

FY 2022



PREPARED BY :

Megan Mann

ANNUAL REPORT

*Ms. Irene Spruill, program participant since 2020.
Photo credit: Joey Overman, delivery volunteer.*

Dear Friend,

Welcome to our first ever annual report! If you are reading this, you are likely a valued member of our community: a program participant or loved one, volunteer, donor, board member, staff member, or community partner—often, serving in more than one of these roles. Thank you for being a part of our caring community, for your contributions of heart, time, skill, and monetary support. Here, we will share with you our impact in fiscal year 2022, as well as our challenges, accomplishments, and a glimpse of where we are going.

What hasn't been challenging about the last couple of years? Not one of us has come through unscathed. Here at Meals on Wheels of Chesapeake, we have been privileged to witness true strength, courage, grit, humanity, and grace daily during an unprecedented and frightening time for the people we are proud and humbled to serve—our collective parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

We have laughed with participants, cried with them, sang Happy Birthday to them on their special day, listened to their stories, and with the help of wonderful individuals and community partners in Chesapeake, met their unmet and evolving needs whenever possible—during those first months of COVID, these were frozen weekend meals donated by Foodbank of Southeast Virginia and Mercy Chefs, as well as paper towels, toilet paper, tissues, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant spray donated by volunteers, individuals, and community partners.

Most of all, we have simply been there for them, Monday through Friday. A kind voice on the other end of the line. A friendly face at the door. A fresh hot meal placed in open hands with a bag lunch for later. *Hello, how are you?* and *Have a good day.* Never underestimate small acts of basic kindness, generosity, and connection—even a pandemic is powerless against these things.

During the pandemic, we learned to really listen. We created call logs to track potential enrollees, their qualifying reasons as well as their reasons for not enrolling. When we discovered affordability was an issue, we implemented a more equitable sliding scale informed by FPL and ALICE metrics. We created our first participant survey, and the results helped us to better understand the people we serve and how to better support them.

We learned. A lot. We installed new software that simplified daily meal production and delivery, and freed up more time for development, sustainably raising funds for meals for elderly neighbors who needed our service, but could not afford to pay. We listened to volunteers, and created volunteer handbooks for every route binder. We listened to community partners, and implemented vetting processes for new volunteers.

What we've learned is simple: listen, ask questions to understand, and then listen some more. And don't be afraid to invite others in because this is how you build and nourish an inclusive, diverse, and compassionate community. Thank you for being a part of this process and this special service we provide for the people we serve, who are so worthy.

Megan Mann
Program Director, Meals on Wheels of Chesapeake

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Delivering nourishment, connection, & independence for older and disabled adults in Chesapeake since 1977

About Us

Mission

Founded in 1977, Meals on Wheels of Chesapeake delivers nourishment and connection daily, Monday through Friday, with **two** nutritious meals, a safety check, social connection, and connection to community resources, for elderly, disabled, and convalescing neighbors aging in place in Chesapeake.

Evidence-Based Model

We promote wellbeing for homebound neighbors through the use of evidence-based practices as outlined in Meals on Wheels America's *More Than A Meal* body of research, including the delivery of nutritious meals and safety checks by vetted volunteers; social connection; and connection to community resources.

Who We Are

Meals on Wheels of Chesapeake is a diverse, caring community of **240** participants served per year and rising; donors; community partners; an engaged, compassionate volunteer base of over **310** and rising, including a supportive and highly skilled board of directors; and committed, mission-driven staff, two full-time and two part-time.

Menu

Our menu is updated seasonally with meal suggestions from participants themselves. We offer four weeks of unduplicated meals, two per day per participant. Each meal is dietician-approved and meets federal nutritional guidelines. Ever-mindful that participants look forward to their meals each day, Pete (pictured right) ensures the meals are appetizingly plated. Meals are delicious and wholesome. No sodium is added, and we accommodate diabetic, renal, mechanical soft, and lactose-intolerant diets. We also accommodate cultural preferences, providing alternatives to pork and beef.



Pete Lucchesi, MOWC Meal Production Assistant, displays a fresh hot meal before packing for delivery.



2022 IMPACT SNAPSHOT

240

Participants Served

63,222

Meals Delivered

31,611

Safety Checks Performed

310

Volunteers

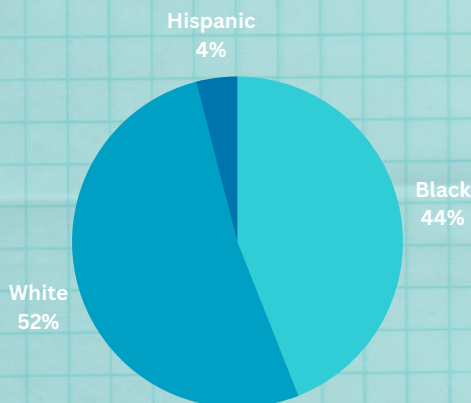


Who We Are: Participants



Program participant & donor Ms. Emma Collado, wearing an apron given to her by volunteer Lilly Rusco. Photo Credit: Megan Mann.

Race & Ethnicity



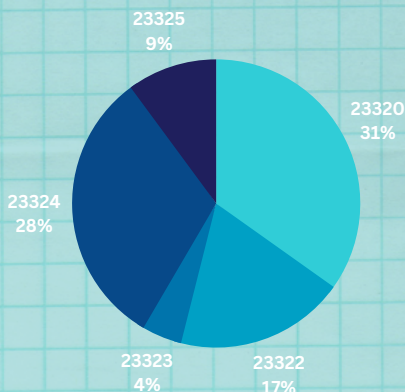
61%

39%



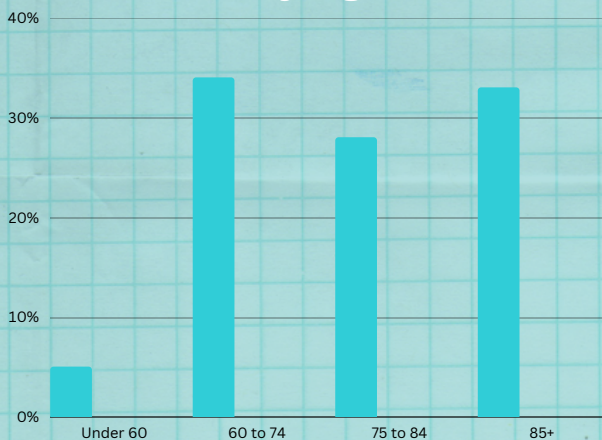
12% Veterans

By Zip Code



Note: 28% live in 23324, the zip code with the highest food-insecurity score in Chesapeake. 37% live in areas of high food-insecurity.*

By Age



*For more information about food-insecurity in Chesapeake, visit: <https://www.ghrconnects.org/indexsuite/index/foodinsecurity>

Who We Are: Volunteers

In 2022, **310** delivery volunteers drove **55,000 miles** to deliver **63,222** meals, **31,611** safety checks and moments of connection, over **500** Christmas gifts, over **400** emergency shelf-stable meal boxes, **240** birthday gifts, **183** Thanksgiving dinners, **110** welcome packets, hand-outs about community resources and events, and extra donated meals for the weekend. **Wow!** Additionally, some volunteers returned to participants' homes with groceries for the weekend, to do yard work or make home repairs, or simply for a friendly visit. Our volunteers are servant leaders who quietly teach by example the universal values of loving our neighbors and caring for our community.



Food Lion volunteer Lisa Bednarczyk and participant Rilla Derby enjoying the sunshine, talking about hula hooping, and looking for dimes.

Our volunteer groups are **Chesapeake Homeschool Group, Eggleston, Community Options Program, Deep Creek Baptist, Deep Creek Methodist, Dominion Energy, Food Lion, Great Bridge Baptist, Great Bridge Methodist, Great Bridge Presbyterian, Greater Mount Zion, Grassfield Baptist, Oak Grove Methodist, Prince of Peace, Raleigh Heights, Rotary, Saint Thomas Episcopal, Serenity Living, Underwater Construction Team One, Vibrant Steps,** and various **active duty military groups and squadrons.**

We have also had the good fortune of enlisting skilled volunteers to develop our website: **Dominion Enterprises** on the 2020 United Way Day of Caring, and skilled volunteer **Kerry Winters** to get us to phase two. We are thankful for their efforts, and thrilled to have a way for members of our community to find and connect with us online.

"The folks who deliver my meals are all fantastic. Really fine lovely people. One stands out extra: my Thursday person. She brings my trash can to the door if the truck has picked up my trash." -Ms. Helen, RT 8

"Each volunteer that I have met brings a SMILE and JOY along with the food."
-Mr. David, RT 12

"The volunteers are WONDERFUL, and go out of their way to make extra time for me."
-Ms. Emma, RT 8

Funds for Meals for Food-Insecure Seniors

Thank you to the following donors for providing meals for homebound neighbors in 2022:

United Way of South Hampton Roads: \$18,518 | infrastructure upgrades that allowed us to serve more meals to more participants.

Over 150 donors that gave less than \$200 each: \$14,269 | 5,062 meals

Meals on Wheels America: \$12,000 | larger meal bags and 4,630 meals in FY2021 & FY 2022

Chesapeake Human Services: \$10,000 | 3,546 meals

Dominion Energy: \$8,000 | 2,836 meals

Southeast Virginia Community Foundation: \$6,100 | 2,162 meals

Jim & Jeanne Dyche: \$3,500 | 1,240 meals

Walmart Neighborhood Market #3330 on Cedar Rd in Chesapeake: \$2,500 | 886 meals

Walmart Supercenter #2529 on Lynnhaven Pkwy in Virginia Beach: \$1,500 | 532 meals

Michael & Linda Mann: \$1,200 | 426 meals

Wegman's of Virginia Beach: \$1,200 | 426 meals

Healthy Chesapeake: \$1,130 | 400 meals

Chesapeake Sam's Club #6368: \$1,000 | 354 meals

Walmart Supercenter #5253 on Grassfield Pkwy in Chesapeake: \$1,000 | 354 meals

Walmart Supercenter #3831 on Frederick Blvd in Portsmouth: \$725 | 256 meals

Gayle Robinson & Loved Ones: \$645 | 228 meals

Cathy Lopes, in honor of Marion Lopes: \$600 | 212 meals

Capital One, in honor of employee Alisha Davis, Financial Consultant: \$500 | 176 meals

Hampton Roads Academy: \$500 | 176 meals

Calib Miller: \$500 | 176 meals

New York Life: \$500 | 176 meals

Sam's Club #4710 on Chesapeake Ring Rd in Chesapeake: \$500 | 176 meals

South Norfolk Golf Association: \$500 | 176 meals

Anonymous: \$500 | 176 meals

Walmart Supercenter #1687 on Main St in Suffolk: \$500 | 176 meals

Chesapeake Task Force on Aging: \$300 | 106 meals

Phyllis Sargent: \$300 | 106 meals

Danny & Barbara Kesner: \$200 | 70 meals

Louise Quales: \$200 | 70 meals

St Thomas Episcopal Church: \$200 | 70 meals

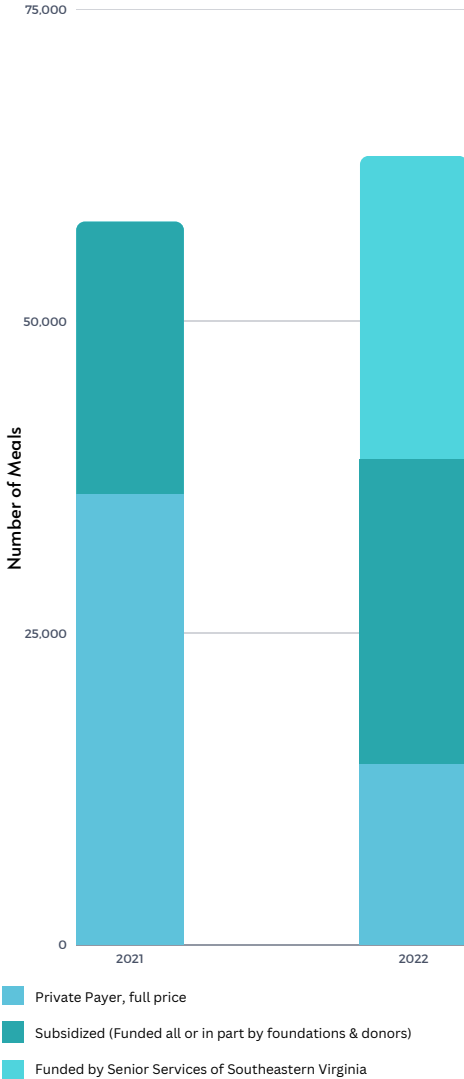
Wanda Watson: \$200 | 70 meals

Ms. Evelyn, a participant who lives in a food-insecure neighborhood, thanks you:

"Well I don't have to be concerned now about how I can't divide one meal into two or three meals a day. I know my meals will have vegetables in them. I couldn't always have fresh vegetables before. Now I know my meals will be nutritious. With my health issues, it makes a big difference. Thank you. I am truly grateful."

Funds for Meals for Food-Insecure Seniors

Subsidized Meals Served in FY 2022



Our single largest expense is the first word in our name: meals! In FY 2022, we delivered **63,222** meals, a **10% increase** over meals delivered in FY 2021.

24,390 (see middle segment of "2022" bar in graph to left) of these meals were partially or fully subsidized by foundation grants and donations, meaning that **81 participants experiencing food-insecurity and isolation** paid little to nothing for their meals.

In October 2021 we entered into a contractual partnership with our Area Agency on Aging, **Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia (SSSEVA)**. SSSEVA fully funds meals for **125** qualifying participants, and funded **24,328** meals in 2022.

All in all, **77% of meals served in 2022 were subsidized**, meaning most participants paid less than cost or nothing for their meals during this time of runaway inflation.

84%

of participants live in zip codes with moderate to high food-insecurity

71%

of participants live in ALICE or FPL households

48%

are isolated, and would see no one for a week or more if not for their delivery volunteers

Funds for Infrastructure Investments

In 2022, we worked smarter with targeted infrastructure investments that have allowed us to scale up (from 99 served in March 2020 to 168 served in December 2022) as both our service population and demand have continued to grow.



United Way
of South Hampton Roads

United Way of South Hampton Roads

With a generous 2022 United Way of South Hampton Roads *Thriving Families* grant award of **\$18,518**, we were able to hire our **third employee**, Wendy, who assists with meal production and office duties. We also invested in **software**, including **Quickbooks** and **ServTracker**, the industry standard for meal production software endorsed by Meals on Wheels America.



In seconds, **ServTracker** produces **daily route directions** for volunteers, as well as numerous **customizable data reports** that allow us to better understand who we serve, their needs, and our impact. These processes were previously rote and required hours of daily and weekly work. Now, **ServTracker** saves us **over five hundred staff hours per annum**.



Meals On Wheels America

In 2020 and again in 2021, each time to avoid a **waiting list**, we also **added two permanent daily delivery routes**, **Route 13** and **Route 14**, in Chesapeake's **most food-insecure zip code, 23324** (with a food-insecurity score of 88/100). The addition of **Route 14**, as well as **larger meal bags** to accommodate more participants on every route, were funded by a **Meals on Wheels America** grant, and made possible by our wonderful volunteers.



MEALS ON WHEELS
AMERICA

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

Between 2010 & 2021, the 65+ group was the fastest growing of any age group in Chesapeake, increasing by

50.9%

11.1%
of seniors in Chesapeake lived below the Federal Poverty Level in 2021, a key indicator for food-insecurity

23.3%
of seniors in Chesapeake lived alone in 2021, a key indicator for isolation

Community Partners & In-Kind Donors



- **Volunteer Hampton Roads** and **JustServe**, which each provided us with free memberships in 2022 and in 2020, when COVID hit, and have connected us with over thirty volunteers



- **Healthy Chesapeake** and the **Chesapeake Task Force on Aging**, which donated sponsorships to remove financial barriers to enrollment and provide meals for food-insecure participants



- **Prince of Peace Catholic Church** and **Buffalow Family & Friends Community Days**, which provide hundreds of Thanksgiving dinners for food-insecure and isolated participants



- **SilverTree Seniors**, which for the past four holiday seasons has organized an Adopt-A-Senior Secret Santa project benefiting participants

- **Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities** in conjunction with the **Hampton Roads Community Foundation**, which provided a year of DEI training free of charge for MOWC and other area nonprofits

Additionally, **Sandy and Mel Eckhart** of the **Unity Renaissance Prayer Shawl Group** have made and donated over 600 prayer shawls for new and hospitalized participants over the past three years. **Sue Powers** has made and donated warm, beautiful beanies for winter. And **Susan Jordan**, the family member of a meal participant, also began donating handmade prayer shawls and blankets for participants in 2021.



And two sisters, **Shealyn and Madison Weed**, wrapped and donated over **500** birthday gifts that were distributed over two years to participants on their special days. This birthday tradition continues in 2022, with every participant still receiving a birthday gift thanks to the generosity of individual donors like **Loriann Stewart** and **Deloris Harvey**.



Lastly, we receive regular donations of hand-quilted placemats, bowl cozies, coasters, and blankets from **Cathy Meador, Laura Gilbert**, and the **Quilt Bingers** that go into birthday bags and welcome packets.



Meal Partners & Member Organizations

Member Organizations

In 2020, we applied for and received certification with **United Way of South Hampton Roads**. In FY 2022 and again in FY 2023, we applied for and received United Way funding for infrastructure and subsidized meals: to date, **\$52,102**.

In 2020, we joined **Meals on Wheels America**, which has provided access to free education, networking, and capacity building & program funding totaling **\$52,000** since 2021. Additionally, MOW America coordinated the donation and distribution of \$1,550 in **Wawa** gift cards and \$500 in **Food Lion** gift cards for well-deserved volunteer recognition, as 100% of our delivery force is volunteer.

Meal Partners

Chesapeake Regional Medical Center has been our contracted meal vendor since day one, and generously donates office space, technology, and some program supplies. Throughout COVID-19, CRMC has given us a generous discount on meal costs, and we have passed those savings on to the population we serve, stepping up to provide meals for participants who are food-insecure and unable to pay. In 2021, CRMC graphic designer Lisa Cardona designed our new logo.

Through **Meals on Wheels of Suffolk & Isle of Wight**, we learned of an opportunity to partner with **Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia**, our regional Area Agency on Aging. Since last October, we have been a vendor agency with Senior Services. Senior Services provides meals for qualifying residents of Chesapeake aged 60 and older who live alone and experience difficulty preparing nutritious meals.

Stronger Together

These partnerships have been a blessing for the people we serve. Together, we are able to more fully carry out our mission in the community. With the help and partnership of **Chesapeake Regional, Senior Services, United Way of South Hampton Roads, and Meals on Wheels America**, we have grown to serve more participants than ever before. We are so very thankful for their support.



United Way
of South Hampton Roads



Looking Forward: PAWs

PAWS: PET ASSISTANCE ON WHEELS

Our Pets Aiding the Wellbeing of Seniors program, **PAWS**, was launched on October 3rd, using funds provided by the **Pet Smart** and **Meals on Wheels America Discovery Pet Program Grant**. In early October, we sent out our first monthly delivery of food and supplies.

65% of MOWC participants with pets live in ALICE and FPL households. Most of these participants pay nothing for their meals. Their pets are their family and main companions. Yet, between COVID, mobility and transportation issues, and limited ability to pay, many participants need assistance with pet care, especially with veterinary access.

PAWS is helping: besides monthly deliveries of food and supplies, we are coordinating annual exams with **Veterinarian Tara Golden** of **Golden Paws**, a mobile veterinary office that serves the pets of area seniors. Golden Paws has extended a generous discount, and vet visits are funded by MOWC. We depend on donations to keep this program going.

Dr. Golden was inspired by experiences with her grandmothers to tailor her services for seniors, and in an article in the *Virginian-Pilot*, shared, "I noticed that COVID altered the ability for many seniors to go out, and it was harder for them to get veterinary care. To most seniors, animals are an emotional support, and I knew I wanted to provide quality veterinary care to senior living communities."

We are currently discussing our needs with local nonprofits that serve pets, including **Animal Resources of Tidewater** and **Chesapeake Humane Society**, to enlist their help with sick pet care, as well as food and supply donations in the long-term. A local 4H chapter is organizing a donation drive for food and supplies, and the 4H children will deliver donations to the homes of participants, giving them a chance to meet their neighbors and see firsthand the positive results of their efforts. Also in the works is a partnership with a mobile grooming service. Look for updates in our next annual report and on social media!



Mr. Charles and Iris. Every day he sits in this chair and brushes her.



Dr. Golden, Honeyblue, & Grumman.

Looking Forward: Meeting the Need with Your Help

New enrollee Ms. Elizabeth, a Black woman living alone, called on her first day of meal delivery in tears, relieved to have a hot, wholesome, delicious meal to sit down to. She said, **"Today I didn't look in my pantry to see what was in there that would make a meal."** Elizabeth has mobility issues, and cooking is difficult. With all this inflation, it's been hard for her to afford fresh meats and produce. She said she used to buy whatever is on special, but now nothing is on special or in stock on the few occasions that she can get to the grocery store.

Our service population is elderly, disabled, and convalescing neighbors who live in the 23320, 23322, 23323, 23324, & 23325 zip codes of Chesapeake. We prioritize enrolling seniors who live alone, do not have the assistance of a home health aide, and have difficulty preparing fresh and nutritious meals due to age-related disability and illness. We have no income ceilings or thresholds; income is never a qualifier. Our sliding scale is updated as needed, most recently in response to historically unprecedented inflation that caused the cost of food and other basic necessities to skyrocket in 2022.

The aging-in-place population we serve has been adversely impacted by COVID-19, as demonstrated by the most recent statistics from the Census Bureau. The table below compares 5-year ACS averages against 12-month data from the most current years available, 2021 and 2019. Data for 2022, a year that saw historically unprecedented inflation, is still out. But **the demand for our service is higher than it's ever been.**

Fast Facts: Demographics of Need in Chesapeake

ACS Data Type	Number of 65+ Residents & Percentage of Total Population (indicator of increasing need)	65+ Residents in Poverty (indicator of food-insecurity)	Number of Single-person 65+ Households (indicator of isolation)	Number of 65+ Residents with Disabilities (indicator of poverty and increased need for Meals on Wheels due to functional limitations)
2021 data	34,964/251,269 13.9%	3,881 11.1%	8,145 23.3%	11,040 31.6%
2019 data	33,514/244,835 13.7%	1,274 3.8%	7,930 22.7%	12,117 36.2%
2017-2021 averages	32,898/247,172 13.3%	1,776 5.4%	7,584 23.1%	10,587 32.2%

Note: these statistics are taken from the most current information available: the American Community Survey Estimates Data Profiles from data.census.gov

In Chesapeake, "the 65+ group was the fastest growing between 2010 and 2021 with its population increasing by 50.9%" [Source: USAFacts.org.] Further, **residents who are 65+ were more likely to be impoverished than any other age group in 2021, with 11.1% experiencing poverty, more than triple than in 2019, and over double averages from the five year period preceding.** According to the USDA Report for 2021, there is **"a need for greater support amongst people 65 years and older and individuals living alone. ...food insecurity increased [in 2021] among households with no children, especially for women and elderly people living alone. Black individuals were nearly 3 times more likely to face hunger than white individuals. Latino individuals were 2.5 times more likely to face hunger than white individuals."**

We have responded to high inflation and increased need by crafting compassionate, responsive policies and procedures. For the second time in two years, we've updated the sliding scale in FY 2023 using metrics like the FPL, United Way's ALICE, and current inflation data, and added the third new route in as many years in the 23324 zip code (Chesapeake's most food-insecure, scoring 92.6/100 [Source: [GHR Connects](#)]) to avoid a waiting list.

These innovations have increased racial and ethnic diversity among participants from 29% in 2020 to 48% in 2022. 61% of participants are women. 95% are 60 and older. The vast majority of participants live alone or are alone during the day. 48% would see no one for a week or more if it weren't for their delivery volunteer, and 77% say they feel less isolated since enrolling. 99% look forward to seeing their volunteer each day. 96% agree that MOW sustains or improves their health, and 82% feel that their well-being has increased since enrolling in our five day, ten meal per week delivery model. **To find out more about the evidence-based service model we follow, read up on *More Than a Meal* here, at GHR Connects:** <https://www.ghrconnects.org/promiseppractice/index/view?pid=30457>

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Meal Production Assistant

WE COULDN'T
DO ANY OF
THIS WITHOUT
YOUR
GENEROUS
SUPPORT &
INVOLVEMENT.



THANK YOU TO
OUR
STAKEHOLDERS:
PARTICIPANTS,
VOLUNTEERS,
DONORS, STAFF,
AND PARTNERS.



Mr. Roger waves to volunteer Julie Ulrich as she snaps a pic of him after meal delivery on his birthday, during the early days of COVID. Before becoming a participant and a donor, Roger was a twenty-year daily volunteer.

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