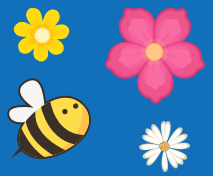




Meals on Wheels
of Charlotte County

NEWSLETTER



SPRING/SUMMER
2026



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Darcy Woods, President
- Jamal Hishmeh, Vice President
- Valerie Tiffany, Secretary
- Donna Kennedy, Treasurer
- Keith Meyer, Board Member
- Jennifer Neuman, Board Member
- Amber Weaver, Board Member
- Dr. Amy Mellor, Board Member
- Debbie Amaral-Chow, Board Member
- Christine Zerjav, Board Member
- Stephanie Eller, Board Member
- Judy Davis, Board Member



Growing Together

As we welcome the fresh energy of spring and summer, we're reminded that growth happens when a community comes together with purpose.

At Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County, every meal prepared and every delivery made reflects a shared commitment to our neighbors. This season, we're focused on growing awareness of our mission, strengthening partnerships, and expanding our reach to serve more seniors who depend on nutritious meals and connection.

But we can't do it alone.

It takes volunteers, donors, local businesses, and community members working side by side to make this possible. Because of your support, we continue to serve with consistency, dignity, and compassion.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected community, and we are growing together.

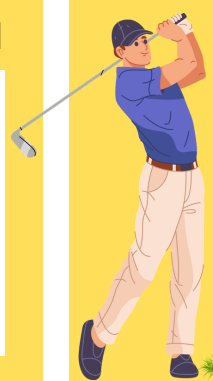
Pictured left to right Kay, Volunteer, Happy Client & Mike Volunteer

“
*Where
compassion
grows,
community
thrives.*
”

FOR MORE INFORMATION



UPCOMING EVENTS



Take a Swing Against Hunger Golf Tournament
Saturday May 2nd, 2026
Deep Creek Golf Club 1260 San Cristobal Ave

Painting with a Twist - Create a Wave of Hope
Thursday, May 21, 2026
Painting with a Twist 18700 Veterans Blvd Ste#8





FROM THE DESK OF OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

As we welcome the bright days of spring and look ahead to summer, we're reminded of the renewed energy each season brings. While the days grow longer, our mission remains the same. Many understand the challenges of caring for aging loved ones. For homebound seniors, daily needs can still feel overwhelming, and isolation remains very real.

At Meals on Wheels, our team and volunteers continue delivering more than just meals, we bring comfort, connection, and reassurance. Each visit is a reminder that someone cares. Your support makes it possible for seniors to feel valued and for families to have peace of mind.

We're also excited to welcome new leadership, including Board Vice President Jamal Hishmeh and board members Debbie Amaral-Chow, Judy Davis, Stephanie Eller, and Christine Zerjav. We are grateful for their dedication to our mission.

As the seasons change, take a moment to check in on a neighbor or friend. A simple gesture can mean so much.

With gratitude,
Darcy Woods

Board President

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Jamal Hishmeh
Board Vice President



Debbie Amaral-Chow
Board Member



Christine Zerjav
Board Member



Judy Davis
Board Member



Stephanie Eller
Board Member



Presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

Save the Date!

APRIL 15-16, 2026 NOON to NOON

Celebrating the 10th Giving Challenge

We're excited to participate in the 2026 Giving Challenge

During this 24-hour event,
every donation is matched 1:1 (up to \$100 per donor).

That means:

Your \$25 becomes \$50
Your \$100 becomes \$200



Your generosity goes twice as far in helping seniors stay nourished and connected and while the match applies up to \$100, you can give any amount to make an even greater impact.

Together, We Deliver More Than a Meal
Because of supporters like you, we can continue to provide not just nourishment—but dignity, connection, and hope.

Join us April 15-16 and help us make twice the impact.

<https://www.givingchallenge.org/organizations/meals-on-wheels-of-charlotte-county-inc>





OFFICE TIDBITS



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.



Joan, Volunteer



Diana and Charles
Volunteers



MEET MIKE, VOLUNTEER

Mike has been delivering meals with us for over 13 years. He began volunteering shortly after the passing of his wife, finding purpose and connection through helping others. A former U.S. Postal Service mail carrier, Mike grew up in Massachusetts and was married over 40 years to the love of his life. Mike has a daughter and a son who live outside the area.

Humble and thoughtful, Mike enjoys reading, good company, and the occasional TV show to pass the time. His dedication and quiet generosity have made a lasting impact on the seniors he serves.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

MEET SUSHILA MEAL DELIVERY VOLUNTEER

For over 17 years, Sushila has been a shining light at Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County, delivering not just meals but care, connection, and joy to our seniors.

Sushila's story is remarkable. In 2020, she battled COVID-19 during a very difficult time. After recovering, she returned to volunteering with us, demonstrating incredible resilience, compassion, and dedication to serving others in our community.

"I like to give back to the community," Sushila says. She enjoys meeting the people she serves, often keeping a notebook of personal details so she can celebrate milestones with them. Born in Singapore and a longtime Florida resident, Sushila has also volunteered with Charlotte CARE, Habitat for Humanity, and the Virginia B. Andes Clinic. She's adventurous too, repelling down buildings for fundraisers and even skydiving!

Sushila's dedication, courage, and compassion make her a true hero in our community. Thank you, Sushila, for 17 years of service and for touching so many lives with your heart.



We  our
Volunteers

thank  you

"When you give your time, you deliver more than a meal, you deliver comfort, connection, and kindness."



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.

TERRY AND WARREN: A STORY OF COMMUNITY AND CARE

When Terry returned home from the hospital last November, she and her husband Warren faced a challenge many seniors know too well, how to stay healthy, nourished, and independent without family nearby to help. That's when Meals on Wheels stepped in, delivering more than just meals to their door. For Terry and Warren, each delivery brings reassurance, nutrition, and a connection to a caring community that makes all the difference in their daily lives.

For the couple, who don't have local family to rely on, Meals on Wheels has become a true lifeline. "The appreciation I feel for getting these meals is immense," Terry shared. "It gives us one less thing to worry about and allows us to focus on each other." Warren agrees: "Knowing we have nutritious meals delivered each day gives us peace of mind."

Born in Minnesota, Terry moved to Florida over 20 years ago to care for her mother. She spent more than 30 years as a mental health therapist in the Minnesota prison system, a career she is proud of. She has four daughters, 18 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild—all living back in Minnesota—but now her local family is the Meals on Wheels team and the volunteers who bring care and connection along with each meal.

In her free time, Terry enjoys keeping her mind sharp with picture puzzles, while also caring for their dog Tete and cat Lucy. When asked what she is most proud of, she smiled simply: "My four girls and my husband."

For Terry and Warren, Meals on Wheels is about more than food. It's about independence, support, and knowing that even when family is far away, they are not alone. Their story is a touching reminder of the difference a caring community can make one meal at a time.



IMPACT STATS
2025



407

seniors served

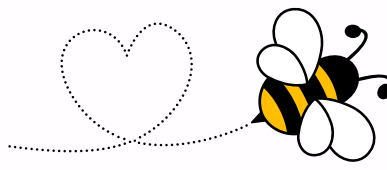


28,560

meals served



Terry, Meal Recipient



BEHIND THE SCENES

Every day, there's more happening behind the scenes than most people realize. While meals are being delivered and shoppers browse our thrift store, a dedicated team is hard at work making it all possible.

Behind the Scenes in Our Thrift Store Donation Room

Before any item reaches the sales floor, it's carefully sorted, inspected, and priced by our staff with help from our volunteers. Clothing is checked for quality, household goods are tested, and seasonal items are rotated to keep the store fresh. It's detailed work, but every donated item sold helps fund our mission of delivering nutritious meals to local seniors.

In the Kitchen: Early Mornings, Purposeful Work

Our kitchen starts early each morning with meal prep, chopping vegetables, preparing hearty soups, and cooking balanced entrées designed for seniors. Careful menu planning, proper portioning, and strict food safety practices guide every step. By the time drivers arrive, meals are packaged, organized by route, and ready to go.

In the Office: The Coordination Hub

In the office, calls are answered, new client intakes are completed, delivery routes are finalized, and food and supplies are ordered. Donations are processed, payroll and bookkeeping are handled, and reports are prepared to ensure accountability. It's steady, behind-the-scenes work that keeps everything running smoothly.

Just as important is the ongoing work of fundraising and community awareness. Grant writing, donor outreach, events, sponsorships, and sharing our story through newsletters and social media all help ensure we can continue serving seniors in need. Every gift, every shared post, and every new supporter strengthens our ability to deliver meals and make a difference.

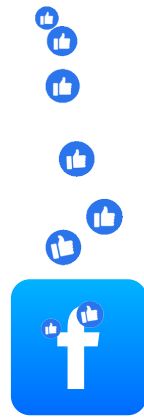
From the donation room to the kitchen to the office, every role matters. Though much of this work isn't visible, its impact is felt every day at the doorsteps of the seniors we serve.



Pictured: Top Left, Debbie, Board Member, Top (R), Wendy, Program Manager, Bottom (L) Darcy, Board President, Bottom (R) Miriam, Office Assistant



Vivian, Volunteer



DISCOVER TREASURES, SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Step into our thrift store and discover more than just great finds—you'll discover a way to make a difference. Every purchase supports our mission to deliver warm, nutritious meals and spread connection to homebound seniors. From clothing and books to one-of-a-kind treasures, your shopping helps bring comfort and joy to those who need it most.

Want to get the inside scoop? Sign up for our newsletter to receive sneak peeks of upcoming sales, special promotions, and exclusive store updates.

Stop by, explore, and be part of something meaningful, because every \$5 you spend feeds a senior and strengthens our community.

MEET GWEN

After volunteering with us for several years, Gwen officially joined our staff and has now been part of our organization for nearly nine years.

She plays an important role in our thrift store operations, working in the back room, receiving donations, and sorting through the many generous contributions from our community. Gwen finds her work especially rewarding knowing that every item processed helps support warm, nutritious meals for homebound seniors.

We are truly grateful for her dedication and the steady, behind-the-scenes work she does each day to help further our mission.

Finders
Keepers
Thrift
Store



DONATION DROP-OFF:

Monday through Friday
10AM - 4PM

Sorry, we are unable to accept large donations on Saturdays due to limited staff.

STORE HOURS:

Monday through Friday
10AM - 4PM

Saturday 10am -4pm
Closed Sundays



SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

Charlotte County is home to nearly 19,700 veterans, and more than three quarters are age 65 or older. Many live alone, manage health challenges, or stretch limited incomes, and some don't have family nearby to help.

For these veterans, a delivered meal is more than nourishment. It's independence. It's dignity. It's a reminder that their service is remembered and appreciated.

If you know a veteran who could use our help, please reach out. Our team is ready to provide nutritious meals and friendly visits to ensure no veteran in our community feels forgotten.

Our veterans once showed up for us, now it's our turn to show up for them.

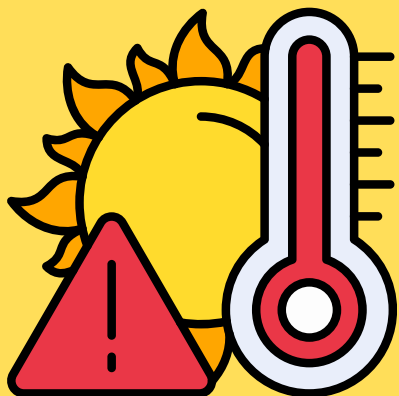


GOT DONATIONS?

The need continues to grow, and so does our commitment, but we can't do it alone. Your donations to our thrift store help bring meals and comfort to seniors each day.

Every \$5 spent provides a meal.

- Clothing
- Shoes
- Coats / Jackets
- Accessories
- Electronics
- Home Decor
- Kitchenware
- Books
- Tools
- Small Furnishings



SUMMER HEAT

As we step into the bright days of spring and the warmth of summer here in Florida, we're reminded that while this season brings sunshine, it also brings serious heat.

For the seniors we serve, rising temperatures can increase the risk of dehydration and heat-related illness, especially for those living alone. During these months, proper nutrition and regular check-ins are more important than ever.

A VISIT WITH SANDI AND JOHN

Recently we had the pleasure of spending a little time with Sandi and John, and it was a reminder of just how meaningful this program can be.

Sandi spent much of her life caring for others as a nurse, working many years in intensive care. Now, after both she and John have gone through surgeries in recent months, receiving Meals on Wheels has become a real help in their daily lives.

They shared how comforting it is to know a nutritious meal will arrive and how much they appreciate the kindness of the drivers who bring it. For them, it's not just about the food — it's about knowing someone is checking in and that they are part of a community that cares.

When asked if he had any suggestions for improving the program, John smiled and said, "Deliver meals on the weekend!"

We took that as the highest compliment.

It's conversations like these that remind us why our mission matters. Every meal delivered is a small act of support, connection, and care for neighbors like Sandi and John.



BEHIND THE MENU: MORE THAN A MEAL

Creating our monthly menu takes thoughtful planning and a lot of heart. Our cooks carefully balance nutrition, portion sizes, and variety while keeping in mind the many different tastes and preferences of the seniors we serve.

Each day, hundreds of meals are prepared in our kitchen. Recipes are carefully scaled, and proteins, vegetables, and starches are portioned using standardized scoops to ensure every client receives a consistent, well-balanced meal. This careful planning helps us maintain proper nutrition while making the most of every ingredient.

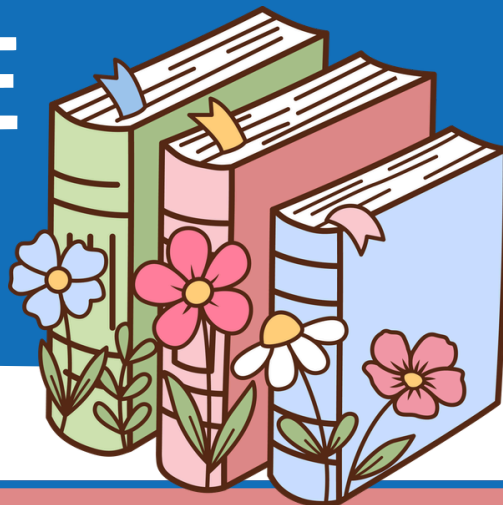
But to our kitchen team, these meals are more than just numbers and portions.

They understand that for many of our clients, the meal delivered to their door may be the highlight of their day. Every tray is prepared with care, knowing it brings comfort, nourishment, and a reminder that their community is thinking of them.



Cooks, Debbie & Pam

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



SUMMER

X	J	B	Z	X	H	U	F	D	M	M	Z	N	F	L	K	Q	Q	F
R	H	C	J	W	M	Q	L	E	O	U	T	D	O	O	R	S	Q	L
X	G	I	J	N	O	L	E	M	R	E	T	A	W	X	N	A	Q	E
F	W	N	E	U	H	B	M	S	W	H	I	T	V	W	E	T	I	F
L	R	C	K	S	A	N	A	W	M	S	Y	Q	V	D	D	X	J	Z
M	G	I	V	E	N	I	H	S	N	U	S	S	H	C	R	Y	X	I
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Y	Y	N	R	K	G	E	H	Z	U	M	T	L	Z	U	J	W	Y	T
J	Z	B	R	O	S	E	N	T	G	I	O	M	L	Q	P	U	S	T
C	B	A	C	X	H	C	A	A	C	W	U	G	V	E	N	U	J	H
P	P	Y	E	X	A	S	M	N	S	S	P	P	A	K	G	I	F	U
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Q	S	Z	O	D	S	Q	N	B	V	I	E	S	N	O	R	K	E	L

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| AUGUST | GARDEN | OUTDOORS | SNORKEL |
| BASEBALL | GRASS | PARK | SUNSHINE |
| BEACH | ICE CREAM | PICNIC | SWIM |
| CAMPING | JULY | PLAY | THUNDER |
| FRISBEE | JUNE | SANDALS | VACATION |
| GAMES | OCEAN | SHORTS | WATERMELON |

“TAKE A SWING AGAINST HUNGER”



Meals on Wheels
of Charlotte County



ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday May 2nd

**Registration starts at 7:30am
Shotgun at 8:30am**

**Deep Creek
Golf Club**

**1260 San Cristobal Ave
Punta Gorda, FL**



Includes:

- Day of Fun while helping feed Seniors
- 18 Hole Golf w/cart
- Continental Breakfast
- 2 Drink Tickets
- Delicious lunch

Available for Purchase:

- 50/50 Tickets \$1 ea, 10 for \$5 or 20 for \$10
 - Chance Auction 25 Tickets for \$20
 - \$5 Mulligans 2 Max Per Golfer
- *Please Bring Cash for purchases*

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED TO BE REGISTERED

TEAM OF 4

GOLFER NAME: _____ Ph# _____ Email _____

GOLFER NAME: _____ Ph# _____ Email _____

GOLFER NAME: _____ Ph# _____ Email _____

GOLFER NAME: _____ Ph# _____ Email _____

Golfers can pay cash, check or credit card.

**A processing fee applies for all credit card transactions.*

Make Checks Payable to: **Meals on Wheels**, and mail with forms to:

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



Please email your logo in PNG, JPG or PDF format to events@mowofcc.org

NO REFUNDS due to inclement weather cancellations.

For additional information, contact **Darcy Woods at (941) 763-2195**



CREATE A WAVE OF HOPE

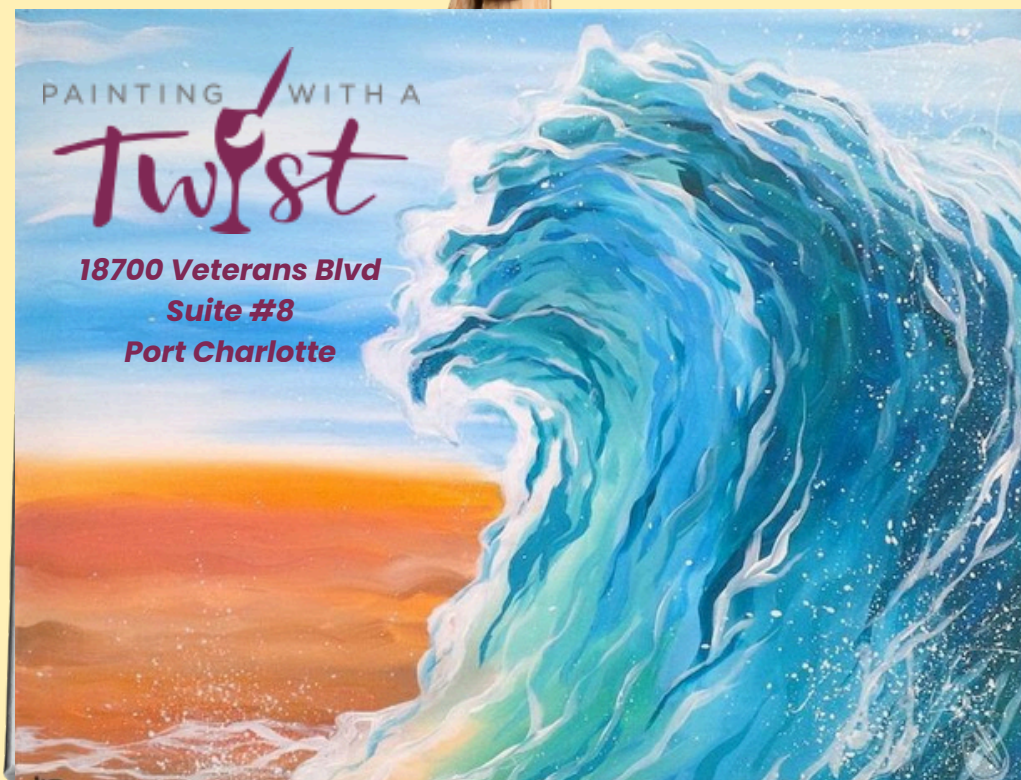
Paint. Sip. Make a Difference.

THURSDAY
MAY 21
7PM - 9PM

Reserve Your Spot Today!



*Scan above to reserve your spot or
Contact Darcy Woods
(941) 763-2195*



Drinks available for Purchase
Light Snacks Provided | 50/50 Raffle

100% of Net Proceeds Benefit



Meals on Wheels
of Charlotte County



Meals on Wheels

of Charlotte County



**3082 TAMIAMI TRAIL
PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952**



(941) 625-4343



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WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MOWOFCC



@MEALSONWHEELSCHARLOTTECOUNTY

Thank you for reading!

