

Nourishing News

Together Through Changing Seasons

As the fall leaves turn and the days grow shorter, many of our homebound neighbors face another kind of season—one marked by uncertainty, isolation, and financial strain. For more than 35 years, Meals on Wheels Contra Costa has stood beside them, helping guarantee that nutritious meals and caring connections reach older adults throughout Contra Costa County.

Our commitment is more important now than ever. Across our community, government funding has not kept pace with the growing senior population—leaving Meals on Wheels Contra Costa to bridge the funding gap. Here in Contra Costa County, government support covers roughly three-quarters of the actual meal costs. The rest is made possible through the generosity of community members, foundations, and local partners who believe no senior should have to choose between food and other essentials.

For many seniors in Contra Costa County, the Meals on Wheels program is more than a meal—it's a link to stability, kindness, and care.

One of those seniors is Reina Platero, who has received meals from one of our service providers, Meals on Wheels West Contra Costa (MOWWCC), for several years. At 75, Reina looks forward to celebrating her birthday this fall with much gratitude. Throughout her life, she has worked tirelessly to support her family and to find belonging in her community. Growing up with a language barrier wasn't easy, but her determination built bridges where words sometimes could not.

“
Me da mucha alegría al recibir la comida de su programa (MOWWCC). Ustedes ponen todo su esfuerzo para entregarme la comida y espero que dios los bendiga.
It gives me so much joy to receive the food from your program (WCCMOW). You give all your effort into delivering the food to me, and I hope that God blesses you all.
— Reina Platero, Meals on Wheels client
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Through MOWWCC's bilingual staff, Reina and other Spanish-speaking clients are able to access resources and support that help them live safely and independently at home. These culturally responsive services are essential—ensuring that every senior, regardless of background or language, can age in place with dignity.

Reina's perseverance reflects the heart of the Meals on Wheels network throughout Contra Costa County. Each program, like Meals on Wheels West Contra Costa, plays a vital role in ensuring older adults are nourished, connected, and cared for.

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At Meals on Wheels Contra Costa, we are honored to contribute to the success of our service provider partners. By bridging the financial gap between limited government funding and the true cost of meals, we make it possible for dedicated service providers like MOWWCC to continue reaching seniors like Reina—day after day, meal after meal.

Reina's story is a reminder that behind every plate of food is a partnership of compassion. Together—with your support—we can ensure that every senior across Contra Costa County has access to the nourishment, dignity, and hope they deserve.



Matching Gift Opportunity Double Your Impact!

As the need for Meals on Wheels continues to grow, generosity from our community is making all the difference. Thanks to our friends at the Mervyn L. Brenner Foundation, that generosity will go even further as we approach the holiday season. Every dollar you give through December 31 will be matched, up to \$7,500.

Together, we can help ensure that our seniors neighbors have access to the meals and connection They need to live with dignity in the comfort of their own homes.

**Scan the QR code to
give today!**

*Every dollar counts.
Every meal matters.*



Why Community Support Matters More Than Ever

Across the country, thousands of seniors are waiting for the daily meals & connection they desperately need. According to *Meals on Wheels America's 2025 Waitlist Research Initiative*, one in three Meals on Wheels providers nationwide has a waitlist, & tens of thousands of older adults waiting—sometimes for months—to begin receiving services.

The leading cause is insufficient funding. Federal support has not kept pace with the rapidly growing senior population, while food, fuel, & staffing costs continue to rise. Many programs are doing everything they can, but without sustainable financial resources, the gap between need & capacity keeps widening.

Here in Contra Costa County, Meals on Wheels Contra Costa continues to help bridge that gap. And thanks to community support, our service providers are not facing waitlists due to lack of funding. However, some communities – particularly in East County like Pittsburg, Antioch, & Brentwood – are experiencing waitlists caused by volunteer shortages. These challenges underscore how essential both funding & community engagement are to ensuring every senior receives the meals & care they deserve.

Your support makes a difference.
**Donate today to help us continue
bridging the funding gap.**

Interested in volunteering?
Contact us at
info@mowcontracosta.org
to learn how you can support
communities experiencing volunteer
shortages.

Data source:

*Meals on Wheels America,
2025 Waitlist Research Initiative
mealsonwheelsamerica.org/facts*

MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

Gift from:

Carrie Kroger
Winona Leal
Mildred Horton
Joseph Lujan
Barbara Brown
Sharon Love
Yvonne Ruiz
Theodore Purcell

In Memory/Honor of:

A. Patricia Kroeger
Alan and Todd Leal
Bob Horton
Carol Lujan
Debbie
Dennis J Desmond
Isidro and Ana Ruiz
Jean Purcell

Gift from:

Marion Keibel
Barbara Anson
Joanne Doorack
Marie Humphrey
Matthew Stretch
Julie Freestone
Brian Bray
Laureen Barthman-Thompson

In Memory/Honor of:

Joy Swan
Judi Fox
Leighton Simpson
Paul Kraitz
Paul Kraitz
Paul Kraitz
Paul Kraitz
William and Olga Cortes

GRANTORS

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING GRANTORS!

Your generosity helps guarantee thousands of meals for approximately 3,800 homebound seniors across Contra Costa County. We are deeply grateful for your support & partnership.

City of Martinez Community Groups Funding
Martinez Community Foundation
Mervyn L. Brenner Foundation
San Francisco Humanities

EVENTS

San Joaquin Yacht Club's 2nd Annual Island Charity Cruise:

The 2nd Annual Island Charity Cruise on September 20th was a beautiful day on the Delta—filled with generosity, community spirit, and heartfelt giving. Hosted by the **San Joaquin Yacht Club**, the event brought together friends and neighbors in support of Meals on Wheels Contra Costa and Bethel Island Children's Support.

This cherished event continues to raise vital funds to help nourish homebound seniors across Contra Costa County and support children in need in the Bethel Island Community. The proceeds from this year's event will help Meals on Wheels Contra Costa guarantee thousands of meals for vulnerable older adults across our county—ensuring no senior is left hungry or forgotten.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who made this event such a success—the San Joaquin Yacht Club, the Bethel Island community, the boat captains, volunteers, and all the sponsors—each of whom embodies the spirit of service that Dennis Pippin began so many years ago.

♥ *In memory of Dennis Pippin*
🌊 *In celebration of community*
🍷 *And always, in the spirit of giving*





Meals on Wheels

CONTRA COSTA

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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.