



Meals on Wheels feeds body and soul

By Julie Brouhard

Meals on Wheels of Shaker Heights, Beachwood and University Heights is an independent community service agency whose dedicated volunteers deliver affordable, nutritious meals of superior quality to residents of Shaker Heights, Beachwood and University Heights. This service assists its clients in maintaining their health and well-being.

Meals on Wheels has been delivering food for 37 years in the three communities, which together have the highest concentration of seniors on the East Side. It is a 501(c)(3) organization sustained by generous donations, sponsorships, and clients who pay a small fee for two meals per day.

Through a partnership with the McGregor retirement community, Meals on Wheels obtains food to prepare a complete hot lunch consisting of a protein, starch, vegetable and dessert, and a light supper that does not need to be heated consisting of a sandwich, fruit, and a beverage. Volunteers package and heat individual meals in the kitchen of First Unitarian Church in Shaker Heights. They then deliver the meals to the clients in

time for them to have a hot lunch.

The key to the success of the Meals on Wheels program is the dedicated volunteer crew, some of whom have been volunteering for decades. Some volunteers do meal prep only, others are drivers, and a few do both jobs. Volunteers work just one or two hours one day a week, but the rewards are big, which explains why there are so many long-term volunteers.

Volunteering feeds the soul of the volunteers. Laura Rowan, board member and volunteer for 16 years, says MOW is "such a simple way to know that I'm making a difference."

Drivers get to know the clients on their route and provide a critical check and connection for those who are homebound. If needed, "We know how to handle emergencies," says Penny Parker, Director of Meals on Wheels. In most cases, though, it is just the personal connections that provide as much sustenance to clients as the food that is delivered.

Currently, the program serves 40 clients, but it can accommodate more. There is no age limit or income limit to be eligible to subscribe. The only requirement is the need for meal delivery due to the client's being unable to obtain the meal on their own, and the ability to pay the minimal cost of \$7.00 per day. Long term, Parker hopes to establish an emergency fund to provide support for those who temporarily cannot afford the daily cost of their meals. Donations are always welcome to help achieve this goal.

Meals on Wheels wants to expand its client base, particularly in University Heights. If you or someone you know need delivered meals, or are interested in volunteering, please call (216) 991-6376, or visit www.mealsonwheelsshaker.org.

Julie Brouhard is the Secretary of the Board of Trustees for Meals on Wheels of Shaker Heights, Beachwood and University Heights.



Happy Buddha Cafe

2173 South Green Road
University Heights, OH 44121
happybuddhacafe.com
216-291-2446

Eat In * Carry-Out



HOURS: MONDAY - THURSDAY 11 a - 9 p / FRIDAYS 11 a - 10 p
SATURDAYS Noon - 10 p / SUNDAYS 4 p - 9 p

