



**Meals on Wheels**  
of Charlotte County

# NEWSLETTER



Fall/Winter 2025



Debbie , Cook

Pam , Cook

## Season of Caring

As the holiday season approaches, our mission stays at the heart of everything we do: delivering warm, nutritious meals to homebound seniors and bringing comfort, companionship, and a sense of belonging to every heart we serve.

Every meal is prepared and shared with love by our dedicated staff and wonderful volunteers, who brighten lives with their kindness and compassion.

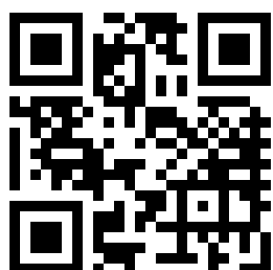
In this issue, you'll find stories of impact, program updates, and ways you can help us continue nourishing both bodies and spirits. Together, we're sharing warmth, connection, and hope, one meal at a time.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Darcy Woods, President  
Jami Joannes, Vice President  
Valerie Tiffany, Secretary  
Donna Kennedy, Treasurer  
Keith Meyer, Board Member  
Jennifer Neuman, Board Member  
Amber Weaver, Board Member  
Peri Bluemer, Board Member  
Dr. Amy Mellor, Board Member

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Annual "Take a Swing Against Hunger" Golf Tournament

Saturday November 1st, 2025  
Riverwood Golf Club Port Charlotte

### Leroy's "Kicking Hunger" with Boots & Bourbon

Monday, November 17th, 2025  
Leroy's Southern Kitchen, Punta Gorda





## From the Desk of our Board President

Dear Friends,

As we go about our day-to-day work, it's easy to see why our mission is so important. Many of us know firsthand what it's like to care for aging parents or grandparents, the challenges, the worry, and the deep desire to make sure they are safe, healthy, and not alone. For homebound seniors, those daily needs can feel even heavier during the holiday season, a time when connection and care mean the most. Add in the uncertainty of shifting weather and the chill of colder days, and the importance of a warm meal and a friendly face becomes all the more clear.

Our team, along with our incredible volunteers, works tirelessly to deliver warm, nutritious meals and provide comfort, kindness, and reassurance. Every meal is more than food, it's a reminder that someone cares and that our community is here for them.

We are deeply grateful for your support of our mission. Together, we bring comfort and care to seniors who might otherwise feel forgotten especially those who have no family or friends to lean on. Your kindness helps them know they are valued and not alone during the holidays, throughout the colder months, and beyond. And for families who do have loved ones depending on us, your support brings peace of mind in knowing they are cared for with dignity and compassion.

As the seasons change, I encourage you to also take a moment to check on your neighbors. A simple call, visit, or kind word can make the world of difference for someone who may be feeling isolated.

From my heart to yours, thank you for being part of our mission and for helping make this season brighter for so many.

With gratitude,

Darcy Woods

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darcy Woods". The signature is fluid and cursive, matching the printed name above it.

Board President

# Become a MONTHLY MEAL MAKER

## Together we feed more than hunger!

Every meal you help provide is more than nutrition, it's comfort, connection, and a reminder that someone cares. As a Monthly Meal Maker, you stand beside seniors who might otherwise face hunger and isolation. Your ongoing support ensures they're never alone, and never forgotten.



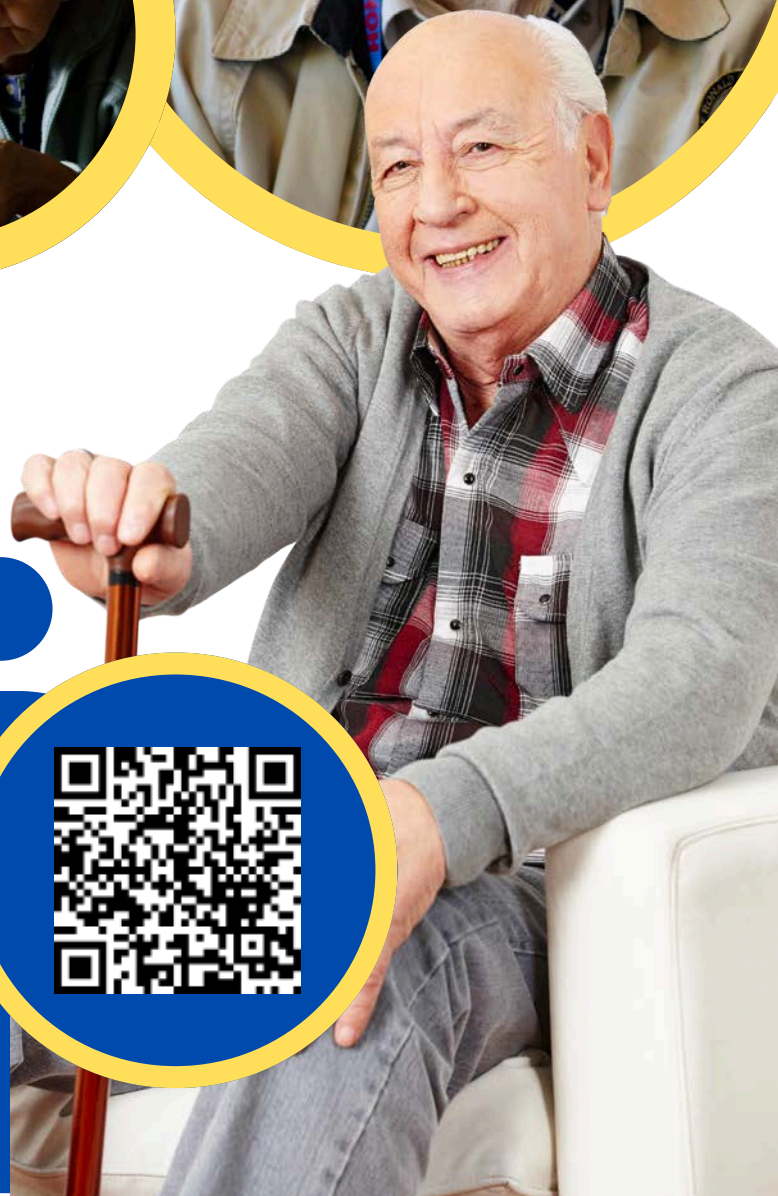
**Supports Seniors**

**Promotes Independence**

**Strengthens our Community**



**Supporting our Local Seniors,  
One Meal at a Time.**





# Office Tidbits



## Meet Miriam M., Office Assistant

You've probably already spoken with Miriam if you've called our office! She joined our team in April 2025 and assists Program Manager, Wendy Bonsall by handling client intakes, answering phones, organizing files, and helping coordinate our volunteer drivers to get meals out on time. Her dedication and friendly approach keep our office running smoothly and make sure our mission stays on track every day..

## Client Reminders

- Meals are usually delivered between 10am & 11am please be ready to ensure delivery
- Please contact us when possible within 24hrs of delivery to let us know if you will not be home (941) 625-4343
- Please keep your coolers clean for Food Safety
- Place an icepack or frozen water bottle in your cooler if you won't be available to personally receive your meal. Make sure to reheat once cooled.



Rob & Sandy



David & Janet

Kay & Meal Recipient



## WE WILL BE CLOSED

Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 27<sup>th</sup>  
Christmas Day, Thursday December 25<sup>th</sup>  
New Years Day, Thursday January 1<sup>st</sup>

*NOTE: A Double Meal will be provided on the day prior to the holiday for those who would normally receive a meal on the weekday we are closed.*



#BeKind



## Meals, Friendship, and Independence: Robert's Journey

At 86 years old, Robert has lived a remarkable life of service and family. A proud U.S. Army Reserve Private, he went on to a successful career as an administrator for a life insurance company. He was married to his beloved wife for 62 years, and together they raised two daughters and built a family that now includes four grandchildren.

As time passed, and his loving wife was no longer with him, preparing meals on his own became challenging. Through our program, he received daily nutritious meals along with the comfort of a friendly visit.

Our program gave him both peace of mind and independence, ensuring he was well cared for and never felt alone.

Recently, Robert relocated to live with family, but his time with Meals on Wheels remains an important part of his story.

Our program provided the support he needed to stay in his own home for as long as possible, surrounded by the memories he cherished.

We are honored to have served Robert and grateful for his service to our country, his lifelong contributions, and the warmth he brought to our Meals on Wheels family.



**IMPACT STATS**  
2025 YTD



**327**

seniors served



**21,641**

meals served



Robert, Meal Recipient



**Joanne**  
Long Time Volunteer



## Discover Treasures, Support our Mission

Step into our thrift store and you'll find more than great deals, you'll find a way to make a real difference in our community. Every purchase supports our mission of delivering warm, nutritious meals and spreading kindness and connection to homebound seniors. From clothing and books to unique finds, shopping with us helps bring comfort, joy, and care to those who need it most. Stop by, explore, and be part of something meaningful!

So, the next time you find a treasure in our store or drop off your donations, remember that your kindness nourishes those in need and strengthens the bonds within our community. Every \$5 you spend feeds a senior!

### Donation Drop-Off:

Days: Monday through Friday  
10:00 am to 3:00 pm



### MEET LILY

We're excited to welcome Lily to our team! She joined us in June 2025 and brings energy and enthusiasm to our thrift store. Lily helps keep the store organized, assists customers, and ensures every visit is a great experience. Stop by and say hello—you'll likely see her helping out behind the counter or making sure our treasures are easy to find!







# Give a Gift That Gives Twice

## Looking for the Perfect Gift? We've Got Gift Cards!

Every gift card you buy helps us deliver warm, nutritious meals and a friendly visit to seniors who need it most. It's a gift that gives twice, brightening your loved one's day while making a real difference in the lives of our elderly neighbors.

available in \$10, \$25, \$50, \$75, \$100 or your specified amount.



A vibrant illustration of a cardboard box labeled "DONATION" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The box is overflowing with a variety of clothing and accessories. On top of the box, there's a yellow fedora, a green jacket, a red shirt, a blue long-sleeved shirt, a pair of blue jeans with a brown belt, a brown leather bag, a red bag, a yellow bag, and a white beanie. A black strap is draped over the side of the box. In front of the box, there are a pair of white sneakers with black laces and a pair of black dress shoes. To the right of the box, there's a brown backpack. The entire scene is set against a solid blue background.

- ## DONATION HOURS & LOCATION

# 10AM - 3PM

REGISTRATION# CH6641

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.



# FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar For Our Upcoming Events

## "Take a Swing Against Hunger" Golf Tournament



**Saturday November 1st**



**Registration starts at**

**7:30am!**

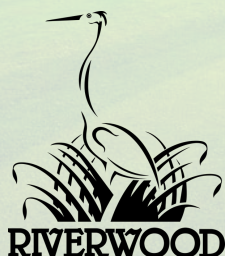
**Shotgun at 8:30am!**



**Riverwood Golf Club**

**4100 Riverwood Drive**

**Port Charlotte, FL**



## Leroy's "Kickin Hunger" with Boots & Bourbon



**Monday November 17th**



**5:00pm**



**Leroy's Southern Kitchen**

**201 West Marion Avenue**

**Punta Gorda, FL**



*When you support our mission, you help seniors  
feel seen, valued, and remembered every day.*

# Volunteer Spotlight

## MEET JOANN W. Thrift Store Volunteer

For the past five years, Joann has been a treasured part of Meals on Wheels, giving her time and heart as a cashier at our Finders Keepers Thrift Store.

When Joann first began volunteering, it was simply to find "something to do." Today, it has become something she truly loves. She cherishes the friendships she's made and the generosity she sees every day at Finders Keepers. Her friendly, bubbly, and personable nature makes every shopper feel welcome, and her smile brightens the store.

Originally from South Jersey, Joann has called Florida home for the past 5 ½ years. She and her husband have been happily married for an incredible 57 years. Together, they've raised two children and are proud grandparents to three grandchildren, who bring her so much joy.

We are deeply grateful for Joann's dedication, kindness, and the warmth she brings to our store and our mission. Volunteers like Joann make Finders Keepers more than just a thrift store, they make it a place where community and compassion thrive. ❤️



We ❤️ our  
Volunteers

thank you

*This season is about more than giving, it's about caring,  
connecting, and reminding one another that we belong.*





# Volunteers needed



Mike, Volunteer



Stephanie, Volunteer



## KITCHEN

- Food Prep
- Packaging Meals
- Dishes

## STORE

- Cashiers
- Merchandising

**WE NEED YOUR  
HELP!**

CALL OUR OFFICE FOR MORE  
INFORMATION

**(941) 625-4343**





Judy



Stephanie



Lisa



Mary & Meal Recipient



Connie



Janet & David



Jane



Vivian



Don



Mike & Bonnie



Sandra & Nancy

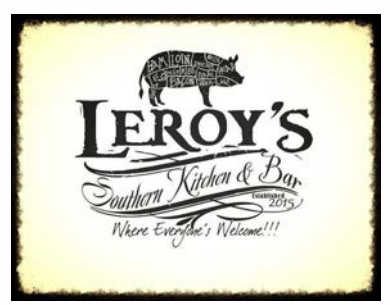


Dawn

# WE Our Volunteers

We wish we could feature every volunteer, but we don't have photos of everyone just yet. For now, here are a few of the amazing people who help make our mission possible! Thank you for your support and for helping keep our community strong.





Thank you



# We Care About Your Pets Too!



At Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County, we know your furry friends are part of the family. We are currently assessing the need for pet assistance and exploring ways we can help. If you have a dog or cat and could use help with pet food, please contact our office to be added to the waiting list.

☎ (941) 625-4343 OPTION, 1

Because every member of your family deserves care!

# RESOURCE GUIDE



## DIAL 2-1-1

Did you know you can dial 2-1-1 to get connected to local resources? Whether you need help with food, housing, utility bills, medical care, or other community services, 2-1-1 is available 24/7, free, and confidential. Trained specialists will listen and connect you with the support you need.



## FREE TRANSPORTATION

Charlotte County Transit – FREE Rides  
Charlotte County residents can use Charlotte Rides, a free, safe, and convenient curb-to-curb transit service.

Cost: Free of charge

Ages: 13+ ride independently; under 13 must ride with an adult

Destinations: Medical appointments, shopping, banks, restaurants, airport, schools/colleges, library, sports events, and more

Accessibility: Wheelchair, scooter, walker, and stroller friendly

How to Ride: Download the Charlotte Rides mobile app or call **941-575-4000 (option 1)** to set up an account and schedule rides







## From the Desk of our Operations Manager

As we enter the fall and winter months, we're reminded that the warmth of the holiday season comes not just from meals, but from the kindness we share. Many seniors face challenges like limited mobility and isolation, making our work even more meaningful.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, selfless volunteers, and the generosity of our community, we provide meals that bring comfort and connection.

I also want to take a moment to thank our Board of Directors. They give generously of their time, knowledge, and guidance to help us carry out our mission. Their leadership and commitment are at the heart of what makes our program strong, and we are truly grateful.

Your support allows us to be there for seniors who may have no family or friends nearby. You can help by volunteering, donating, sharing skills, or checking in on neighbors, every act matters.

Together, we can make this time of year brighter and warmer for everyone in our community.

Wishing you joy, warmth, and a season full of giving.

Kate Grossl



Operations Manager



Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County is looking for a Fundraising Coordinator to join our team. If you have a passion for helping seniors and experience in fundraising or events, we'd love to hear from you!



Send your resume to:  
**[admin@mowofcc.org](mailto:admin@mowofcc.org)**



# WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Supporting our mission can take many forms, each essential to our ongoing efforts.

One of the simplest ways to contribute is to join our Meal Maker Program. To become a Meal Maker Donor, visit our website at [www.mowofcc.org/meal-maker-program](http://www.mowofcc.org/meal-maker-program).

You can also support us by shopping at or donating items to our Finders Keepers Thrift Store, located at 3082 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, FL 33952, where 100% of net proceeds go directly to our cause.

Donating gas cards helps us meet immediate logistical needs and enhances our volunteer activities.

You can connect with us by sponsoring or participating in our fundraising events, which are both enjoyable and impactful.

Volunteering your time and skills is another invaluable way to make a difference.

or If you're considering long-term support, think about leaving a legacy gift.

Additionally, monetary donations can be made via check or money order, made payable to Meals on Wheels Charlotte County. Mail to:

Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County  
3082 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Every contribution is fully tax-deductible. Your support in any of these ways greatly strengthens the success of our mission. If you'd like to discuss any of these opportunities, please feel free to contact our Program Manager  
Wendy Bonsall at: (941) 625-4343

**DONATE**  
*NOW*





# holiday WISH LIST

The holidays are a time for sharing, and together we can make the season brighter for our seniors. Starting in November, we'll be accepting donations from our Holiday Meal Wishlist to bring comfort, joy, and holiday cheer to every table. If you'd like to donate, please email our office at [admin@mowofcc.org](mailto:admin@mowofcc.org) for more information.



FROZEN TURKEYS OR  
BONELESS HAMS



RUSSET POTATOES



STUFFING CUBES



NO SALT ADDED  
CANNED WHOLE  
CORN



PUMPKIN  
PIE  
MIX

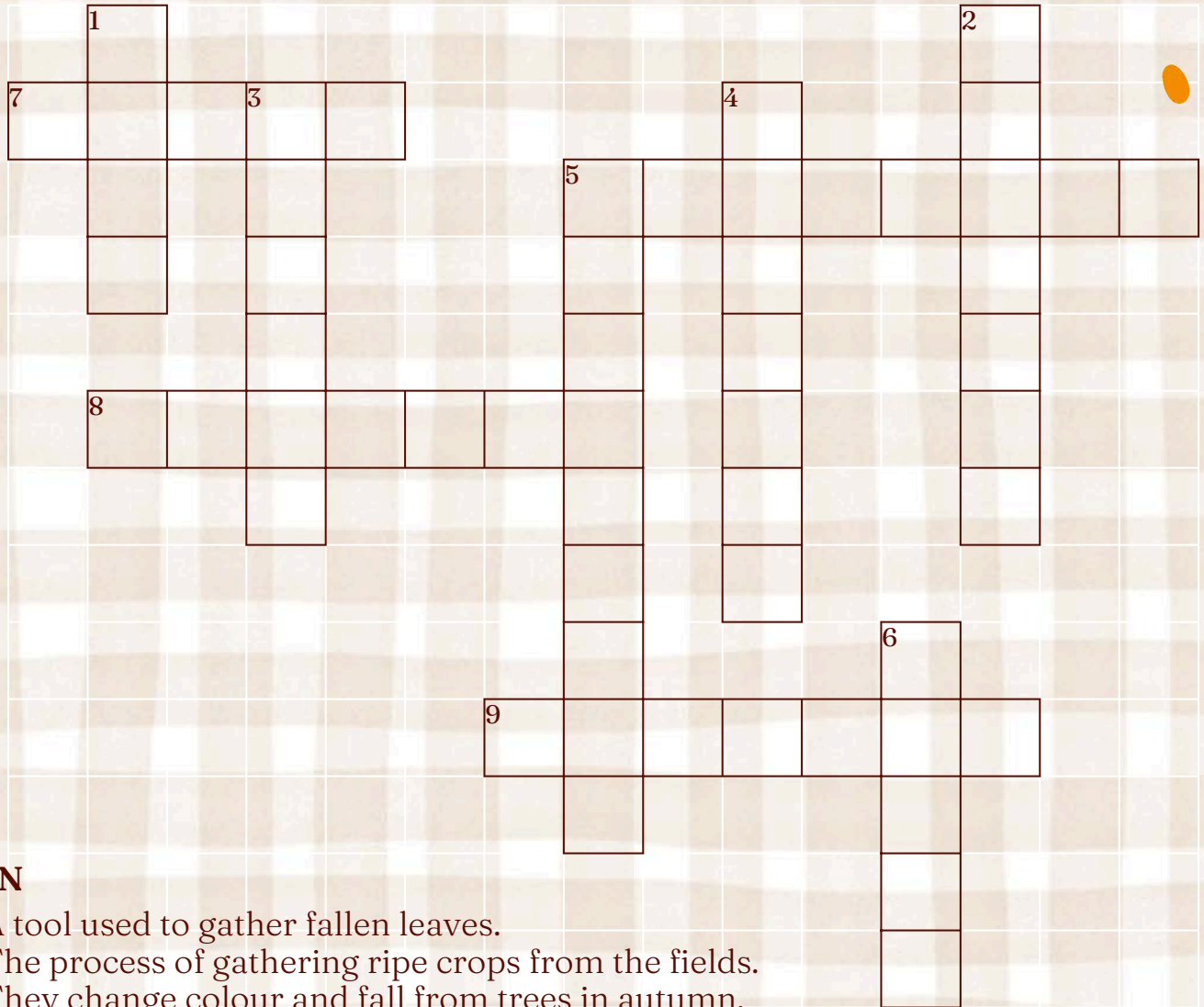


CANNED JELLIED  
CRANBERRIE SAUCE  
CANNED

\*Please note we due to food safety requirements, we cannot accept turkeys or hams that are not frozen. And we cannot accept partial bags or items that are not within the best by, use by or expiration date.

# Autumn

## crossword



### DOWN

- A tool used to gather fallen leaves.
- The process of gathering ripe crops from the fields.
- They change colour and fall from trees in autumn.
- A large orange fruit used for carving.
- A figure made to scare birds away from crops.
- A thin layer of ice that forms on surfaces in cold weather.

### ACROSS

- A tree known for its colourful autumn leaves.
- An animal that collects nuts for winter.
- A knitted piece of clothing worn in cooler weather.
- A large outdoor fire often used for warmth or celebration.





## Did you know we have a Holiday Amazon Wishlist?

This season, you can help bring extra comfort and joy to our seniors by purchasing items from our list. Your gift goes beyond a meal, it provides the everyday essentials that make life brighter and easier.

With our Program Manager, Wendy Bonsall, carefully overseeing distribution, every donation finds its way directly to the clients who need it most. Together, let's make the holidays a little warmer for our community.



3082 TAMIAMI TRAIL, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952



(941) 625-4343



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*Thank you for reading!*