



Dear Friends,

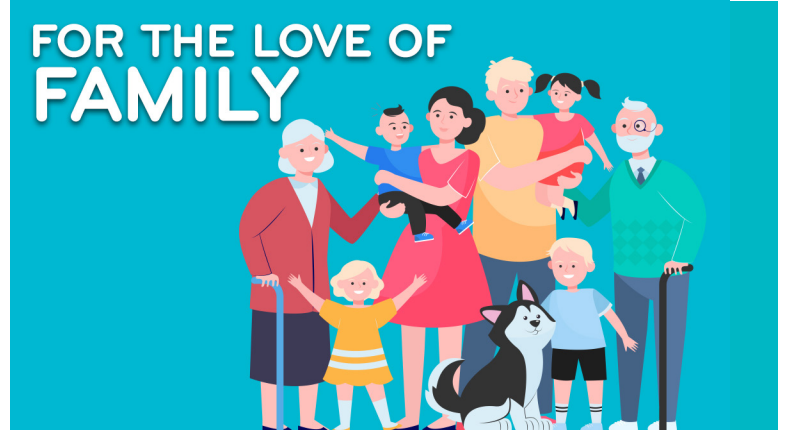
This Thanksgiving will be a different time for many of us. Our table won't have as many place settings, the turkey will be smaller, and your aunt's special dish won't be served. For many seniors, Thanksgiving can be an especially lonely time, but MOW Diablo Region continues to make sure that the seniors we serve are nourished, safe, and have the human touch that keeps them connected. We are able to do this because of those who "sit around our table" every day — a dedicated staff and Board, an army of devoted volunteers, and a community of donors and funders who help us deliver essential meals and services.

In this month's newsletter, you'll learn about new programs we are initiating, and you'll meet the people who help the seniors we serve. You'll also see the many ways people continue to support MOW Diablo Region. While this Thanksgiving will be different for so many of us, we at MOW Diablo Region remain grateful for the commitment, work and generosity of those who keep vulnerable seniors safe and at home with dignity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caitlin Sly".

Caitlin Sly
Executive Director



Rosario comes from a big family and at the age of 87, her extended family just keeps on growing. "I have 14 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren! One is only a few months old. I'm very blessed," says Rosario. Born in the Philippines, she and her late husband Joseph made their way to Martinez where they started a family that grew to the extended one she has today. Since Covid-19, Rosario hasn't been able to see much of her family, and with one son currently living in the Philippines, it is unlikely that they will be able to spend the holidays together. "I don't want them to worry about me. They have their own families now," says Rosario. "There's no way I could cook a big holiday meal anymore anyway."

Rosario reached out to Meals on Wheels Diablo Region back in 2018. One night, she was cooking dinner and forgot to turn off the oven. That's when she realized she needed some help. "After I was connected with MOW Diablo Region, I was introduced to another family at MOW Diablo Region. They drop off meals and are always so friendly," she says. "I very much appreciate the meals. They are tasty and help give me a balanced diet. Plus, I don't have to worry about cooking!"

The holidays can be hard on anyone, especially an isolated senior like Rosario. Here at MOW Region, we offer a wide range of services — not just meal delivery. We have a Friendly Caller program where volunteers make sure the seniors in our community feel loved and cherished. We also offer Friendly Helpers, to assist clients with picking up groceries or prescriptions, and Care Management helps with problems like depression and other social issues. All the services offered by MOW Diablo Region are designed to address the many needs of vulnerable seniors and help them remain at home, safely and with dignity, something that is very important to Rosario. "I'm so thankful for MOW Diablo Region. They help me like they are family," says Rosario.



Meals on Wheels Diablo Region is pleased to announce that Pacific Service Credit Union has become the exclusive sponsor of the agency's Volunteer Town Hall Zoom on **Thursday, Dec. 3rd at 3:00 PM.**

This important event will give current and past volunteers, those who are on hiatus during the pandemic and prospective volunteers an opportunity to connect during these unique times. Volunteers will learn how as a result of the pandemic, MOW Diablo Region changed its procedures and delivery model to keep seniors nourished and safe, how it developed

new programs to meet new needs, and hear heartwarming stories from clients. The agency will also offer its predictions for the future. "When people learn how we responded to Covid-19, they are amazed," says Executive Director Caitlin Sly. "Our staff and volunteers really demonstrated a masterclass in competence and success! We are so pleased that Pacific Service Credit Union recognized the benefit of bringing our volunteers together for this virtual event."

Volunteers are the lifeblood of MOW Diablo Region. They deliver needed meals to vulnerable seniors, help with social isolation by being Friendly Callers and Friendly Visitors, assist at cafés and with exercise classes, and provide office support. "MOW Diablo Region couldn't do the important work we do without our volunteers," adds Sly.

Those who are interested in joining the free Volunteer Town Hall sponsored by Pacific Service Credit Union can RSVP to Shanti Peterson at speterson@mowdr.org and she'll send a Zoom link!



The Martinez Community Foundation has awarded Meals on Wheels Diablo Region a \$3,000 grant for its Weekend Breakfast Bag Program. The funds will be used to supplement the five weekly meals delivered to homebound seniors in Martinez who depend on the agency for their only meal of the day. The Weekend Breakfast Bags will provide a nutritious breakfast which helps prevent many of the health problems associated with food insecurity in the elderly and lessens the likelihood of seniors needing expensive hospital or nursing home placement.

The MCF grant will enable MOW Diablo Region to deliver Weekend Breakfast Bags to 42 frail and homebound Martinez seniors for six weeks — a total of 508 nutritional breakfasts — to help ensure that no Martinez senior goes hungry. "This program is so important at this time," says Caitlin Sly, MOW Diablo Region Executive Director. "Food insecurity is a problem for seniors in normal times, but it is especially problematic in these precarious times. We are extremely grateful to the Martinez Community Foundation for providing the funding that allows MOW Diablo Region to deliver Weekend Breakfast Bags to vulnerable seniors in Martinez."



Meals on Wheels Diablo Region is pleased to announce it has been awarded a grant from Share the Spirit East Bay, a project of the Bay Area News Group — East Bay Times. The funds will be used to purchase and distribute 40 electronic tablets for our low-income seniors. The tablets will allow seniors to stay connected with family and friends, access online health care appointments, participate in MOW Diablo Region's online exercise and fall prevention classes.

Social isolation is a profound problem for too many seniors even during normal times. Because of Covid-19, the seniors we serve are even more isolated. Loneliness and isolation can be as damaging as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

"We appreciate that Bay Area News Group recognized how important tablets will be in helping the seniors we serve stay healthy and engaged during these difficult times," says Meals on Wheels Diablo Region Executive Director, Caitlin Sly.



MOW Diablo Region is hosting its first ever No-Show Gala which allows guests to “attend” whenever they want, from wherever they want and wear whatever they want! We are asking guests to make a donation on what they would have spent that evening on a ticket, an auction item, a babysitter, or a new outfit.

MOW Diablo Region planned a virtual gala, but we have been working double-duty since March, delivering meals and services to 40% more people. “We had a real quandary because we need to raise the revenue from a gala, but we also need to keep our focus on making sure vulnerable seniors are fed and safe at home,” says Sherry Nadworny, Director of Development & Community Relations. “We thought this was a creative way to achieve both goals and we are so pleased that First Republic Bank signed on as a sponsor. They recognized that although the ‘event’ wasn’t traditional, the need to raise funds is very real.”

The No-Show Gala started on October 29th and runs until, “whenever you want,” says Nadworny. “But we hope people will make their donation soon, because we have a waiting list of seniors who need meals and services.” MOW Diablo Region also predicts that the need will continue to increase as Covid-19 goes into the winter.

To “attend” the No-Show Gala, click below:

DON'T REGISTER, BUT PLEASE DONATE



For many of the seniors we serve, the only meal they have all day is the meal we deliver to them. We know this, not only because our seniors tell us, but because we see their empty refrigerators and pantries. No matter the challenges we all face, MOW Diablo Region will never let any of our clients miss a meal or a life-improving service.

In order to continue this work, an anonymous donor has offered a \$6,000 match! This means that every donation up until Dec. 30th will be doubled dollar-for-dollar and have twice the impact on the lives of vulnerable seniors.

We know we can continue to do our important work thanks to our dedicated donors. Please help us meet the match with your donation today. And if you sign up to be a Monthly Giving Circle Donor during the month of November, your gift for the whole year will go toward meeting the match!

Let’s do this for our vulnerable seniors. They depend on Meals on Wheels Diablo Region and we depend on you!



Preparing a meal can be difficult as we age. Carol Smith of Alamo understands the challenges and is glad she is still able to cook for herself at 82. But she knows that not everyone

her age is as lucky. It is something she understood long before she became a senior, as well.

Carol always volunteered for organizations that worked with the elderly and helped her senior neighbors by driving them to appointments and the grocery store. She’s also been a longtime donor to Meals on Wheels Diablo Region. “I’ve always had a soft spot in my heart for the elderly, well before I was elderly myself,” says Carol. “I’m lucky I have my children who bring me groceries and are around to help, but I know that so many seniors can’t cook and don’t have family to depend on. Donating to MOW Diablo Region is something I feel strongly about. I want to support my senior friends. Who knows I might even need the service myself one day!”

**HELP US GET 30
NEW MONTHLY
DONORS IN 30 DAYS!**

3  **in 30**

When the Covid-19 pandemic began, we knew seniors depended on us, so we moved quickly to make sure we didn't let them down. Meals on Wheels Diablo Region continues to respond, thanks to members of our Monthly Giving Circle who provide us with a source of income we rely on during this ongoing emergency. Our vulnerable seniors depend on us. We hope we can depend on your support with a monthly donation — any amount helps!

Please help us, during this time of crisis, meet the 30 in 30 challenge by becoming a member of the Monthly Giving Circle so we can meet the need in our community every day. Your help allows us to ensure seniors can remain safely in their homes, with health and dignity.

JOIN OUR MONTHLY GIVING CIRCLE!

**ANXIOUS ABOUT THE
COVID-19 HOLIDAY
SEASON?**

 **aetna™**

Even during a normal holiday seasons, it's common to feel a bit isolated, depressed or lonely. This year, with the pandemic, it will likely to feel even more so. Research shows social isolation and loneliness are linked to higher risks for a variety of physical and mental conditions. Luckily, we can learn how to keep such feelings at bay. At MOW Diablo Region, we are partnering with Aetna/CVS to provide an online class, where participants will hear about practical tools that help reset and restore their physical and mental well-being. We are not alone! Join us November 18, 2020 at 3pm and register below:

REGISTER NOW!