Fun on the Field!

Plate Expectations 2018 – The Supper Bowl XV was a huge hit at the ADPRO Sports Training Center in mid-July! Guests took to the field for food and drinks, kicking and throwing games, tours of the locker room, games of chance and much more.

Community awards were provided to three wonderful Meals on Wheels partners:

- Community Partner Award: Town and Village of Hamburg
- Friend of the Community Award: Wegmans
- Corporate Volunteering Award: Community Services for Every1

More than 650 people enjoyed the event at this year’s unique venue, netting more than $107,000 in support for the Meals on Wheels Foundation of WNY and the mission of Meals on Wheels for WNY.

“Thank you so much to our presenting sponsor Wegmans, our many gold, silver and bronze sponsors, all of the food and beverage providers, the volunteers and staff and, of course, to all of our guests. We appreciate your support more than we can every say,” Chris Procknal, President and CEO, Meals on Wheels for WNY, said.

“Stay tuned later this year to find out where we’ll be holding Plate Expectations 2019!”

Help our homebound neighbors and their furry companions!

Many of our vulnerable neighbors who receive home-delivered meals live alone and rely on the companionship of their pets to provide comfort and friendship. In fact, some of our clients choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pets, compromising their own health in order to provide for their companions. To help solve this issue, we created our “AniMeals” program.

Twice per month, Meals on Wheels volunteers deliver dog or cat food for one meal per day for a total of 14 days to program participants, eliminating a clients’ choice of feeding themselves or their animals.

On average, the AniMeals program feeds 30 dogs and 47 cats per month. This program relies solely on pet food donations and designated gifts in order to help the homebound have furry companionship!

Recently, our major funding source for this vital program has been eliminated.

A donation of $50 will provide 9 dogs and 16 cats a two-week supply of food.

Please consider giving today by calling (716) 822-2201, ext. 43. Thank you!
Bateman Community Living names Matthew Lysaker General Manager of Meals on Wheels Commissary

Bateman Community Living, our food production partner, has named Matthew Lysaker as the new general manager for the Meals on Wheels commissary. A graduate of the hospitality program at the University of Minnesota, Lysaker brings 16 years of hospitality and executive management experience to the organization.

“Meals on Wheels provides a vital role in this community, and for me, the success of each day’s delivery begins here where the food is made,” Lysaker said. “Bringing quality food and nutrition to those who need it in WNY is the number one goal of our team. I’m honored to have the opportunity to lead this group and build upon the Meals on Wheels legacy here in Buffalo.”

Lysaker will lead food production in the 24,000-square-foot commissary, overseeing the preparation and assembly of more than 5,000 meals each day. He will manage the commissary’s financials, as well as the transport of meals to delivery volunteers at Meals on Wheels sites throughout the region.

Both Bateman Community Living and Meals on Wheels for Western New York, Inc. (MOW-WNY) decided Lysaker was the right person for the job after extensive interviews with both organizations.

“We are thrilled to have Matthew lead our program’s food production,” Chris Procknal, President and CEO, MOW-WNY, said. “His passion for our mission and his experience in management show that he is a natural fit for our commissary.”

In addition to his duties with the Meals on Wheels program, Lysaker also will oversee catering services for the Meals on Wheels Community Center – a community meeting space located adjacent to the commissary. The 350-capacity Community Center is rented to local businesses, groups, and community members at conservative rates as a way to raise funds for Meals on Wheels programs.

Donations Drive Program Improvements

The Meals on Wheels Foundation of WNY and Meals on Wheels for WNY (together MOW) have received a number of generous donations this year that have helped to drive continuous program improvements and pay for much needed maintenance and repairs.

- **West Herr Subaru** recently “shared the love” with MOW. At the end of 2017, as part of the annual “Share the Love” campaign, local Subaru dealers had the opportunity to add a local charity to the list of organizations to which purchasers could designate a donation. West Herr Subaru once again selected MOW. Subaru of America on behalf of West Herr Subaru recently presented MOW with a check for $44,110.

- The **Garman Family Foundation** administered by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo has donated $16,210 to MOW. MOW provides six medically appropriate diets to help ensure that clients can enjoy their greatest health – regular, renal, ground, bland, calorie-controlled, and avoiding gluten. The donation from the Garman Family Foundation will enable the purchase of enhancements for the renal diet, including protein bars and hard boiled eggs – key for those on dialysis who need more protein.

- **Councilman Richard Fontana**, the Councilman for MOW’s headquarters location, recently secured a $10,000 donation for the organization from the Lovejoy District Neighborhood Initiative Fund, enabling us to purchase video equipment, classroom style tables for our community center and other necessary technology upgrades.

- **The Bank of America Charitable Foundation** has donated $10,000 to MOW to assist with facility upgrades in our commissary, which will help reduce humidity in the cold production rooms.

- MOW also received $5,000 from **The Grainger Foundation**, an independent, private foundation to help support our mission of feeding the vulnerable throughout WNY. The donation was recommended by Ronald Burkard, Operations Manager of W.W. Grainger, Inc.’s Buffalo Branch. These funds will also assist with facility upgrades to reduce humidity in the commissary’s cold production rooms.

“Thank you so much to our wonderful business, foundation and government partners for these grant dollars,” Lisa Woodring, Chief Development Officer, said. “These donations will help with so many important projects and priorities and ultimately will enable MOW to better serve the vulnerable throughout WNY.”
Volunteer Spotlight

From builder to booster: Former MOW Executive Director Richard Gehring celebrates 10 years volunteering

“This is where it all began. When I started working with Meals on Wheels, there were only 200 people on service, most of whom were here in city’s West Side, as well as in Black Rock and Riverside,” said Richard Gehring, longtime advocate for Meals on Wheels.

Along his delivery route through tree-lined streets in the heart of Buffalo’s West Side, each stop was treated as a visit with old friends. Like many other decade-long volunteers, Gehring drove the entire route from memory. The seconds saved from remembering the driving directions were instead invested where they mattered most – in conversation.

Gehring was named Executive Director of Meals on Wheels for Buffalo and Erie County, Inc. in 1978 – less than a decade after the program’s inaugural year in 1969. Gehring’s leadership helped to grow the scope of the program, expanding outward into the suburbs and more than tripling the number of meals served per year.

Gehring never lost sight of the people who made the program shine – the dedicated volunteers. Even as the head of the organization, he delivered meals whenever help was needed. “The volunteers have always been the reason we can do so much good here. I would be right there with the volunteers through the worst blizzards. I wanted to thank them, and we worked together to make sure the job would get done. In many ways, our volunteers are living proof of why Buffalo is called the ‘City of Good Neighbors’.”

After retiring in 2008, Gehring signed up to volunteer. Today, he delivers meals with Meals on Wheels three times a week, splitting time between Buffalo’s West Side and Cold Spring areas. His advocacy for the program has never wavered.

“I ask people to take an hour and volunteer with us. Sometimes I will ask and the response I hear is ‘I don’t know,’” Gehring said, “Give it a try, meet the wonderful people we serve, and you may find you love it.”

Forty years after his first day with the program, that love is still as strong as ever.

“Volunteers like Richard are vital to the success of our program. His care for the clients and advocacy for the work that we do is deeply appreciated,” Chris Procknal, President and CEO, Meals on Wheels for WNY, said. “For most people, once you sign up you become a part of the family and never leave, which is a really rich and wonderful part of the Meals on Wheels story.”

Learn more about how you can help Meals on Wheels by visiting www.mealsonwheelswny.org/volunteer.

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Caregiver Corner: Farmers’ Markets Add Variety

All home-delivery clients get two meals a day – a hot lunch and a cold supper – designed to meet 2/3 of the recommended daily allowance for all key nutrients. These meals are medically appropriate and balanced to include protein, fruits and vegetables and starches.

But what if your loved one has a craving for something specific? A farmers’ market can be a great place for you to pick up high quality affordable produce as a special treat for loved ones! Our clients regularly get fruits and vegetables like apples, pears and fresh fruit cups, beans, broccoli, corn, green beans, potatoes and more. We change the menu seasonally to provide a wide variety. But some foods are simply too delicate to prepare for thousands of people at a time.

The following foods are in season in late summer or early fall and might be a nice, healthy treat for your loved ones.

**Fruit:** Blackberries, blueberries, grapes, melons, nectarines, peaches, plums and raspberries.

**Vegetables:** Beets, celery, eggplant, kale, pumpkin, spinach, squash, tomatoes, turnips and zucchini.

So the next time you think of picking up a treat for your mom, dad, grandparent or cherished neighbor, skip the candy aisle and stop at your local farmers’ market or grocery store for some delicious and healthy produce!
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
Meals on Wheels Foundation of Western New York would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their recent donations and generous support.

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The John R. Oishei Foundation
Ms. Christine Procknal
Mr. Michael Procknal and Ms. Karen M. Eckert
Seneca-Babcock Community Association, Inc.
Subaru of America, Inc.
West Herr Auto Group
WGRZ-TV

Thank you, ADOPT-A-ROUTE PARTNERS!
Meals on Wheels for WNY has an Adopt-A-Route program, which encourages groups and businesses to volunteer together. It's very flexible and the most common option is delivering once a week – which means two employees are giving up just one lunch hour that week. Adopt-A-Route provides stability and diversity to Meals on Wheels, provides businesses an easy way to give back, and gives employees a sense of meaning and camaraderie.

The following companies have signed up to Adopt-A-Route since the beginning of 2018:

• ACV Auctions
• Buffalo Spree
• Fisher Associates
• Kaleida Health
• M&T Bank (2nd route)

Thank you to our new partners and all Adopt-A-Route companies! Learn more at https://mealsonwheelswny.org/adopt-a-route/