



Spokes

The quarterly newsletter for TLC Meals on Wheels
Spring 2010 ▶ (303)798-7642 ▶ www.TLCMealsOnWheels.org

From the Executive Director

Much of the national publicity for the meals on wheels concept gives the impression that this program is about younger people taking care of older people—"seniors," "the elderly," or "aging" persons. Often this conjures up stereotypes younger people have about "old age." But it's not quite so simple.

True, the average age of our clients, last time we checked, was 82. But at least three (probably more) of our most active, energetic volunteer drivers are in their mid-eighties, while one-fifth of our meal recipients are under the age of 60.

This is the reason we carefully say that we deliver meals to individuals whose age and/or *disability* make it difficult to provide their own nutritious meals. Last year when a volunteer was surveying our clients by telephone, she asked someone, "Do you have any disabilities?" And the response was, "I'm 89 years old, so what do you think?"

Statistically, there's an apparent link between advancing age and declining ability. However, the dynamic exception to this generalization seen among some of our volunteers shows that no one has to surrender to declining ability altogether.

Of course, many factors are beyond an individual's control—the genetic make-up inherited from biological parents (how long one's ancestors lived); childhood circumstances including diet and exercise

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Mayors for Meals Raises Awareness

Each year during March, the Meals on Wheels Association of America promotes "Mayors for Meals," a day when mayors and elected officials across America deliver meals to seniors in their local communities. TLC Meals



on Wheels involved the mayors of three of Denver's suburban cities in delivering meals: Cathy Noon (Centennial), Doug Clark (Littleton), and Jim Woodward (Englewood). This effort is part of the March For Meals, an annual national campaign to raise awareness of senior hunger and to encourage action on a local level. Here, Mayor Cathy Noon is shown delivering the hot lunches prepared for Mr. and Mrs. Harold Glasser on Route 13.

The mission of TLC Meals on Wheels is to deliver nutritious meals to seniors and other homebound individuals so they may enjoy the benefits and dignity of independent living.

Marilyn Ness, Littleton's Citizen of the Year

Marilyn Ness, the volunteer with the longest record of service through TLC Meals on Wheels received Littleton's "Citizen of the Year" Award from Elks Lodge #1650 in a ceremony on March 20th. Mayor Doug Clark nominated Mrs. Ness not only because of over 40 years of tenure with our organization, but also for her enthusiasm in getting others involved in helping to deliver meals. When our program moved to the Ames property and needed help organizing the storage room, Marilyn Ness mobilized the youth group of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church to tackle the job. Until recently, Mrs. Ness faithfully kept her route in every kind of weather, climbing apartment stairs and walking up sidewalks. A heel injury led to her becoming the greeter to other drivers each Friday. One driver recently said, "I was in a grouchy mood until I ran into her." We're proud that Marilyn Ness has won this honor and grateful for her exemplary dedication to our mission.



Sensible Planning Spares Next Generation

Mary Clement, of Five Rings Financial, shared this story in her newsletter: "The father of my children passed away unexpectedly in July 2009 because of complications from surgery for liver cancer. The bills for his surgery and hospital care were astronomical. But, because he was 67, he had signed up for Medicare and had a Medicare Supplement. They kicked in and covered the cost of the hospital, surgery, and

additional expenses. He had taken other steps to look after his family as well. He had a life insurance policy for our two children, Suzanne and Tom. Third, he had drafted a will with specific instructions. This was particularly important because he had remarried, and his wife had two children and grandchildren of her own. The will detailed who got what. . . I will be eternally grateful for what he did for our children."

Another Sertoma Award

James D. (Denny) Fennell delivers meals on Route 1 as part of the team from the Sertoma Club of Littleton. He received the Sertoman of the Year Award first from the Littleton club, and then from the Front Range District of Sertoma. "Sertoma" means "Service to Mankind," and Mr. Fennell epitomizes that motto. Congratulations, Denny!

From the Executive Director (*continued*)

under parental influence; permanent injuries from an accident; or progressive illnesses such as multiple sclerosis.

Some factors, however, are controllable and can prevent the rapid decline of ability due to age. Substance abuse is an obvious example. Diet and exercise, sleep habits, recreation, family relationships, and community service all contribute to health and longevity.

As I see it, the meals on wheels concept isn't so much about younger people taking care of older people, as it is about able people taking care of less able people. For those who are able, the very activity of volunteering to reach out to others contributes to better health and a longer life. For those who are less able, receiving a balanced meal and a friendly visit also tips the scales toward a longer, healthier, and happier life.

No one lives forever. We lost a few wonderful volunteers during the past few months to cancer. We mourn their loss as well as the passing of some of our dear clients. But while we live, we all would like to grow older with grace and dignity. Participating in the TLC Meals on Wheels program makes that more likely for each of us.

– Phil Miller

Theater Night 2010 Success Story



As a fundraiser, the Fourth Annual Theater Night brought a net total of over \$15,000 for the work of TLC Meals on Wheels—the most yet. But the success story is about more than the money. It's about everyone enjoying the food and the great performance of "Guys and Dolls." It's about the Heritage High National Honor Society members who assisted the caterer. It's about the great video produced by Robin Visser of Creative Touch Video. And it's about supportive relationships shared with the sponsors, who deserve your patronage along with our thanks:

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Tour the Broncos Training Facilities 9:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 15

Come see the Denver Broncos training facility and headquarters, home of the Denver Broncos organization! This state-of-the-art facility houses indoor and outdoor practice fields, the weight room, full service dining room, team auditorium, team locker room, trophy cases, the video library and other amenities.

Chip Conway, a Broncos vice-president will guide the tour. You can take pictures and go home with some great Broncos souvenirs.

This outing will make a terrific birthday or graduation present for a young friend, child, or grandchild, so each adult has the privilege of bringing up to two children under the age of 18 for FREE!

Along with having fun and making a great memory, the Broncos Tour is an opportunity to support TLC Meals on Wheels. 100 percent of your ticket purchase price will go to support providing a hot lunch to those in need of balanced daily nutrition.

The total group size is limited to 50, so reserve a spot now by mailing your check to TLC Meals on Wheels, P.O. Box 3108, Centennial CO 80161-3108. Please include your contact information (phone and e-mail) so we can confirm your reservation. For more info.: (303) 798-7642 or info@TLCMealsonWheels.org.



Cost: \$50 per adult (with the privilege of bringing along two young friends under the age of 18 for free); or \$75 for a married couple with children.