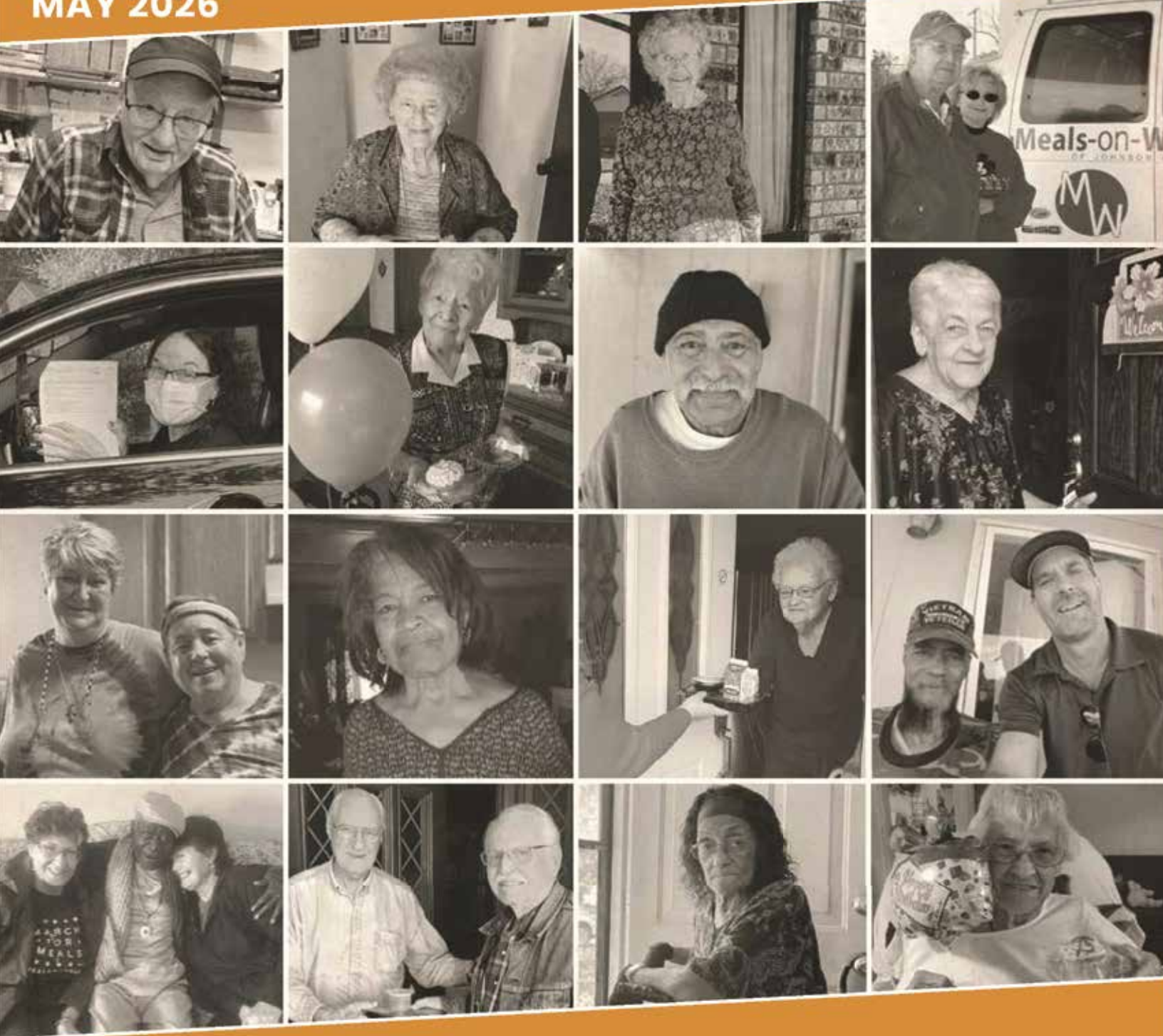


BEHIND THE WHEELS



MAY 2026



203 Kimberly Dr Cleburne TX 76031
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A Lifetime of Hard Work, and a Helping Hand at the Door



Dear Friends,

At Meals on Wheels North Central Texas, dignity is at the heart of everything we do. It's found not only in the meals we deliver, but in the independence we help preserve and the connections we foster each day.

For many of our clients, a knock at the door means more than food—it's a moment of conversation, a familiar face, and a reminder that they are seen and valued. These small, consistent interactions help ensure our neighbors can remain safely and confidently in their own homes.

As we recognize Older Americans Month, we are reminded of the importance of honoring the lives, choices, and independence of those we serve.

None of this is possible without you. Your generosity, your time, and your compassion make this work possible.

Together, we are delivering more than meals, we are delivering dignity.

Happy 50th Anniversary to MOWNCT!

Christine Hockin-Boyd
Christine Hockin-Boyd
Executive Director

Melvin has lived a full life in the same community he still calls home. He and his wife were married young, he was 18, she was 16—and together they shared 60 years of marriage in Corsicana. He worked for the gas company for 33 years, while his wife handled most of the cooking at home. "I just never did cook a whole lot," he says with a laugh. Today, simple meals like beans or a pork loin roast bring him comfort, and the weekly delivery he receives helps fill the gaps when preparing food on his own is no longer easy.

Now 85 years old, Melvin has been receiving meals through Meals on Wheels for six years. In that time, the visits at his door have become just as meaningful as the food itself. The brief conversations and familiar faces offer reassurance and connection in an otherwise quiet day.



When asked what life would be like without Meals on Wheels, Melvin doesn't hesitate: it wouldn't be good. He says he's not always sure what he would eat on his own.

With more volunteers, we could move from weekly deliveries to daily visits for seniors like Melvin, providing not only hot, nutritious meals, but also regular wellness checks and meaningful human connection. Volunteers are needed to help make that possible.

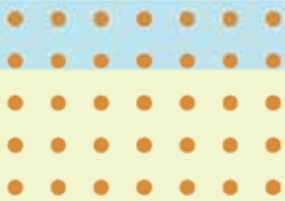
March for Meals

March for Meals was a powerful reminder of what can happen when a community comes together with compassion and purpose. Throughout the month we celebrated the impact of nutrition, connection, and care for our senior neighbors—ensuring they are not forgotten, but valued and supported.

We are deeply grateful to our generous sponsors and dedicated community leaders who stood beside us. Your commitment helped amplify our mission, bringing visibility to the growing need and delivering meaningful support where it matters most.

Because of you, more seniors received not only nutritious meals, but also the reassurance that someone is looking out for them. That sense of dignity and independence is at the heart of everything we do.

To everyone who gave their time, resources, and voice, thank you. Your partnership strengthens our ability to serve and reminds our seniors that they are never alone.



Taking Aim at Senior Hunger

Taking Aim at Senior Hunger was a remarkable day of camaraderie, purpose, and impact—bringing together a community united in support of our senior neighbors. From the first shot to the final round, the energy was filled with laughter, friendly competition, and a shared commitment to making a difference.

Because of the generosity of our sponsors and the enthusiasm of every participant, this event was more than just a day on the range—it was a meaningful investment in the well-being of older adults who rely on us each day. Your support helps ensure they receive not only nutritious meals, but also the dignity, independence, and connection they deserve.

We are deeply grateful to each sponsor, shooter, and volunteer who made this event such a success. Together, you are helping us stand as a steadfast advocate for those who once cared for us, and that impact will be felt far beyond this one special day.



A Movement Rooted in Dignity



In the early 1960s, growing older in America often meant facing life alone—with limited support, few services, and even fewer options. Families did what they could, but many older adults quietly struggled in isolation. It was a reality that couldn't be ignored any longer.

Leaders across the country began to take notice. Community advocates, along with national groups like the Committee on Aging, raised their voices to say something simple but powerful: **aging should not mean losing dignity.**

That belief led to a defining moment in 1965, when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the **Older Americans Act** into law. For the first time, the nation made a commitment to support older adults not in institutions, but in their own homes and communities—where they felt safest, most comfortable, and most like themselves.

This marked the beginning of a new way forward: community-based care. Services were designed to meet real needs—meals, transportation, companionship—delivered with compassion and respect.

At its heart, the movement was never just about programs. It was about people helping people. Neighbors checking on neighbors. Communities stepping up to ensure no one was forgotten.

Because dignity isn't a luxury. It's a promise—and one worth keeping.

The Beginning of Meals on Wheels

Every great story begins with a simple idea—and a group of people willing to act on it.

In October 1976, that idea took root in Johnson County. A small but determined group of neighbors came together to form the **Johnson County Committee on Aging**. Led by Polly von Tungeln and fueled by compassion, they shared one belief: a community is strongest when it cares for its own.

So they got to work.

Day after day, meal after meal, they delivered more than food. They delivered care, connection, and a reminder that no one was alone. What started as a local effort quickly became something more—a lifeline.



As the years passed, the mission grew. Ellis County. Then Navarro County. More miles, more meals, more neighbors served.

Through every chapter, one thing never changed: the heart behind the work.

Today, that same spirit lives on—neighbors helping neighbors, delivering not just meals, but dignity and independence with every knock on the door.



Meals on Wheels
NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS

Serving With Heart

Martena joins our team with a passion for food—and a heart for people.

After years in the fast-paced hotel industry, she made the decision to step back and focus on what matters most: family. “My kids needed me home,” she shared. “That’s when I knew it was time for a change.” That change led her to Meals on Wheels, where her personal experiences also played a role. While caring for her father during his battle with cancer, Martena saw firsthand how important quality meals are, and how often they fall short.



With more than 15 years in food service, starting as a dishwasher and working her way up, Martena brings both experience and purpose to her role. She’s excited to connect with clients, hear their feedback, and even join deliveries to better understand their experience. “I want people to enjoy their meals,” she said. “Because food should bring comfort, not just nutrition.”

Under her leadership, every meal is made with care, dignity, and heart.

A Legacy of Service A Future to Build



Last year, for the first time in its 50-year history, Meals on Wheels North Central Texas was forced to create a wait-list—not from lack of heart, but from a lack of funding. When federal COVID-era support ended, it left a significant gap, resulting in hundreds of seniors left waiting for meals and connection.

Today, that waitlist is gone.

But the need hasn’t disappeared—it’s growing.

At the time of this writing, we’re serving 890+ seniors each day, Meals on Wheels North Central Texas has set a bold goal: **1,000 meals by July and 2,000 within 18 months.** Reaching it will take both funding and people power.

“I thought I was signing up to deliver meals,” one volunteer shared. “But what I found was friendship. Some days, I’m the only person they see—and that means everything.”

To serve at least 110 more seniors by July, the organization needs 80 new weekly volunteers and the funding to sustain each \$12 meal. Just one hour a week can ensure a senior not only receives nourishment, but a moment of connection.

Because meals are only the beginning. It’s the relationships that truly sustain—and the community that makes it all possible.

A Community of Care

At 95 years old, Ivan carries a lifetime of stories, resilience, and quiet strength. Since becoming a client in 2016, he has been a cherished part of the Meals on Wheels family—reminding us each day why this work matters so deeply.

Born in Oklahoma, Ivan later spent years in California before settling in Texas in 2014. With a gentle smile, he'll tell you Texas feels a lot like home—wide open, familiar, and a welcome change from the smog he left behind.

Today, Ivan lives with his daughter and son-in-law, both of whom work during the day. He and his daughter share a special bond—they both communicate through American Sign Language, navigating life together with resilience and understanding. While Ivan doesn't get out much and relies on a walker to steady his steps, his days are filled with simple joys: a good game of solitaire, the challenge of a favorite puzzle, and the comforting presence of his two loyal dogs.

Recently, a broken doorbell created an added sense of isolation. Thanks to a caring case manager, a new visual doorbell was installed restoring not just access, but peace of mind. It's



a meaningful reminder that care goes beyond meals; it's about truly seeing each person.

Ivan looks forward to his meal, especially when meatloaf and mashed potatoes are on the menu. But more importantly, those meals play a vital role in his health. He shares that the consistency and nutrition help him maintain a steady weight and a healthier lifestyle.

For Ivan, and so many like him, this service represents more than nourishment. It brings stability, connection, and the reassurance that he is not alone.

His story is a powerful reflection of our mission, to ensure that our neighbors can age with dignity, independence, and the support they deserve.

Wanda's Circle of Care



At 95 years young, Wanda greets each day with warmth, humor, and a determination to make it to 100—and beyond. With generations of longevity in her family, she fully expects to get there. "I'm on my way," she says with a smile.

Inside her home, you'll often find her with "Precious," her *Joy for All* companion pet, right by her side. Whether she's resting or going about her day, Precious brings comfort, routine, and a sense of companionship. "I really enjoy

her," Wanda shares. In quiet moments, she'll reach over, keeping that connection close.

While Wanda stays in frequent communication with her sister, children, and grandchildren, sharing updates, stories, and milestones—her daily life here looks a little different. Without blood-related family nearby, she has built something just as meaningful: her own "adopted" family.

Through Meals on Wheels, Wanda has formed lasting bonds with the volunteers who visit her regularly. Some lend a helping hand, others share a laugh, but all bring connection. "I have really good Meals on Wheels," she says proudly.

For Wanda, it's more than a meal—it's friendship, care, and the reassurance that she is seen, valued, and never alone.



A Legacy of Care

For Susan, supporting Meals on Wheels isn't something she discovered—it's something she's lived her entire life.

Growing up in the 1960s, she watched her mother advocate for community care, helping secure support for programs that would later shape services like Meals on Wheels. "This is just what we did," Susan shared while delivering meals in Waxahachie. That early example stayed with her.

Over the years, Susan has served through the Red Cross, disaster response, and countless local efforts. Now, she continues that legacy by giving and showing up—delivering meals, meeting clients, and ensuring neighbors are not forgotten.

During one delivery, she reflected on what matters most: "It's not just the meal. It's knowing someone is checking on them...that they're important."

For Susan, dignity isn't an idea—it's action. And through her generosity, more seniors are able to remain independent, cared for, and seen.

We Need Your Help!

Volunteers are the heart of Meals on Wheels. In just an hour, you can deliver more than a meal, you can bring a smile, a friendly visit, and a moment of connection to a senior in our community.

Join us and help make sure our neighbors feel cared for, nourished, and never alone.

Volunteer Today!



We're excited to share a new partnership with BJ's Wholesale Club—and it's an easy way for you to support Meals on Wheels North Central Texas while saving on everyday essentials.

Through BJ's Club for a Cause program, every new membership or renewal using this QR Code helps generate funding for our mission to serve senior neighbors across Johnson, Ellis, and Navarro counties.



Waxahachie Location Only
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