



NEWS ON WHEELS

A Meals on Wheels of Mercer County Publication May 2025

Older Americans Month

Every May, the **Administration for Community Living (ACL)** leads the nation's observance of **Older Americans Month (OAM)**, a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm our commitment to serving older adults.

The 2025 theme, **Flip the Script on Aging**, focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging. It encourages individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and dispel misconceptions. This year, **join us** in honoring older adults' contributions, exploring the many opportunities for staying active and engaged as we age, and highlighting the opportunities for **purpose, exploration and connection** that come with aging.

Check out [**Aging in America - Survive or Thrive**](#), the new PBS documentary, featuring older adults and family caregivers sharing their stories as they navigate the complexities of aging. Experts discuss the issues and share age-friendly solutions that can improve aging for all.

Click [**HERE**](#) for more info!

Participant Highlight

Peggy's Story: Advocating for Meals on Wheels

Washington is cutting down on costs and seniors are the ones to pay the price.

Budget negotiations have been underway in Washington, and Meals on Wheels organizations around the country are at risk of losing essential funding for their services. With rising costs and inadequate funding through the Older Americans Act, the proposed cuts to the Social Services Block Grant program (SSBG), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid could severely impact 2.2 millions older adults in the U.S.— and the near 600 participants MOWMC serves.

"You've made it clear you're not stopping funds that go directly to individuals, but there certainly are lots of organizations that receive funding and then may pass along

a benefit— Meals on Wheels, for one. They provide meals for over 2.2 million seniors," a reporter had asked Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt during a press briefing on Jan. 29, 2025.

For Peggy Nicol, a MOWMC participant, it was a shock to hear Meals on Wheels mentioned in the news, but she was happy that concerns were raised by the media, signifying the importance of the program as so many individuals heavily depend on it.

"I'm really happy the government is paying attention to it and I mention it (Meals on Wheels) all the time. I even called Andy Kim. I would call Cory Booker. I would call lots of senators and representatives," Peggy reflected.

An outspoken individual, Peggy has been a volunteer and advocate her whole life. Besides from her career as a medical technologist, she has also been involved with the American Cancer Society since she received her breast cancer diagnosis in 1996. There, she served 20 years on the board, while also dedicating her time to senior groups and women's groups.

Older adults like Peggy rely on the services that MOWMC provide. Last year, the organization served over 95,000 meals, and that number is only growing. Participants receive a healthy, nutritious meal from a friendly volunteer up to five days a week, and that's not something they're ready to give up.



"When I get my little bag of milk, fruit, vegetables and a sandwich everyday— I'm in heaven, absolutely heaven," she noted. "Especially all the little extras that come along with it. The little placemats, the little notes, the little nutrition comments for better health; all the extras that come with the holidays are absolutely incredible."

Peggy wishes she could be out in the community, but lingering health issues from COVID keep her home. Still, she stays active by making phone calls and writing letters to public officials, advocating for seniors and highlighting the importance of programs like Meals on Wheels.

When asked what people in Mercer County can do to combat the threats to federal funding, she expressed that any amount donated is worth it as it allows participants on the program to receive all the necessary components to a healthy, nutritious meal.

"People can donate— I can't. I'm on social security and I have a mortgage still, and I'm sure a lot of seniors are going through the same thing," she urged.

Like many MOWMC participants, Peggy is worried that funding will get cut, and if that happens, everyone would have to get creative. However, she will continue

fighting, she said, and she will continue to make her voice heard in New Jersey.

*If you want to know how **YOU can advocate** for seniors like Peggy, click [HERE](#) to check out the Meals on Wheels America resources!*

MOWMC Participant Survey Results

Twice a year, we collect data from our participants by asking a series of questions. Of our 465 participants, we received 166 responses...

*~ **86%** feel more socially connected since becoming a MOWMC participant*

*~ **95%** feel their overall health improved*

*~ **97%** feel more confident that they can live independently in their own home*

*~ **69%** would not have a hot, nutritious meal to eat on most days*



What our participants are saying...

~ "Meals on Wheels frees up my time so I can concentrate on taking care of my husband which consumes most of my time throughout the day. Also we are very low income and the help with our 5 cats is so appreciated."

~ "It means that I get a hot meal most days. And I get to speak to someone once in a while :)"

~ "I am 75 years old and live with my 95 year old mother. I don't know what we'd do without you."

~ "It means a lot to me, it builds my self-confidence and gives me a purpose in life."

~ "It's a blessing to have meals prepared by caring people and I don't have to cook or worry. I'm grateful for people kindness."

Federal Funding Cuts

What can you do?

Recent federal funding cuts have created significant challenges for Meals on Wheels of Mercer County, impacting our ability to provide essential services to the seniors in our community.

With reduced resources, we are more reliant than ever on the generosity of our donors and volunteers. ***Your support ensures we can continue to deliver nutritious meals and vital services to those in need.***

Now, more than ever, ***we need your help to maintain our programs*** and make a meaningful difference in the lives of our seniors.

[Donate Now](#)

[Volunteer](#)

Check out the article published by Town Topics featuring our CEO Venetta Ellerbe and our volunteers!



An excerpt from the article discussing the impact of Federal Funding cuts on MOWMC...

She went on to discuss some of the challenges that MOWMC is facing in the current climate of increasing demand and federal funding cuts. "Most participants are over 60, and they often cannot prepare meals for themselves," she said. "Some live with family members, but often because of the rising cost of food those family members might not be able to pay for meals. They may only be able to check in occasionally on their relatives."

Ellerbe went on, "MOWMC provides prepared and cooked meals that can be refrigerated and heated up for the next day or later that same day. The meals are dietarily restricted for those who need that. We have a dietician who oversees all of the meal plans for all participants."

[Read More...](#)

Welcome New Volunteers!

Each month, we will be highlighting our newest volunteers.
In March & April, we welcomed:

**Halina B.
David L.
Chuck M.
Martha N.
Bob & Laura R.
Michele R.
Emilie S.
Sharon V.**
New Jersey Prevention Network

Thank you for joining our volunteer team!

Looking for delivery volunteer opportunities?

Email our Volunteer Director, Lisa Kasabach, for more information
at lkasabach@mealsonwheelsmercer.org or call (609) 695-3483 Ext. 103

□ **Happy National Pet Week** □

May 4-7

At **Meals on Wheels of Mercer County**, we **LOVE** our participants' pets! With **56 pets on the program** in total, we are constantly looking for ways to support the furry little pets that bring joy and companionship to our community neighbors.

***If you're looking for a way to get involved, email
outreach@mealsonwheelsmercer.org for more info!***



Giving Info

[Donate Now](#)



You may now donate via Apple Pay, PayPal & Venmo!

*You can also set up **recurring monthly giving!***

If you would like to make a donation **In Memory or In Honor** of someone, you may do so by selecting the type of 'Tribute Gift' on our donation page.
Please leave details regarding names and acknowledgement.

Be sure to check our [website](#) for acknowledgements for tribute dedications!
(currently listing donations received January 1, 2025 though March 31, 2025)

Contact Us: (609) 695-3483 or Email at info@mealsonwheelsmercercoun.org



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