

Nourishing News

Honoring a Visionary: Paul Kraintz's Legacy at the Heart of MOWCC

When Paul Kraintz began his career with Contra Costa County's Senior Nutrition Program, he wasn't thinking about legacy—he was thinking about the growing number of older adults who needed meals. He saw the waiting lists. He saw the limitations of government funding. And more than that, he saw what was coming: a future where the need would only grow.

Paul didn't wait for someone else to solve the problem. He studied the system, looked ahead, and built a solution that has now stood for 35 years.



*Paul Kraintz, co-founder of
Meals on Wheels Contra Costa*

In 1990, alongside Area Agency on Aging Director Robert Sessler, Paul helped create Meals on Wheels Contra Costa—a nonprofit established specifically to raise the funds needed to fill the gap in government funding and ensure that no eligible senior would be placed on a wait list due to funding. It was Paul's idea to form a separate nonprofit, and it was his vision to make sure the County, the service providers, and the senior community would all have a seat at the table.

"He was a true visionary," said Robert Sessler. "Paul took both a short- and long-term view of what was needed. His idea was to build a structure that could meet the need—not just for now, but for the future."

Paul served as Director of the Senior Nutrition Program for more than 30 years, and dedicated nearly 40 years of service to improving the lives of older adults. Thanks to his steady leadership and partnership with other advocates, what started with modest fundraising through mail appeals grew into a strong and reliable source of support. Over time, the organization added foundation support, grant funding, and legacy gifts—always evolving, always adapting.

"He was a true visionary." -Robert Sessler

Today, Meals on Wheels Contra Costa contributes approximately \$2 million annually toward meal costs, helping to guarantee approximately 800,000 meals each year for 3,800 homebound seniors across the county. By covering approximately 46% of the total cost of the countywide Meals on Wheels Programs, the organization has ensured that no senior is placed on a waitlist due to funding shortfalls.

"Looking back after 35 years, that's an incredibly wonderful place to be," Robert shared. "Very few programs in the country can say they've consistently met the need."

Paul passed away this year, and while his absence is felt deeply, his legacy remains steady. He left behind not just a framework for success, but an example of what happens when someone commits fully to their community. Paul didn't chase recognition—he focused on results. He believed in service, in shared responsibility, and in solving problems through practical leadership and long-term thinking.

His impact didn't stop with Meals on Wheels. Paul's lifelong dedication to his hometown of Martinez showed up in every part of his life—from his role with the Martinez Historical Society and Kiwanis Club to his time as a volunteer firefighter, poll worker, and mentor to local youth. He was a collector, a historian, a restorer of classic cars, and a lover of old movies. But above all, he was a man who believed that local action matters.

“Paul can be a role model for all of us,” Robert said. “If you have a passion for something, and you're willing to put in the time and effort, you can have a long-lasting impact.”

Honoring Paul's legacy means facing new challenges. Organizations like Meals on Wheels Contra Costa serve as a vital bridge to fill funding gaps, ensuring seniors continue to receive the meals they need. If federal funding cuts occur in the future as threatened, your support will be more important than ever. Paul's vision reminds us that local action and investment are key to guaranteeing no senior is left behind—even in uncertain times.

As we mark 35 years of Meals on Wheels Contra Costa's existence, we do so with pride and gratitude. We are here because Paul had the foresight to act. Looking ahead, we carry his example with us - his legacy alive in the mission that continues every day.



Paul Krantz and Robert Sessler launched Meals on Wheels Contra Costa in 1990.

Continue what Paul started - give today to help guarantee meals for tomorrow.



OUR LEGACY IN ACTION

35 Years of Community-Powered Support

Our Mission

We support homebound elders to maintain their health and dignity, and enable them to live independently in the comfort and security of their own homes. We serve nutritionally at-risk senior citizens who have challenges that prevent them from preparing nutritious daily meals for themselves.



MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

Donor

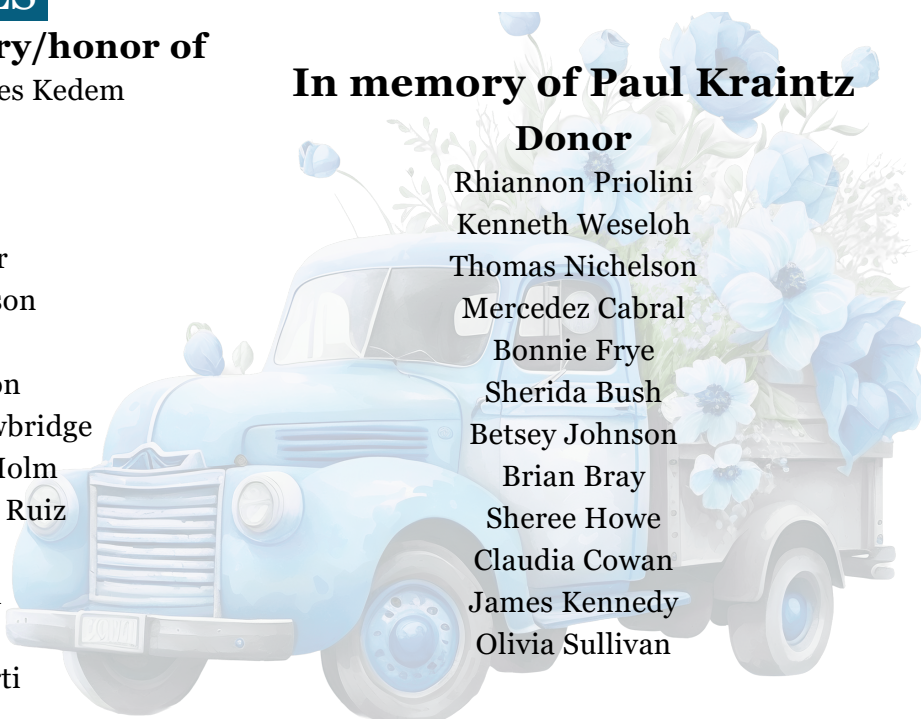
Elliot & Carolyn Tertes..... Andrew Tertes Kede
Zelda Lefrak..... Betty Panky
Robert & Margaret Bame..... Betty Panky
Charles Dybdal..... Betty Panky
Paul West..... C. M. Weaver
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Kristin Kogure..... David Haber
Loulana Miles..... Gladys Wilson
Shannon Kilbane..... Gordon Trowbridge
Ashley Holm..... Gregory N. Holm
Yvonne Ruiz..... Isidro & Ana Ruiz
Chester Holm..... Judith Holm
Charles Honodel..... Kay Honodel
Darlene Commiskey..... Kay Thayer
Leanne Bruschini..... Olga Lamberti

In memory/honor of

In memory of Paul Kraintz

Donor

Rhiannon Priolini
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Betsey Johnson
Brian Bray
Sheree Howe
Claudia Cowan
James Kennedy
Olivia Sullivan



Thank you to the following grantors!

GRANTORS

Your generosity helps guarantee approximately 800,000 meals for thousands of homebound seniors across Contra Costa County. We are deeply grateful for your support and partnership.

Kaiser Permanente Foundation
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
Antioch Community Foundation
Concord Pleasant Hill Healthcare District
Kiwanis Club of Martinez
Walmart - Martinez Store
Sam's Club - Concord

EVENTS

The Island Charity Cruise on September 20th, hosted by the **San Joaquin Yacht Club**, is officially **sold out**—a testament to the generosity and heart of this incredible community.

Each year, this beloved event raises funds to benefit both **Meals on Wheels Contra Costa** and **Bethel Island Children's Support**, bringing together neighbors who care deeply about helping the most vulnerable—seniors and children.

The cruise was originally created by the late Dennis Pippin, a passionate advocate for older adults and longtime supporter of Meals on Wheels Contra Costa. His legacy of kindness and community care lives on in this joyful tradition on the Delta.

We are honored to be one of the beneficiaries of this year's cruise and are deeply grateful to the San Joaquin Yacht Club and all who make this event possible.



♥ In memory of Dennis

🌊 In support of community

🍷 And always, in the spirit of giving



Meals on Wheels

CONTRA COSTA

PO Box 3195 Martinez CA 94553

Toll Free: 866.669.6697

Federal Tax ID: 68-0231350

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THESE GIVING OPTIONS?

Legacy Giving:

A legacy gift to Meals on Wheels Contra Costa ensures that we can continue guaranteeing nutritious meals for homebound seniors for generations to come. Whether through a bequest in your will or trust, or by giving assets such as stocks, bonds, real estate, or cash, your gift can provide lasting support. Legacy gifts offer tax advantages and allow you to make a meaningful impact on our mission.

Donor-Advised Fund (DAF):

A Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) is a flexible and tax-efficient way to support Meals on Wheels Contra Costa. By contributing cash, stocks, or other assets to your DAF, you can recommend grants to us whenever you'd like. This provides immediate tax benefits, while allowing you to direct your charitable giving to our cause in a simple and effective manner.

Workplace Giving:

Many employers offer workplace giving programs that make it easy to support causes you care about—often through automatic payroll deductions. Even better, some companies will match your gift, doubling or even tripling your impact! Ask your HR department if your company offers matching gifts or workplace giving options to support Meals on Wheels Contra Costa.

If you are considering a legacy gift or wish to support Meals on Wheels Contra Costa through your Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) or workplace giving program, we would be happy to discuss your options and guide you in making a lasting impact. Please contact us at 925-387-5001 for more information and assistance on how to create a meaningful partnership with our organization.

Annual Report & Form 990 are available on our website. If you would like an emailed version, please call our main office.

If you would prefer an email version of our newsletter, please email LLoving@MOWContraCosta.org



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Turn Your Wheels into Meals

Donating your vehicle through our partner, **Car Donation Services**, is a simple way to support Meals on Wheels Contra Costa. They accept a wide variety of vehicles - including **cars, trucks, boats and RVs** - and handle all the details for you. Your gift helps guarantee nutritious meals for homebound seniors throughout Contra Costa County.

For more information or to start your donation, please **scan the QR code** below or call our office at 925-387-5001.



In partnership with:



Car Donation Services, Inc.