meals on Wheels volunteers Gail Mathis, left, and Sue Kast prepare to make their May 30 deliveries of meals to residents who are homebound or not able to make their own meals. [Independent Newsmedia/Rusty Bradshaw]

and has been growing ever since, which testifies both to the need of the service and the quality of the food," stated an article in the Jubilee, a publication produced in

1984 for Sun City's 25th anniversary.

Meals were originally prepared by Wilcrest Restaurant, Greenbriar Cafeteria and Duff's Cafeteria, with

Boswell Memorial Hospital taking care of special diets. The hospital staff assumed the meal preparation responsibility in 1980. Meals are now prepared and

packed by staff at Banner Rehabilitation Center.

Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com. Continue the discussion at www.newszap.com.