



Meals on Wheels
16781 Chagrin Blvd, #450
Shaker Heights, OH 44120

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Beachwood
University Heights

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MEALS ON WHEELS

Shaker Heights, Beachwood, University Heights

Volume 20 - Summer 2025



Kiri Soprano

Client Services
Administrator



Jody Podl

Volunteer
Coordinator

Meet Kiri Soprano. She recently joined Meals on Wheels Shaker as the Client Services Administrator. Kiri and her family relocated to Shaker Heights in 2022. She has over 15 years of experience working with senior service agencies including the Alzheimer's Association, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Virginia, and senior centers in North Carolina and Virginia. In these roles, Kiri gained experience in program and volunteer management, development and outreach.

Kiri graduated from Clark University in Worcester, MA with both an undergraduate degree in Sociology, concentrating in Gerontology, and a master's degree in public administration. Between her education and experience, Kiri is a perfect fit for MOW!

Outside of work, Kiri is busy tending to her garden, cooking, and serving as assistant builder for her son's LEGO and block creations. Fun fact: Kiri and her family recently started making maple syrup with sap boiled down from their own maple trees.

Please welcome Jody Podl, our new Volunteer Coordinator. This position focuses on matching and managing volunteers with the various tasks involved in making Meals on Wheels work. Plus, this allows the Client Services Administrator to focus more on her administrative responsibilities.

Jody has been a supporter of Meals on Wheels for years, and she wanted to get more involved with the organization. Her duties include working with Kiri Soprano, our Client Services Administrator, to determine how many kitchen helpers and drivers are needed on each day we deliver. While we do have regularly scheduled volunteers, sometimes someone just can't participate on any given day and other times we need additional volunteers. Jody keeps track of everyone and makes sure we have all the volunteers we need. Jody also sends weekly messages to the volunteers to keep them up to date, just as we had hoped. Thank you, Jody!

SIGN UP FOR THE EMAIL NEWSLETTER



Would you like to receive this newsletter directly in your inbox? With email, we are able to reach our supporters more quickly. We send this newsletter via email to readers for whom we have email addresses. If you want to receive this newsletter via email, simply click the SIGN UP button at www.MealsOnWheelsShaker.org/news and enter your contact information.

OUR WHEELS DELIVER

Well-being
Health
Energy
Encounters
Lunch/dinner
Smiles

ACCEPTING NEW CLIENTS!

If you or someone you know would like to receive our delicious meals, please call us at **216-991-6376** or visit our website at www.MealsOnWheelsShaker.org to learn more about us. We serve clients within a four-mile radius of our commercial kitchen located at 21600 Shaker Blvd, Shaker Heights. Thank you!

MAILING ADDRESS

16781 Chagrin Blvd, #450
Shaker Heights, OH 44120



CHANGES ON OUR BOARD

MEALS ON WHEELS has had a lot of changes this year. Not only do we have a new Client Services Administrator and a new food provider (see other articles in this newsletter), we also have made some changes to our Board of Directors. Paul Nickerson has been our President since the pandemic started in 2020 and has done an excellent job steering us through numerous unforeseeable problems and challenges. Paul is moving to be closer to his family in Chicago and is stepping down as President. Fortunately, he will remain on our Board to lend us his wisdom. THANK YOU PAUL FOR EVERYTHING!

We recently installed four new Board members: Kerianne Hearn, Courtney Ricchetti, Marti Spoth and Bob Spreat. Kerianne has been a volunteer and the Board's consultant for several years. We finally convinced her to join us officially, AND she's agreed to be our next President. Thank you Kerianne! Courtney, Marti (see Geraci's article) and Bob have been MOW volunteers and know our operations from first-hand experience. We are lucky to have them on our Board. Welcome to all of you!

CLEVELAND FOOD BANK



As of January, we are now purchasing our meals from the Cleveland Food Bank. The meals are delivered to us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Cleveland each weekday morning. We receive the entrée items, which include a protein, starch and 1-2 vegetables, in large pans. Our kitchen volunteers portion out the food in individual-sized containers for delivery to our clients. A recent entree, pictured here, included Grilled Hawaiian Chicken, served with Rice Pilaf, Kyoto Blend Vegetables and Asian Blend Vegetables.

We also receive a box lunch consisting of a sandwich, fruit, and side items such as coleslaw, potato salad, 3 bean salad, or a salad with protein, all of which are assembled by volunteers at the Food Bank. While the Food Bank offers meals for the weekdays, we also offer meals for the weekends, so we send fresh entrees 5 days a week and frozen entrees made up with leftover Food Bank items 2 days a week. Meals are planned by a registered dietitian. Our partnership with the Food Bank allows us to continue to provide full and nutritious meals at a reasonable price.

ADOPT-A-ROUTE

We are very grateful to our Adopt-a-Route sponsors for their support this past year. These companies have provided both financial support and volunteers, which has been a great help in our efforts to keep meals affordable for our clients. Our two newest Adopt-a-Route sponsors are 1) an anonymous donor who is splitting the route with Sgt Clean Car Wash and 2) the Church of the Gesu. We are very thankful to the 20+ volunteers from Gesu who signed up to deliver meals on a rotating basis to the clients on our University Heights route.

Please join us in thanking and supporting our Adopt-a-Route sponsors: Church of the Gesu • Equity Engineering Just Ask Janet • Sgt Clean Car Wash/Anonymous Donor



We have more routes available! Please reach out to info@mealsonwheelsshaker.org to learn more about Adopt-a-Route opportunities.

GERACI'S RESTAURANT MEALS ON WHEELS DAYS

We owe a BIG THANK YOU to Geraci's Restaurant for donating 20% of its proceeds for all meals served on Tuesdays during May at its University Heights location. We are thrilled to announce that Geraci's donated over **\$3,000.00 to Meals on Wheels!**

Please join us in thanking Marti and Greg Spoth, Geraci's owners, for their generosity. Marti, a former Meals on Wheels volunteer who has continued to support our mission is a new member of our Board of Directors. We are pleased by her ongoing commitment to MOW.

Make your meal planning on Tuesdays, and every day, a bit easier by dining in or ordering carry-out at the Geraci's University Heights location (2266 Warrensville Center Road) – or any other Geraci's restaurant. See www.geracisrestaurant.com for other locations.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We are very grateful to our many donors who made contributions this year, both those who gave for the first time and those who have given numerous times over the years. But just like every other nonprofit, our needs continue. Here's how you can help:

- 1 Make a monetary donation. A full week of meals costs a client \$70, but it costs Meals on Wheels \$105. Donations to help close that gap are needed and appreciated.
- 2 Provide extra individual packets of shelf-stable condiments such as ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise to supplement lunches.
- 3 Provide shelf-stable items such as: Soups (individual ready-to-eat); Tuna pouches or single serving cans; Fruit cups – no sugar; Applesauce cups – unsweetened; Cookies, snack crackers – single serving packs; Pudding and Jello cups – unsweetened, non-refrigerated.
- 4 Offer office supplies such as 8.5 x 11 paper, Avery labels 5163, 5162 and Avery Presta 94504.

MANY THANKS TO STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND ALL WHO HELPED US

We frequently have teachers ask if their classes can help us. During this past school year, we received festive holiday cards, crafts, and Valentines from students at Laurel School, the Mercer Service Club, and University School. Our clients love to see these greetings in with their deliveries and often reach out to tell us that their day is brightened when they open their bags and find them. Clients want to express their thanks to these students and teachers for their thoughtfulness, and so do we!

The Gesu School Service Club collected donations of non-perishable food for Meals on Wheels Snow Bags that are given to clients in case we cannot deliver meals due to bad weather. After collecting the food, the students decorated bags with winter scenes and messages. Then they packed up the food so it was ready to be delivered to clients. We are grateful for this help in kicking-off last winter season!

University School 3rd graders also helped us stuff Snow Bags. We had our many food donations set out on tables. The students decorated large grocery bags and carried them around the tables to load them up with food. We then gave the students a tour of our facility and explained how we help our community. Some of them were surprised that our delivery volunteers are the only people our clients may see all week. We appreciate the help of the students, their teachers and chaperones who brought them our kitchen!

Adults help us too! The Premier Chapter of Business Networking International (BNI) held a food drive in December to donate non-perishable food to be used for Snow Bags. It was wonderful to arrive in the kitchen on a cold winter day to see the piles of donated food waiting for us. Thank you BNI!

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shirley Baldwin | Dale Braun | Julie Brouhard | Kerianne Hearn | Lawrence Kent | Joylen Kent | Sally Levine
Paul Nickerson | Courtney Ricchetti | Marcia Romano | Steven Roth | Laura Rowan | Marti Spoth | Bob Spreat
Kiri Soprano, *Client Services Administrator*

MISSION STATEMENT

Meals on Wheels (MOW) is an independent community service agency whose dedicated volunteers deliver affordable, nutritious meals to seniors and others unable to provide for themselves. This service assists our clients in maintaining their health and well-being.

WE ARE AN IMPORTANT KEY TO INDEPENDENT LIVING.



MEALS ON WHEELS

Shaker Heights, Beachwood, University Heights

21600 Shaker Blvd. // Shaker Heights, OH 44122
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