



# News on Wheels

THE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF MEALS ON WHEELS OF RIDGEFIELD, CT

SPRING 2019



## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends:

Greetings! I hope you enjoy our Spring 2019 Newsletter. I'd first like to express our gratitude to all of our donors, volunteers and supporters.

We couldn't operate without your generosity and dedication to our mission.

We are here for anyone in need of assistance, regardless of age or income, and we provide meals on a short-term or long-term basis. This past year we broadened our outreach efforts, increased our social media presence and undertook other awareness initiatives in order to reach more people who might not be aware of all that we do.

As a result of those efforts, 2018 was a record year for us! We served **24,260 meals** which was a **22% increase** over the prior year. Our Ballard Green kitchen has been bursting at the seams with all the activity. Our mission is to provide nourishing meals to those in need of assistance, and we are proud to be helping more people than ever.

If you know of anyone who might need our meal service, please help spread the word...we're here when you need us!

Many thanks again – we couldn't continue our mission, as we've done for the past 47 years, without you.

Dean Miller, President & Board Chair



## HOW WE OPERATE

MOW doesn't receive any federal or state funding, so we rely on the generosity of donors to help fund nearly two thirds of our costs. We charge only \$2 for lunch and \$4 for dinner to keep our program affordable for those on a fixed income, and we haven't raised our fees in over eight years. We keep costs low with only five part-time employees who work with our dedicated corps of 140+ volunteers to prepare, package and deliver the meals. And we receive in-kind donations of goods and services from many businesses, civic organizations and individuals (see "It Takes a Village" on the inside).

All of this helps ensure that the vast majority of donations go towards food, supplies and kitchen operations. If you want to support us, please go to [www.mealsonwheelsofridgefield.org/donate](http://www.mealsonwheelsofridgefield.org/donate). Thank you!



We welcome prospective clients, new volunteers and donations!

203.438.8788

[mowridgefield@gmail.com](mailto:mowridgefield@gmail.com)

[www.mealsonwheelsofridgefield.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsofridgefield.org)

25 Gilbert Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

Kitchen hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 8 am - 12 pm

Find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn



# Volunteer Spotlight

**SONIA KRISHNA**, a former teacher, came to MOW delivering meals with her daughter through NCL (National Charity League). "I used to watch the kitchen when I came to get the food, and wish I could join them," says Sonia. "There was just so much energy." Now, five years later, not only did she get her wish, but she also has a big responsibility: Sonia makes sure all of Friday's meals are packed and labeled correctly, and that there are no issues with allergies or other dietary restraints.

"I started subbing in the kitchen, and when a spot opened up, I said yes. I love it!" Sonia comes in every Thursday for an hour or two to get organized, and then from early Friday morning until the food goes out, she and everyone else in the kitchen work non-stop. "It's a good kind of chaos," says Sonia. One of her favorite things about being a volunteer is the friends she's made. "A couple of us knit, and for a while, a group of us played bridge. We have a lot of fun."

Sonia still likes to make deliveries with her daughter, who is now in high school. "It's one activity the both of us love doing together. It's so nice to meet the clients, and to understand that there is a real need in Ridgefield for MOW."

**DEBRA FRANCESCHINI-GATJE** has been on the board of MOW for two years and is responsible for outreach and events. In 2018, she put together a "MOW road show" to present to community organizations across Ridgefield in order to broaden the reach of MOW and serve more clients in need. "We wanted to tell people we aren't just for seniors," says Deb. "We can also help a parent who injured themselves and can't cook, or someone with an illness who needs short-term help. As a result, we've seen a tremendous increase in client meals."

Deb also organizes fundraising events and is the point person for schools, scout troops and businesses who want to contribute special decorated bags, holiday treats, or other gifts. Beyond MOW, Deb is also involved with Senior Positive Initiative Forum and the Commission on Aging. She says these roles help her understand the wider needs of many of our clients.

Deb has extensive experience in the corporate world until serious health issues forced her to stop work. Early retirement was never her plan, but becoming a board member has allowed her to find a meaningful role. She says that her experience was perhaps "God's way of pointing me in a direction where I could be helpful and make a difference."



## Special thanks to these 'villagers' who have so generously donated either their time, talent or specialty items over the past year:

It takes a village...

A2 Salon  
Aerial 360 Solutions  
Bluebird Ice Cream  
CZ Education of Ridgefield  
Cake Box  
Cellar XV  
Colonial Cleaners  
Commission on Aging  
Cultural Care Au Pairs  
Jan Cuny  
The Dapper Den  
Eddie's Pizza & Pasta  
Fit Club  
Gallo Ristorante  
Hello Ridgefield  
Interact Club at RHS  
Kate Wark Photography

Leir Retreat Center  
Lion's Heart  
Market at Union Hall  
Milillo Farms  
National Charity League – Nutmeg Chapter  
National Charity League – Ridgefield Chapter  
Nicole Chiarello  
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OWLS Club  
Ridgefield Department of Social Services  
Ridgefield Garden Club  
Ridgefield Girl Scouts & Brownies  
Ridgefield Library  
Ridgefield Prime  
Ridgefield Lions Club  
Ridgefield Liquor Shop  
Ridgefield Fathers Club

Ridgefield Moms Group  
Ridgefield Organics & Specialty Market  
Ridgefield Playdate Meetup Moms Group  
Ridgefield Public & Private School Students  
Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association  
Ross Bread + Coffee  
Rotary Club of Ridgefield  
Senior Positive Information Forum  
Serene Escape Spa  
Southwest Café  
Sphere of CT  
Susi Laura Massage  
Thrown Stone Theatre Company  
Tiger Sports  
TownVibe/Ridgefield Magazine  
Wilton Food Bank

## "The Soup Guys"



Once the weather starts to get cold, MOW adds a popular item to the menu: soup! But making it is not easy as you might think. Not all soups are healthy, and it can be tricky to get the quantities right. But, as is so often the case, some amazing people stepped up to help. Four volunteers, all men, get together every week to prepare nourishing and delicious soups like cream of asparagus, chicken tortellini and black bean.

They all have different backgrounds and didn't know each other before volunteering, but now love working together as a team and have earned the nickname "the Soup Guys." **FRANK RAMOS**, a retired firefighter, is used to making soup in large quantities. His specialty? "The Firehouse Italian Wedding soup is my favorite." And he adds, laughing: "Even though these guys complain about making the little tiny meatballs."

**TIM FARROW** is a graphic designer who freelances from home and makes time in his schedule for MOW. **ANDREW ULICKY** lives in South Salem and is a retired cabinet maker. One thing they both have in common? They are the cooks of the family. "My wife burns water," says Andrew. **CHRIS ORLOW** is also a graphic designer, but is thinking about starting up a food business. They have all learned a lot about cooking, have fun and enjoy giving back to the community.

# Meet Our Clients

When **CHRIS NOLAN** found out she needed complex foot surgery that would mean weeks off her feet, she wasn't sure that MOW was right for her. "I thought you had to sign up for the long term. I had no idea it was something you could do for a few weeks." Chris, who was the Director of the Ridgefield Library for 16 years until retiring three years ago, signed up to get deliveries for six weeks after her surgery last November.

She says that not having to worry about shopping and cooking, as well as the quality of the meals she received, made a big difference to her recovery. "When you're home alone and it's hard to manage, you make poor nutrition choices. But with MOW, there's salad, there's fruit, there is a real variety of food. It's just terrific." Something else that was a bonus? "I enjoyed the little messages on the bags- those little pick-me-ups can go a long way."

Chris has had orthopedic surgeries before and wishes she had known then that MOW was an option during those recoveries. "It was hard for me to manage. I was living on my own, and without being able to walk, I couldn't manage my kitchen. This really worked out great. I hope other people realize it's an option in case they need it."

**MARIE ADAMS** enjoys her morning routine: an early church service, followed by breakfast at Steve's Bagels. She has lived in Ridgefield since 1975, and now has an apartment in the center of town. She lives on her own, but has family not too far away. When she is out and about, she enjoys being social. "I always try to make a connection with someone," she says. "It's a small world."

Her son was a volunteer driver several years ago, but she only started receiving meals after she had hip replacement surgery. "I love it, and I never stopped. I only get two deliveries a week, which is perfect for me. Then I don't need to cook as much, and I enjoy going out to eat as well. But being my age, things pop up. It's nice to know that it's there when I need it."

While salmon is her favorite MOW entree, she says she has never been disappointed in any of the meals. "My friends think I'm getting a sandwich and a glass of milk. I tell them that if they saw what I was eating, they would move here!"

Marie has a message for the children who decorate the bags the meals come in: "I hope those kids realize that we love those bags. I always appreciate the decoration and I reuse them."



## SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBORS

I/We would like to support Meals on Wheels of Ridgefield through the following donation:

- |                                                        |                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 = 3 client meals         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$130 = 2 weeks of client meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$65 = 1 week of client meals | <input type="checkbox"/> \$270 = 1 Month of client meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____                |                                                          |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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I would like to make this gift  In honor of:  In memory of:

Print honoree's name clearly: \_\_\_\_\_

- My company/my spouse's has a matching gift program (please enclose forms)
- I choose not to have my name publicly disclosed
- I would like information on volunteering (circle one: Driver / Kitchen )

Please mail to:

Meals on Wheels, 25 Gilbert St., Ridgefield, CT 06877

Donations also accepted online at  
[www.mealsonwheelsofidgefield.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsofidgefield.org)

## Creative Ways to Give



We are constantly amazed by the many ways people find to support us. Recently, John Frey, our State Representative, chose MOW as the recipient of his Facebook birthday fundraiser and raised \$2,600 for us. Thanks to John, and to all of you who donated!

And Kyela McGuire, a Ridgefield Girl Scout, collected over 20,000 bottles and cans and raised \$1,004, which she split between Meals on Wheels and the Food Pantry. Way to go, Kyela!

## 2018-19 Donor List

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Frank & Carole Salvatore  
Kenneth & Laurie Sandberg  
Jack & Sally Sanders  
Ingeborg Sands  
Thomas & Catherine Savoca  
Ken Sayers  
John & Jane Scarbrough  
Michael Schmidt  
Joseph & Juliette Schneider  
Lynn Schneider  
Jeff & Judy Schweitzer  
Grace Scordino  
Patrick & Jennifer Scully  
Sigmund Sedlmaier  
Raymond & Kay Sementini  
John Shenko  
Patrick Shima

Joy Soleiman  
Daniel & Diana Stadnyk  
Lester & Loretta Steinman  
Patricia Stephens  
Michael Stipicevic  
Charles & Doria Stover  
Rebecca Strominger  
James & Antoinette Syrotiak  
Monica Taddonio  
Audrey Teplyakov  
Renee Terbruch  
Ronald & Patricia Terrill  
Melissa Terzo  
Douglas Thompson  
Daniel Tierno  
Rebecca Townsend  
Joseph & Kathleen Trench  
Lori Carriero & Julius Tulipani  
Mary Tulipani  
James & Andrea Turnbull  
John & Susan Van Blarcom  
Jackson & Lynn Vaughn  
Peter & Natalie Vecchio  
Timothy & Lori Vickers  
Oskar & Shelly Vides  
James & Judith Vigar  
Tim & Cathy Vilinskis  
Joan Voss  
Michael & Lauren Walker  
Kay Walton  
Belinda Ward  
The West Lane Inn  
Bob & Andrea Whitton  
Walter & Lynn Wieland  
George & Sally Williamson  
Jonathan Winn  
Frank & Christine Woodtke  
Mary Lou Worrall  
Dorothy Wright  
Brian & Jennifer Zeyer  
Linda Zuckerman

**Matching Gifts**

21st Century Fox  
Amazon Smile  
Ciena Corporation  
Fairfield County Bank  
GE Foundation  
Hearst Corporation  
IBM Corporation  
Microsoft Corporation  
Pepsico Foundation  
Pitney Bowes Inc.  
Praxair, Inc.  
Prudential Financial, Inc.  
Target Corporation  
United Health Group

*Reflects donations in 2018 and through March 2019. We apologize for any errors or omissions - please email us with any corrections or if you prefer to remain anonymous*



**THANK YOU** to our 140+ VOLUNTEERS  
who give countless hours to preparing,  
packing and delivering our meals



25 Gilbert Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

NON PROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT 2093  
Danbury, CT

**KITCHEN**

James Adamini  
Jesstye Amill  
Phyllis Appel  
Donna Bello  
Linda Bloch  
Frank Calise  
Gary Calabro  
Lou Campagna  
Joyce Carl  
Cynthia Chandler-Ross  
Christine Coffey  
Suzanne Conlin  
Patrick Caudill  
Lisa Cousins  
Jacqui Cowley  
Ree Coyman  
Dave Cronin  
Terry Cucinell  
Meg Dave  
Linda DeMayo  
Donna Devaney  
Trudy DeVivo  
Jeff Dinkel  
David Durbin  
Tim Farrow  
Betty Fitzgerald  
Betsy Fitzpatrick  
Deb Franceschini  
Pat Giacone  
Mark Gilliam  
Linda Gledman  
Maryann Grierson  
Amy Grossfeld  
Kathryn Guido  
Cathy Hagan  
Kristen Hoban  
Kate Jacullo  
Jennifer Johnson  
Joni Karsh  
Elizabeth Krause  
Mary Krebs  
Sonia Krishna  
Anne Marie Kwalwasser  
Connie LaBarbera  
Ellen Lipton  
Janet Lloyd  
John Lowenstine  
Louisa Lu-Orlow  
Dyane MacDaniel-Brandt  
Brenda Macmillan  
Carmela Maiorano  
Ashley Manari  
Mindy McGuire  
Pat McPike  
Lyn Merrill  
Theresa Miller

**DRIVERS**

Bonnie Mills  
Kathy Morgan  
Debbie Morrison  
Rich Moskwa  
Cris Nichols  
Heather Nichols  
Peter Nichols  
Nancy Ollinger  
Chris Orlow  
Jerry Paoletta  
Grace Park  
Jean Pedersen  
Courtney Penachio  
Mendy Polchinski  
Sarah Pyrda  
Michele Quindlen  
Frank Ramos  
Marty Romaniello  
Mia Rossiter  
Dave Schupmann  
Gerry Sexton  
Mary Pat Sexton  
Jean Siomkos  
Felicia Soltys  
Doreen Stubbs  
Anni Sylvester  
Andy Ulicky  
Celeste Ulmer  
Jennifer Wagner  
Barbara Wickstrum  
Kathleen Wile  
Eileen Wilson

**OPERATIONS**

Nicole Fortson  
George Flynn  
Beverly Gabel  
Tom Galvin  
Peter Geike  
Karin Guynn  
Barbara Hartman  
Emily Haughney  
Sabine Heym-Kloekner  
Carol Hoecker  
Jana Hogan  
Alicia Hwang  
Jane Jawlik  
Caroline Keenan  
Karen Latore  
Nancy Libby  
Tony Loomis  
Jane MacKenzie  
Katie Macdonald  
Brenda Macmillan  
Bill Markus  
Jill McAnderson  
Minnie McCartan  
Frank McPike  
Mari Miles  
Dean Miller  
Amy Mischenko  
Tom Miserendino  
Marc Moll  
Joe Motta  
Lauren Mulvihill  
David Naves  
Dennis O'Connell  
Jodi O'Connell  
Caroline Olkoski  
Jenny Perhamus  
Kathy Pesce  
Phyllis Petchonka  
Mary Phelps  
Mary Pupazzoni  
Frank Ramos  
Diane Reilly  
Dave Schupmann  
Jenn Scully  
Patrick Shima  
Meg Spera  
Erica Smock  
Rupinder Sura-Collins  
Kate Tobin  
Korey Tuttle  
Kerri Ungaro  
Cathy Vilinskis  
Deb Wagner  
Lauren Walker  
Jen Zeyer

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS** with Liz Kelly



2018 was a busy year for us, and we served more people than ever before. We also provided more meals at a discount or no charge for those in financial need. As a result, client receipts grew at a slower pace than meals served.

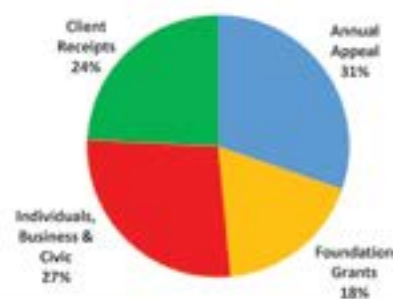
Total donations decreased slightly. While we experienced strong growth in donations from individuals and foundations, annual appeal donations were lower

than in 2017.

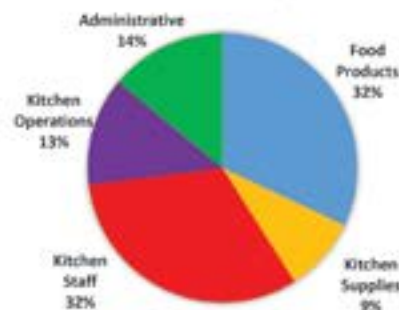
In total, our income in 2018 was roughly the same as the prior year.

Even with a 22% growth in meals served, our total expenses increased by only 7%, resulting in a 15% decline in net income compared to 2017.

2018 INCOME \$290,154



2018 EXPENSES \$218,473



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dean Miller  
Chair

Liz Kelly  
Treasurer

Dyane MacDaniel-Brandt  
Chair Emeritus

Michele Goodman  
Vice-Chair

Carolee Olkoski  
Co-Treasurer

Minnie McCartan  
Recording Secretary

Catherine Desmarais  
Corresponding Secretary

Deirdre Condon  
Client Services

Peter Geike  
Driver Staffing

Phyllis Appel  
Development

Hilary Aronow  
Public Relations & Digital

Cris Nichols  
Kitchen Staffing

Deb Franceschini  
Outreach & Events

Caroline Keenan  
Newsletter Editor

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**  
Cris Nichols

**KITCHEN MANAGERS**  
Kathryn Guido  
Joni Karsh  
Mary Pat Sexton

**DIETITIAN CONSULTANT**  
Meg Whitbeck, MS RDN

**ADVISORY BOARD**  
John Frey  
David Pazer, M.D.  
Tony Phillips  
Tom Reynolds  
Theresa Santoro  
David Schneider

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Liz Kelly - Chair  
Gary Condon  
Peter Grierson

Joyce Ligi  
Dean Miller  
Joe Venturato

**MOW Board News**

Our newest board member is **Caroline Keenan**, who is now our Newsletter Editor. Many thanks to our prior Newsletter Editor, **Cathy Vilinskis**, who retired after being on our board for nearly 10 years. She (and her family) continue to deliver meals when her schedule allows. Thanks Cathy!