meal TIMES

Meals on Wheels
of Central Maryland
Newsletter Volume 39, Fall 2026
@mealsonwheelsmd



RECIPE FOR THE FUTURE

A generous cup of compassion. A heaping measure of community. Thousands of dedicated volunteers. Millions of meals delivered with care. And one unwavering belief: no neighbor should face hunger or isolation alone.

The ingredients were gathered long before the first shovel touched the ground.

For more than sixty years, Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland has been perfecting this recipe every day throughout Baltimore City and the surrounding region. What began as a simple mission to deliver nutritious meals has grown into something far greater, providing companionship, wellness checks, and peace of mind to older adults who choose to remain independent in their own homes.

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MealTimes is the official newsletter for Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, Inc.

But every great recipe evolves as it gets passed from one generation to the next.

Across Central Maryland, more older adults are aging in place than ever before. The demand for home delivered meals and services continues to rise, and waiting lists remind us that too many neighbors are still waiting for a helping hand.

That is why, on September 14, 2026, nearly 100 community leaders, volunteers, donors, and supporters gathered in Southwest Baltimore for a historic milestone. Standing on a vacant parcel behind Edmondson Village Shopping Center, they celebrated the groundbreaking of a new $54 million headquarters and state-of-the-art kitchen that will transform the organization's ability to serve the community.

To some, it looked like an empty piece of land. To those who understood the mission, it looked like possibility. They could already imagine the future taking shape. A larger kitchen. More volunteers. More delivery routes. More doors being knocked on. More lives touched.

As the ceremony unfolded, long-time volunteer Mary looked out at the crowd and thought about the many people she had met during her years on a delivery route.

She remembered the veteran who waited by the window each morning. The widow who kept a photo album by the front door and shared a different memory every week.

The gentleman who once told her, “Your visit is the brightest part of my day.” Holding back tears, Mary reflected on what the new facility would mean.

“Every recipe starts with ingredients,” she said. “The ingredients here are kindness, generosity, and people who care about their neighbors. This building will help us prepare more meals, but more importantly, it will help us deliver more hope. Every tray that leaves that kitchen will remind someone that they are not alone.”

Her words captured the heart of the day.

A few moments later, Del. Malcolm Ruff stepped to the podium and reminded everyone gathered why this project mattered so deeply.

“May this building that rises from the ground here allow us to feed more people, reach more older adults, support more families, create more opportunities, and serve Maryland for generations to come.”

His words were both a blessing and a challenge. They spoke not only to the building that would soon stand at 701 Swann Avenue, but to the lives that would be changed because of it.

The future headquarters will increase meal production capacity from approximately 5,000 meals per day to as many as 15,000 meals daily, allowing Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland to reach significantly more homebound neighbors throughout the region for generations to come.



But the true recipe for the future is not measured in meals. It is measured in independence. In dignity. In peace of mind.

It is found in the relief of a daughter who knows someone is checking on her mother. It is found in the smile of an older adult opening the door to a friendly face. It is found in the strength of a community that refuses to leave its most vulnerable neighbors behind.

As shovels broke through the earth and applause filled the air, everyone present understood that they were helping create something much larger than a building.

The foundation being laid that day was made of compassion. The walls would be built with generosity. The mission would continue to be powered by volunteers. And the final product would be a stronger, healthier, more connected Central Maryland.

That is the Recipe for the Future, and Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland will continue serving it, one meal, one visit, and one neighbor at a time.



Mary Jo and Alex, Gordon Feinblatt LLC



Anthony and Dion, KCI Technologies Inc.

CREATING COMMUNITY WITH COLLEAGUES

Delivering meals with Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland (MOWCM) allows volunteers to serve clients while strengthening connections with one another. Companies and social groups can form a delivery team, known as a Lunch Bunch, whose members rotate responsibility for a weekly or monthly route. This gives everyone a chance to participate without requiring anyone to deliver every week.

Typically, two group members deliver together, giving colleagues who may not know each other well time to connect. This can be especially valuable for new employees building workplace relationships. Pairing a manager with someone from another department can also spark fresh conversations and perspectives along the route.

Participants give back to the community while building lasting connections with colleagues and fellow group members. To learn how your group can deliver with Meals on Wheels, contact the Volunteer Department at volunteer@mowcm.org.

FASST
Food Access & Support Services Team

Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, Moveable Feast, and Maryland Food Bank

THE MEASURABLE IMPACT OF ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY

The Food Access and Support Services Team (FASST), led by Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, recently concluded a four-year project aiming to improve health outcomes, reduce cost of healthcare, and improve satisfaction for populations with complex or high risk medical and social conditions. The project, our largest and most ambitious health care collaboration to date, was funded by a $4.3 million grant from the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS). Key partners in the initiative included the Chesapeake Regional Information System for Patients, Maryland Food Bank, and Moveable Feast.

The project team developed a highly accurate algorithmic referral process that leveraged electronic medical record data to identify individuals as being at risk of food insecurity and poor health outcomes. Eligible people were referred to the appropriate community-based organization for nutrition and safety net social services paid for by the grant.

By addressing food insecurity and other social drivers of health for adults living in Maryland's underserved communities of color, where access to healthy food has been identified as a key factor in poor health outcomes, the project strove to reduce the total cost of care and to improve health equity among UMMS patients.

Results indicate that many participants reduced their food insecurity, reduced their number of unhealthy days, and increased medication compliance and food literacy during participation in the FASST project. The project also achieved significant hospital cost savings ($6.06 million), a substantial return on investment.

More importantly, the project results added to the evidence that the services offered by the FASST collaborating CBOs (Community-Based Organizations) are well-aligned to the needs of the identified patients and demonstrated the strength of MOWCM's intervention in improving health outcomes for older adults. Finally, data around reduced total cost of healthcare and cost avoidance for FASST participants should be of interest to policymakers and health care entities alike.

Plans for publication of the strong project outcomes are underway currently in two academic journals.

FASST Enrollment & Service Provision



Survey Data

38% experienced reduced food insecurity

36% of participants increased medication compliance

43% increased their healthy days, averaging 3.4 more healthy days per month

36% of participants increased their food literacy

*language/data written by Sharp Insight





WHY COMMUNITY DINING IS SO IMPORTANT

At Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, we know a meal offers more than nourishment—it creates opportunities to connect, build friendships, and feel part of a community.

Our **Community Dining Program, Food for Thought, serves 61 senior centers and senior living facilities across Central Maryland,** providing nutritious hot and cold meals that older adults can enjoy with fellow residents and friends.

Two recent events demonstrated the power of these connections.





“On behalf of my entire Nutrition Team, I want to take a moment to thank you all and let you know how amazing yesterday was!

We heard nothing but compliments about the event. You were all incredibly organized, attentive, and on top of everything. I have been involved with No Senior Eats Alone Day/engAGE Day from the very beginning, and I honestly don’t think I have EVER seen it go as smoothly and successfully as it did yesterday.

The drivers did an outstanding job and were on top of everything throughout the day. And a special kudos to Kathy, who was there to answer every question and address every comment we had. Your support and dedication truly made a difference!

Again, a HUGE pat on the back to all of you for an incredible job yesterday. We appreciate everything you did to help make the day such a success!”

-Baltimore County Department of Aging

At Baltimore County’s engAGE Day on September 10th, 1,600 lunches were provided to seniors across the county. The countywide event brings older adults together for meals, activities, and connection at senior centers while helping homebound seniors find ways to stay engaged.

Food for Thought also participated in the **Annual Senior Picnic & Fitness Day** hosted by the Prince George’s County Department of Family Services on September 18.

MOWCM prepared **3,400 nutritious meals for the thousands of seniors who attended. Our more than 15-year partnership** with Prince George’s County demonstrates the lasting impact that comes from working together to support older adults in our community.

Together, we shared in this opportunity for older adults to gather, share meals, and enjoy activities such as line dancing. In short, we created community.

Whether it is lunch at a senior center or a countywide celebration filled with dancing and laughter, these events remind us that it is about more than a meal. It ensures older adults have both a place at the table and someone with whom to share it.

MAXIMIZE YOUR CHARITABLE IMPACT

Supporting Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland does more than provide nutritious meals—it helps older adults remain connected, cared for, and supported at home. Together, donors, volunteers, and community partners strengthen our community and help ensure that no older adult faces hunger or isolation alone.

"There are a few very simple and smart ways to give back that many people don't realize are right at their fingertips. If you're already taking required distributions (RMDs) from your Individual Retirement Account, sending a portion straight to Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland can satisfy that withdrawal without adding to your tax bill, so more of your money goes toward helping aging members of our community. For those who like to plan ahead for their donations, a donor-advised fund (DAF) lets you set money aside for charity now and decide when and how to support causes like Meals on Wheels over the years to come."

- Peter Della Croce, MOWCM Board of Directors, Vice President

Please consult your financial or tax advisor regarding your individual circumstances and potential tax advantages.

Join the Full Plate Club (Recurring Donation).

Your monthly donation ensures a steady stream of income allowing Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland to plan and implement vital programs to provide food, friendship and other critical services to our homebound, aging neighbors. Call us (443) 573-0929 or go online at https://mealsonwheelsmd.org/give/donate/monthly/ to set up your recurring donation. **Your donation will make a sustaining impact.**

Recommend a Donor-Advised Fund Grant

A Donor Advised Fund is a charitable giving account established through a sponsoring financial organization that offers donors the ability to recommend grants (donations) to support Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland and receive an immediate tax deduction.

Give Through Your IRA

If you are age 70½ or older, you may be eligible to make a **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)** directly from your IRA account to a qualified charity. A QCD can satisfy all or part of your **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)** (minimum amount you must withdraw starting at age 73) and may provide tax benefits.

Donate Appreciated Stock

Donating appreciated securities (stocks) directly allows you to support Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland and pay no capital gains tax on the increased value of the stock, in addition to receiving a tax deduction based on the full market value of the stock at the time of the gift.

Make a Legacy Gift

You can make a lasting difference by naming Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland in your estate plans, including your will, living trust, life insurance policy, or retirement plan. Your thoughtful gift can create an enduring legacy that helps support our mission of enabling people to live independently at home through the provision of nutritious meals, personal contact, and vital support services.

MEALS ON WHEELS OF CENTRAL MARYLAND CREATES COMMUNITY

Community is at the heart of everything we do at Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland. While a nutritious meal is often where our work begins, it is the relationships, partnerships, and connections we build along the way that make the greatest difference. We see community in the simple moments—colleagues delivering meals side by side, volunteers taking time to check in on a neighbor, and older adults gathering together through community dining programs. We see it in the generosity of donors who believe every older adult deserves access to nutritious food and the comfort of knowing someone cares.

We also know that meeting the needs of homebound older adults takes a community. After reading this Fall edition of our newsletter, I hope you will see this sense of community too. One example, the FASST project article, highlights what is possible when a community works together to solve a complex problem or address a complex need. Connecting people with nutritious food, supportive services, and health resources builds healthier, more connected communities.

This spirit of collaboration is helping us look beyond today and imagine what is possible tomorrow. As we create our Recipe for the Future, we are bringing together the people, partnerships, and resources needed to build a stronger, more connected community—one nutritious meal, one caring conversation, and one homebound, aging neighbor at a time.

Together, we are creating a future where older adults can remain connected, supported, and nourished in the communities they call home.



Stephanie Archer-Smith
Executive Director and CEO



YOUR NEIGHBORS NEED YOUR HELP!

Volunteer to deliver weekly, monthly, or when your schedule allows. No minimum number of times you are required to delivered. Delivery with your kids or teens, corporation or civic group is encouraged.

We deliver meals in 8 counties! Pick a location close to your home or job. We need help in all the counties and specifically in these areas:

- Anne Arundel County: Glen Burnie, Odenton, Severna Park, Pasadena, Crofton, Edgewater
- Baltimore City: Bolton Hill, Hampden & Northeast (Loch Raven area)
- Baltimore County: Dundalk, Essex, Freeland, Randallstown, Windsor Mill
- Carroll County: Westminster
- Harford County: Aberdeen, Edgewood, Bel Air
- Howard County: Columbia, Ellicott City
- Montgomery County: Gaithersburg, Silver Spring
- Prince George's County: Laurel

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Learn More about our Recipe for the Future!

