



BEHIND THE WHEEL

Monday Morning Deliveries: The Best Tonic to Start the Week!

It would be hard to think of another volunteer who has been with Meals on Wheels for so long, in so many different capacities, and with so much enthusiasm as Margaret Baxter.

It was on a visit to relatives in England in the 1960s that Margaret first heard about the “Women’s Volunteer Services” who delivered tea and sandwiches to bombed out victims and troop trains during the war. Over time, this service evolved to help isolated, elderly individuals to maintain independence and dignity in their homes and communities and became what we now know as Meals on Wheels.

Upon returning to Montreal, where she worked in the research labs at Ogilvie Flour Mills, Margaret joined a committee initiating the first Meals on Wheels program at St. Matthias church and she has never looked back. Margaret also became a delivery volunteer — a role that remains one of her great joys to this day.

In 1968, the Ottawa City Union of The International Order of The King’s Daughters and Sons had also launched their own Meals on Wheels program. During the first week of operation, 29 meals were served to 15 people at a cost of 75 cents per meal. Meals were kept warm using charcoal briquettes in “hotlock” boxes.

When Margaret moved to Ottawa in 1979, she continued her commitment to Meals on Wheels, volunteering in the office on the phones and organizing the routes. She spent ten years on the Board of Directors and was President for two years. In addition to delivering meals across the city wherever she was needed, Margaret was also the Supplier Liaison Committee Chair visiting all the kitchens on a regular basis to ensure the quality of the Meals on Wheels service. Thirty-six years later, you will still find her heading out each Monday morning to deliver her weekly route!

“The best part of the delivery is meeting the

clients so, even though I do the driving, I also join the server in delivering meals to the door whenever possible. It is amazing how quickly I can get involved with clients’ lives with such a short visit every week. There have been many very special clients who have shared their lives with me and I don’t know which of us benefitted most from the special hugs during hard times.”



Margaret Baxter with today’s delivery bag and the hotlock box of yesteryear. (Photo: Baudouin St-Cyr)

Margaret sees the value of the service and knows firsthand that it is so much more than just the meal that she is delivering. The safety check and the visit provided by the volunteer are equally important.

“I’ve always done the Monday morning deliveries so clients are particularly happy to have a visitor after what may have been a couple of lonely days. One lady was particularly pleased to have us arrive as she had accidentally slipped in her bathtub and was stranded there for some time until the apartment superintendent let us in. That was the only time I’ve had to call 911.”

Margaret recently had her own challenges to overcome. In 2013, while crossing at a pedestrian crosswalk, she was struck by a car. With a fractured knee and shoulder as well as a cracked pelvis and many bruises, Margaret began a long year of recovery and physiotherapy. With her signature enthusiasm and spirit, Margaret eventually returned to her weekly delivery route and the clients who look forward to her visit.

Dates to Note:

June 17
Annual General Meeting

July 1 - Canada Day
No meal delivery

August 3 - Civic Holiday
No meal delivery

September 7 - Labour Day
No meal delivery

October 2 and 3
Mums for Thanksgiving deliveries

October 12 - Thanksgiving
No meal delivery

In addition to delivering Meals on Wheels, at 85, Margaret attends fitness classes at the Good Companions Centre, volunteers with their home help program driving people to medical appointments, and works on the 60th Jubilee celebrations committee for the Centre. In the nicer weather, you can find her on the golf course two or three times a week!

If you think you don’t have the time to help out with Meals on Wheels, just ask Margaret if it’s worth it:

“If anyone has doubts about volunteering, just get them out on a route and see how rewarding it can be. There have been days when I’ve pushed myself out the door feeling a bit out of sorts but returned feeling on top of the world — it’s the best possible tonic to start the week.”

Welcome to Our Team!
Volunteers joining
Meals on Wheels
since Autumn 2014:

- Mona Ahmad
- Leslie Alleyne
- Anne-Marie Battis
- Don Bell
- Shannon Bennett
- Sydney Bernstein
- Sarah Bone
- Susan Boyd
- Michael Brown
- Ronald Burnley
- Ahmed Gameil
- Stephanie Hajjar
- Kate Johnson
- Ryan Lambert
- Tracy Lo
- William MacDonald
- Sandra Mackie
- Gilbert Malboeuf
- André Marquis
- Susan Marquis
- Margot Morissette
- Arlene Paulemont
- Doug Ritchie
- Peggy Ritchie
- Nafees Rizwan
- Jenah St-Jacques
- Connie Sung
- Angela Thain
- Sheryl Urie
- Karen Toren
- Yvon Vincent
- William Wells

Algonquin College Culinary Students and Meals on Wheels: A Win/Win Partnership

Every weekday morning, Chef Ric Lee puts his students to work. Based on the day's menu, the morning class gets busy heating, cooking, and packaging meals for the day's Meals on Wheels clients. Thanks to the previous day's "Quantity Cooking Lab" class — whose students prepared the soup, diced and chopped the vegetables, and marinated the protein — the morning students methodically (under supervision) prepare about 40 meals every day. Before the meals go out for delivery, the lead Chef adjusts for dietary requirements and records the food temperatures.



From left to right: student Colton Poirier, Chef Ric Lee, and student Michelle Thompson. (Photo courtesy of Algonquin College)

Chef Ric Lee developed the menu with the help of a committee to make sure that curriculum outlines would be met. The highest standards regarding food safety and quality ingredients have been integrated into every recipe drawn from a professional cookbook used in the Algonquin program. These recipes were also chosen, of course, with our clients in mind. Ric is happy to say that the way the culinary program has been re-designed "recognizes the importance of serving nutritious meals with high standards to seniors, the chronically ill, and adults with disabilities."

The experience for Algonquin College, for the culinary program's students, and for the chefs has been a positive one, just as it has been for Meals on Wheels. "Knowing that we have been maintaining someone's health and well-being in the community," says Ric, "is a win/win experience!"

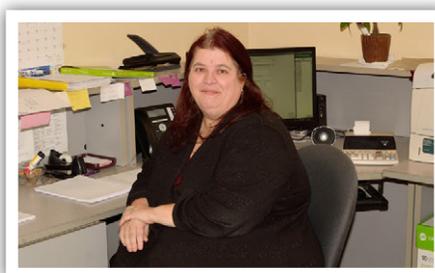
Our Meals Are Ready When You Are

One of the greatest advantages of our program is our fast action in getting services set up and meals delivered as soon as possible. Here at Meals on Wheels, our services can be set up for delivery Monday through Saturday within 24–48 hours of a request or referral. This is especially helpful for clients returning home after a hospital stay or having found themselves housebound and in need of nutritional support and a daily volunteer check in. We work hard to be available as much as possible and only close on Sundays and some statutory holidays (we still deliver on Family Day, Easter Monday, Remembrance Day, and Christmas Day.) Even on long weekends, we are still out delivering meals on Saturday thanks to our volunteers and our Saturday coordinator, Cathy Shaw. This past winter was especially cold, and we received many calls from clients requesting meals due to snowfall or cold temperatures. In our organization, we don't know what a snow day is, and thankfully neither do our clients!



MOW client Johanna Schultz enjoyed the special gifts that accompanied her hot meal at Easter. Thanks to the 42nd Nepean Girl Guides for the treats and to the Hintonburg Sewcial Club for the beautiful handmade placemats. (Photo: Jeff Brown)

Welcome Derna



Derna Lisi, our new bookkeeper, happy to be in her new office. (Photo: Baudouin St-Cyr)

Derna Lisi joined our staff last December as Bookkeeper. She brings to Meals on Wheels extensive experience in the financial management of not-for-profit organizations, gained through a variety of positions, including an eight-year stint at the Entomological Society of Canada. She also brings a wealth of positive energy to our staff team. It's good to have you with us Derna!

The “Energy” to Make a Difference!

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held on April 22. We had a great turnout and celebrated the many wonderful volunteers who deliver meals, help in the office, and serve on our Board of Directors. Many thanks to all who helped make the event a great success!

We were also pleased to recognize Enbridge Gas Distribution as they celebrated 20 years of volunteerism with Meals on Wheels. With corporate support, Enbridge joined Meals on Wheels in 1995 with 15 employees on the delivery team. Twenty years later, that number has doubled. Over the years, they have had about 70 employees involved and have delivered many thousands of meals out of the Garry J. Armstrong Centre — our first and longest-standing hot meal provider. Many Enbridge employees are long-time volunteers and one team member, Leah Stiles, has been on the team since its inception!

“Enbridge believes a community belongs to everyone who lives there and our employees want to make life better for our neighbours as well as ourselves. Volunteering achieves both those goals and our employees have the energy to make a difference!” —Sharon Wilson, Employee Enbridge Gas Distribution



Back Row: Rick Findlay, Leah Stiles, Wil Hanbidge
Middle Row: Sharon Wilson, Ida Findlay, Maria Almonte, MOW Board Member Terri Morgan
Front Row: Kristen Almonte
(Photo: Baudouin St-Cyr)

Celebrating Our Heroes: March for Meals Community Champions Week

During the week of March 16–20, The Meals on Wheels Network, comprised of the five Meals on Wheels programs serving the Ottawa area, was pleased to have various Community Champions help to deliver meals and draw attention to this much-needed service. Thank you to Yasir Naqvi, Ontario Minister of Safety and Correctional Services and Ottawa Centre MPP, for joining our delivery volunteer Jim Morrison as he visited clients along his downtown route.

The March for Meals Campaign was celebrated all over North America and its goal was supported by the release of a recent study conducted by Brown University’s Center for Gerontology and Healthcare Research, which examined the impact of Meals on Wheels programs on the elderly. This study found that:

- Seniors requesting Meals on Wheels service were more likely to have poorer health, suffer from depression, have limited mobility due to frequent falls, and require assistance shopping and preparing food.
- Seniors receiving daily meal service reported an improvement in both mental and physical health, fewer falls, and fewer feelings of isolation and loneliness.

However, the most important finding was that Meals on Wheels programs helped seniors remain in their homes longer. It takes many caring individuals to accomplish this, from those who speak out to support our programs, to the volunteers out delivering every day, to the donors who support us financially. Thank you to all the volunteers and community partners who are champions for Meals on Wheels all year long and who really deliver “more than just a meal.”

Remembering Meals on Wheels Founder Gwen Richards



Three of the original Meals on Wheels Founders: Gwen Richards, Phyllis Lyon, and Evelyn Sparks. (Photo: Baudouin St-Cyr)

It was with great regret that we learned of Gwen Richards’ passing on December 24, 2014. Gwen was an avid volunteer her whole life. Realizing the need for a home delivered meal program to help seniors in Ottawa, Gwen helped to found our Meals on Wheels program in 1968. In addition, she served as President of our Board from March 1971 to July 1974, as a meal deliverer in her Centretown neighbourhood, and as a passionate promoter of Meals on Wheels. Gwen was also a long-time Director of the King’s Daughters Apartments, the first low-rent high-rise apartment building for seniors in Ottawa, built in 1964. In 1987, she was awarded a plaque from the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services in recognition of her volunteer work. We are grateful for Gwen’s compassion towards others and for her community spirit. We extend our sincere condolences to Gwen’s family and many friends.

Speakers Bureau

Your church group, community association, or other organization may be interested in having someone speak about Meals on Wheels, our meal programs, and volunteer opportunities. You may also be interested in joining the Speakers Bureau. Training is available for anyone interested in helping to promote Meals on Wheels by speaking to community groups. Please contact Terry Moxness for further information.

Stock Up with Apetito Frozen Meals

With summer coming, it is understandable that many of our clients will want to be out enjoying the weather, and thus may not always be at home to receive a hot meal at lunchtime. Our frozen meal program is a convenient and flexible alternative to ensure that there is always something to eat on hand if clients are not able to be at home for hot meal delivery.



Two of Apetito's 250 staff at work preparing frozen meals. (Photo courtesy of Apetito Canada Ltd.)

Meals on Wheels began providing frozen meals through a company called Private Recipes in 1994. In 2007, Apetito, a company with over 50 years of experience in the frozen food industry in Europe, bought out Private Recipes. Since making its debut in Canada, Apetito quickly grew popular among Meals on Wheels agencies across Ontario and now serves 80 percent of the province's frozen meal programs. The company prides itself on producing meals from scratch, meaning that chefs in-house prepare all of their soups and entrees, with minimal use of processed products. With a staff of 250 focused on meal preparation from beginning to end, plus others who work with food suppliers and in addressing the growing demand for home delivered meals, the Brampton, Ontario, based company focuses on catering to health-care needs. Moreover, the chefs create their flash frozen, home-cooked recipes using quality fresh ingredients supplied by Canadian farmers and growers whenever possible. With the guidance of a registered dietician and a certified nutritionist, soups, entrees, and desserts are suitable to many diets, including diabetic, low sodium, minced, pureed, gluten free, lactose free, and renal.

For more information on Apetito frozen meals, or to obtain a menu of their selections, contact our office.

Why I Support Meals on Wheels

I strongly believe that Meals on Wheels is a tremendous organization. Although the service provided by the organization is subsidized by government dollars, these funds do not cover the full cost of providing the meals upon which so many Ottawa seniors rely. That's why I provide support by making an annual donation. I feel happy knowing that these funds help to keep Meals on Wheels clients independent and healthy. I know how important it is to me to be in my own home and so I want to help seniors to be able to stay at home too. Because the program can begin delivery within a day or two, bringing a nutritious meal and providing a caring volunteer contact, I know that the service goes a long way to helping seniors maintain that independence when they need it most. It also helps the community by reducing the strain and costs associated with nursing home care and hospitalization, and that is important to me too.

I care deeply about the Mission of Meals on Wheels and so, in addition to supporting the program financially, I also served on the Board of Directors for 11 years. I continue to be involved by volunteering on the Finance Committee and so I understand firsthand the importance of donations from the community. Meals on Wheels has been a mainstay in Ottawa since 1968 with a proven track record of sound fiscal practices and quality service in the community. I feel confident knowing my financial donation and my time is put to good use and has a direct impact on the quality of life of seniors in Ottawa.



Long-term volunteer and former Board President Stuart McLeod. (Photo: Baudouin St-Cyr)

Charitable Donations

Yes, I would like to make a donation to Meals on Wheels (Ottawa)

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 other _____

Method of Payment:

Cash Visa Mastercard Cheque

Please make cheque payable to: Meals on Wheels (Ottawa)
Charitable registration # 11898 1778 RR0001

Card # _____

Expiry Date# _____

Signature _____

Mailing Address: 670 Albert Street, Ottawa, ON K1R 6L2

For more information please contact us at 613-233-2424. You can also support Meals on Wheels through a monthly donation, planned giving or making a donation in memoriam.

MORE THAN JUST A MEAL!

