In 2015, we told you about a number of major objectives as we accomplished them – including full implementation of our 450-kw natural gas fed generator system in case of emergencies, and the launch of ServTracker as our new client system. (Find previous newsletters at https://mealsonwheelswny.org/news-events)

We anticipate another busy year in 2016 – one full of milestones and important changes that enable us to continue fulfilling our mission. The major priorities we will be working on include:

• Launching the made-without-gluten pilot (underway)
• Developing a plan to offer lactose-free milk, as needed
• Raising approximately $1.12 million in total philanthropic support
• Purchasing new delivery ovens and much needed commissary equipment
• Launching a large-scale planned giving initiative and increasing contributions to the Distinguished Donor Society
• Recruiting 475 individual volunteers and 15 new Adopt-A-Route partners
• Implementing a specific volunteer retention program
• Actively engaging donors and volunteers through our fourth annual advertising campaign
• Deepening community relationships
• Evaluating a variety of services to ensure we have the best options for our needs
• Automating as much of the Managed Long-Term Care (MLTC) claim process as possible
• Developing an equipment replacement schedule for the commissary
• Evaluating and improving on procedures related to purchases and resource use
• Looking for additional collaboration opportunities, such as with Mobile Pharmacy and UB’s School of Pharmacy
• Achieving greater meal delivery coverage at the site level by volunteers, substitutes, and Site Managers
• Improving site-specific tracking to understand potential challenges and trends

This is a broad view of some of our major priorities for 2016, many of which have additional detail or sub-priorities. Our team works tirelessly to make sure we can accommodate growth, ensure great customer service and meet community need – to say nothing of meeting the day-to-day needs of efficiently serving between 5,000 and 6,000 meals.

I’m very proud of the work that we do at Meals on Wheels for WNY and welcome your thoughts and feedback on our ongoing efforts, these priorities and any other topic of importance to you. Please feel free to contact me at tellis@mealsonwheelswny.org with your thoughts.

Delivering More than Just a Meal

This past Christmas season, Bishop Richard Malone and Father Ryszard Biernat delivered meals to some of the area’s homebound through Meals on Wheels for WNY.

At each home, the personable Bishop took time to get to know his homebound neighbors - asking about their families and their health - before providing a prayer and Holy Communion.

The homebound clients were excited to have the Bishop visit. Each of them lit up with smiles and eagerly prayed along with the Our Father. Smiles were broad during each visit and eyes were alternately closed in prayer and misty during many visits.

In addition to meals and communion, each client also received a hand-made card and ornament from children through a local religious education program.

“We’re very fortunate to have the Bishop come out and deliver to our clients. He tells us every year how much he enjoys it and it just means the world to those that we are able to visit. Plus, his support is greatly appreciated as we work to get additional meal delivery volunteers,” Tara A. Ellis, CEO and President, Meals on Wheels for WNY, said.

Thank you to Bishop Malone and Father Biernat for their time and dedication to Meals on Wheels.

To learn more about how you can make a difference, please visit https://mealsonwheelswny.org/volunteer
Honoring 40+ Years of Service

Meals on Wheels for Western New York is grateful to have a history of dedicated volunteers who commit many years of their lives to delivering nutritious meals to our homebound clients. Every spring, we hold a volunteer recognition dinner as a gesture of our appreciation for these selfless and giving individuals who have helped us carry out our mission for 20, 25, 30, and 35 years. This year, we are extremely proud and grateful to honor Edith Beatty, who with 40+ years of service to Meals on Wheels, is the longest-serving volunteer in the history of our agency!

Edith Beatty began her service with the Hamburg Meals on Wheels in the 1970s in support of her sister-in-law, Polly Mitchell, who worked with others in the community to spearhead the formation of the local group. Edith began delivering meals every Wednesday, and her friends and family quickly learned not to ask her to lunch on Wednesdays because that was her “Meals day.” The ability to give back through Meals on Wheels was something that nourished Edith’s caring nature and the values she and her husband, Spen, instilled in their family - to do what they could for others in need.

Edith’s enjoyment and passion for the program was contagious, and after Spen retired, he joined her in delivering meals every week until he passed away in 1989. Edith continued to volunteer throughout the years, and her devotion to Meals on Wheels and the clients was unwavering. In 2006, her son, Jim Beatty, and daughter, Louise Zittel, started to volunteer for Meals on Wheels. They did so not only to make sure that their mother could continue this weekly tradition of giving as she got older, but also to take part in giving back themselves when their schedules opened up a bit in retirement. For Edith, volunteering with Meals on Wheels started and continued as a family affair with deep roots.

It is clear that Edith is a true people person. In addition to her longstanding volunteer career with Meals on Wheels and her commitment to her family, Edith worked as a substitute teacher in the Hamburg, Frontier and Springville school districts.

Recently, Edith retired from her volunteer career at Meals on Wheels for Western New York, but not before reaching the impressive milestone of serving our clients for 40+ years.

Edith fondly remembers her days at Meals on Wheels, noting “I really enjoyed the weekly interactions with each client and the other volunteers. They all brought me a great deal happiness.”

We know that Edith also spread joy to those she delivered to and volunteered with each week, and we are all very appreciative of her dedication and service for so many years.

In April, Meals on Wheels for WNY will honor 28 individuals and one company that have reached an incredible 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 or more years of service. Look for more details and profiles in future issues.

Creating Your Legacy with Meals on Wheels...

The Meals on Wheels Legacy Society is comprised of individuals who have expressed an interest in ensuring our organization’s bright future by including MOW in their will or estate plans, creating a legacy for an organization that has had a meaningful impact on their life. Membership to the Legacy Society does not depend on the size of the gift, desired use, or donor age.

Creating your legacy by including MOW in your estate plans continues your generosity beyond your lifetime. We will work with you to find a planned giving option that balances your wishes for yourself, your family and your philanthropic goals. You can take pride in the knowledge that your decision will make a difference in the future by ensuring that every member of our community will receive meals that meet their nutritional needs and unsurpassed care from our staff and volunteers.

For more information on how to create your legacy to support Meals on Wheels, please contact Kelly Campbell, Planned and Major Gifts Officer, at (716) 822-2201, ext. 43 or kcampbell@mealsonwheelswny.org.

The Meals on Wheels Foundation of Western New York, Inc. (tax ID number 16-1475486) is a proud partner of Leave a Legacy. Meals on Wheels recommends contacting your attorney or financial advisor before making a contribution.
1 in 3 seniors dies with Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. If you’ve ever had someone with dementia in your life, then you know what a toll it can take on loved ones who provide care. You also may understand hopelessness, as Alzheimer’s cannot be prevented or cured.

If you are a caregiver, please be aware of signs of dementia in your loved ones. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, only 45% of those with the disease and their caregivers say that they were told of the diagnosis, as compared to 90% of those with cancer and heart disease. Early detection is vital for making decisions about quality of life or even getting a second opinion.

10 important indicators of dementia include:

1. Life-disrupting memory loss
2. Challenges in planning or problem-solving
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks
4. Confusion with time or place
5. Trouble with visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with speaking or writing
7. Frequently misplacing things and being unable to find them
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood and personality

While these may seem like typical signs of aging, if they happen consistently and with increasingly negative effects, they may indicate Alzheimer’s. If this sounds like you or your loved one, please see a doctor as soon as possible. Learn more at http://www.alz.org/.
The essential work done by Meals on Wheels for Western New York is made possible by generous financial support from community members, local foundations and corporations, as well as through grants from the New York State Office for the Aging and Erie County’s Departments of Senior Services and Social Services.

Recent Sponsors & Supporters
($1,000 and up)

Meals on Wheels for Western New York would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their recent donations and generous support of Meals on Wheels.

- Mr. and Mrs. Paul W. Babbitt
- The Edward H. Butler Foundation
- Mrs. Marjorie S. Buyers
- Cappellino Buick GMC
- Mr. Frederick B. and Mrs. R. Maura Cohen
- Dash Markets, Inc.
- Dr. and Mrs. George DeTitta
- East Hill Foundation
- Essex Homes of Western New York, Inc.
- Ferguson Electric Construction Company, Inc.
- Mrs. Kathleen Gleason
- Mr. and Mrs. Eugene P. Gramza, Jr.
- Mr. and Mrs. Steven N. Heffter
- Mr. Jacob H. Iliohan
- Todd M. Joseph, Esq.
- Mr. and Mrs. Timothy J. Klein
- Mr. Warren P. Lippa
- The Mentholatum Company
- NYSRTA Founders Fund
- Mrs. Michelle G. Parrish
- Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Pretorius
- Mrs. Margaret M. Riexinger
- Seneca Mortgage and Employees
- Dr. and Mrs. Safiuddin Soniwal
- Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Will

In late 2015, MOW volunteers and staff helped Helene M. of West Seneca celebrate her 100th birthday. Along with her meals for the day, she received a card, piece of cake, balloons and a personalized gift of chocolate and yarn which she is looking forward to knitting into hats for her family and friends. Helene said her secret to 100 years was “a glass of coffee a day, a glass of red wine, and her delicious, healthy Meals on Wheels!” It was great to share Helene’s excitement for turning 100, which she exclaimed as “the best thing in the world!”