

SPRING/SUMMER 2019

A NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS OF MEALS ON WHEELS SAN FRANCISCO

ANTOINETTE KEEPS A POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON LIFE *by Jim Oswald*

Antoinette greets me from the third floor landing of her Visitacion Valley apartment that she's lived in for the past 20 years. I look up at her from the sidewalk as she says hello and beckons for me to enter the complex.

"There are too many stairs for me; I'll throw the keys down to you," she explains.

Antoinette, who is from Holland, is 69-years-young and uses a cane to get around. She has a rich, Dutch accent, and is dressed in a bright red dress and gray sweatshirt jacket — perfect for warding off the day's chill.

She came to the U.S. in 1977 and landed in New York working at a brokerage firm on Wall Street. By 1980, Antoinette wanted a change of scenery so she travelled to San Francisco where she would eventually meet her husband, a Vietnam era veteran who suffered from PTSD. He and Antoinette raised three children together.



Antoinette attended San Francisco City College and studied court reporting which opened the doors for her to work as a note taker for the City and County of San Francisco. Despite the rigors of work and school, she continued to provide for her kids and her husband.

In 2016, life changed dramatically for Antoinette and her family. She was diagnosed with lung cancer and her husband suffered a stroke which forced her to make the hard decision to

move her husband to an assisted living facility where he could receive the care he needed. He passed away in May of 2018. Through it all, the loss of her husband, grown-up kids that left the nest, and now her battle with cancer, she still has a positive outlook on life.

Antoinette became a Meals on Wheels client in 2016 and says the service has helped her stay healthy by providing her with food that agrees with her stomach, even when she isn't feeling well after a chemo treatment.

"As a lung cancer patient, I have struggles, but I hope to overcome and live a long life," she explains with optimism and a big smile. Antoinette says that she likes when people make something of themselves. "Be all you can be. Even if you're a bum, you can be the best bum there is."

Visit mowsf.org/blog to read the latest stories by Meals on Wheels San Francisco.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

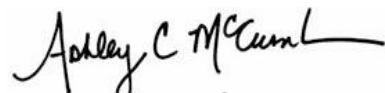
Not a single day goes by when I do not smile with joy after hearing wonderful stories about senior neighbors in our Meals on Wheels San Francisco community — including the recent 100th birthday celebration of one of our senior recipients, or the heartfelt delivery of meals, smiles, and sharing of stories between our elected city officials and clients during March for Meals. These stories, along with healthy exercise tips, and CalFresh benefits news can all be found in this issue of *Nourish*.

While there's certainly good news to go around, not everything is rosy for seniors trying to make ends meet while living in San Francisco. The high cost of living and lack of financial resources forces many to make hard choices between paying the bills or having a good, healthy meal. Meals on Wheels needs to plan for the future so that we can continue to provide nutritious meals, wellness checks, and a friendly visitor to homebound and financially strapped seniors in need. No senior should go hungry or be isolated in one of the richest cities in the world.

That is why we are really excited about the next two years as we continue our 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign to build a much bigger kitchen and production facility just minutes away from our headquarters in the Bayview. The new kitchen, which we plan to begin constructing later this year, will more than double our capacity to produce meals (currently at approximately 8,000 meals a day,) allow us to be even more efficient with our resources, and assure we'll be able to provide meals and services quickly for new clients.

Next year, we'll celebrate 50 years of being an integral part of your lives and the community we share together, and we'll do so with a new kitchen! Thank you for allowing us the privilege to serve you today, and for another 50 years.

With gratitude,



Ashley C. McCumber
CEO/Executive Director



OUR MISSION:

Meals on Wheels provides a network of services that allow seniors to live in their homes with dignity and independence for as long as possible.

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EXERCISE AND LONGEVITY

YOUR EXERCISE HABITS AND WHAT THEY MIGHT SAY ABOUT YOUR LONGEVITY

by Diane Luce, RDN



Even if you have not exercised in recent years — it's not too late! A new study published this March in *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, finds that people who start to exercise in midlife, even if they have not exercised in years, can quickly gain most of the longevity benefits of exercise.

However, the reverse is also true. If you stop exercising, then the benefits quickly disappear. It makes no difference even if you were a champion athlete in high school — if you have not exercised in decades then those health benefits will have been lost.

The study looked at 315,059 men and women who were between the ages of 50–71 years at the time of enrollment. Initially, the focus was on intentional exercise, but then activities like house and yard work were included as exercise.



It was no surprise that the study found that participants who had led sedentary lives were more likely to have died younger — most commonly from heart disease. When, compared to participants who had exercised regularly for a few hours per week, the more active group were 30–35% less likely to have died from any cause, plus they were 40% less likely to have died from heart disease as seen in the inactive group.

It was particularly heartening to see that the men and women who had begun exercising again for a few hours a week after a 10–20-year break, also had the same “protection” against premature death as the group who had always exercised.

The encouraging message is that it is never too late to benefit from exercise that is appropriate for your age and health status.

For example, a recent story about Jessica Slaughter, an 86-year-old woman from St. Louis who lost 120 pounds by **walking** and by **eating** healthier food. In her 70s,

this motivated woman walked 3,000 steps every day around her one-bedroom apartment to lose weight. When interviewed, Ms. Slaughter said “Even as a kid in Mississippi, I was always the fattest kid in the class. I got teased a lot and I didn't know how to stop eating fried chicken, bacon, eggs, and desserts like cakes and pies.”



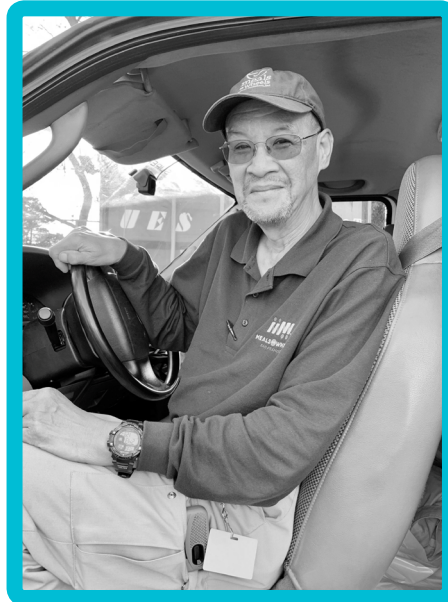
With her new lifestyle changes, Ms. Slaughter even became a vegan when it was recommended. She was borderline diabetic and now she is the “healthiest she has ever been.” Ms. Slaughter says that she is free of all that and knows that the benefits are as a result of how she eats and exercises. She reflects and says, “I just want seniors to know just because you've gotten to a certain age, you don't have to stop living... there's a better way of life if you choose.”

It is always recommended that before you begin an exercise regimen, you check with your doctor.

ROLAND LEE

MEALS ON WHEELS DRIVER ROLAND YEE RETIRES AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

You may recognize this man as your friendly meal delivery driver. During the past 29 years on staff, Meals on Wheels driver Roland Yee has delivered more than one million meals to program beneficiaries. His routes over the years took him to almost every neighborhood in San Francisco including the Tenderloin and Chinatown, and recently, even to some of SF's new Navigation Centers helping to feed the homeless as part of a partnership between MOWSF and the City.



Roland, who recently turned 68, retired in February this

year. During his time on staff, he delivered more than just meals and food — he made the days brighter for many seniors who had no family to call their own. His attention to the little things that matter that make people feel appreciated and special, is what truly makes his contribution to the organization and the community at large so valuable. We wish him and his wife well on their new adventures. **You can read more about Roland at: mowsf.org/roland**

EATING WELL ON A BUDGET MAY GET EASIER FOR SENIORS

A law that takes effect June 1 this year may affect you. If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) you will be able to apply for CalFresh

to receive food stamps (now called CalFresh.) CalFresh is a free nutrition assistance program for low-income individuals and families.

much as \$192 per month to spend on groceries.

Approximately 74 percent of Meals on Wheels clients living in San Francisco live at or below the Federal Poverty Level making their decision between purchasing healthy food or paying their bills a difficult choice. CalFresh may provide some extra relief.

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and possibly receive extra money for your groceries.

Since 1974, low-income Californians who qualified for SSI have not been able

In San Francisco, the law will allow nearly 40,000 elderly and disabled SSI recipients to apply for benefits. Those who qualify may be eligible to receive as

Learn more by calling the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank at (415) 549-7021 to see if you qualify or to apply.

MARCH FOR MEALS

SF COMMUNITY SUPPORTS SENIORS DURING MARCH FOR MEALS

On March 21, more than 40 Meals on Wheels San Francisco volunteers from the tech community delivered 150 disaster preparedness kits to homebound seniors as part of the 17th Annual March for Meals — the annual, nationwide senior hunger and isolation awareness campaign that celebrates the passage of the Older Americans Act signed by president Nixon on March 22, 1972.



Constanza Hevia H.

Tech companies Eventbrite, Google, Twitter, Uber, SVB, Zendesk, and others made the deliveries in Mid-Market where many MOWSF recipients live. We were also honored to receive a City Proclamation signed by Mayor London Breed announcing March 21, 2019, March for Meals Day in San Francisco and recognizing our nearly 50 years of service to the senior community in the City.



Kushal Kapoor

Mayor London Breed visits Mrs. Lee

During the month-long campaign, SF District Supervisors Mar, Yee, Mandelman, Brown, Fewer, Walton, Peskin, and Safai, as well as Mayor Breed, took the time to meet their fellow neighbors by

delivering meals, sharing some laughs, and raising awareness around the growing population of seniors who are food insecure. Read more about March for Meals at: bit.ly/march-for-meals



Supervisor Vallie Brown visits Raymond Guiducci



Supervisor Gordon Mar visits Shui Tam

Constanza Hevia H.



Supervisor Norman Yee visits Rosa Witkower



Supervisor Rafael Mandelman visits Ceralina Hafalia

Constanza Hevia H.

STAFF UPDATE

MEET ALEX AND LOIS — TWO MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIAL WORK TEAM

What is a favorite client moment you've recently experienced?

Alex: I love meeting people from so many different walks of life and backgrounds, it's what truly makes up the Meals on Wheels community.

I recently had an initial client who was a bit nervous for the home visit due to her mental health



conditions. She was very kind and spoke rapidly due to nervousness. Once

we built a rapport, we were able to engage in a genuine conversation where she felt comfortable to open up. At the end of the visit she gave me a coin called a "Kindness Token". She said she wanted to give it to me because I showed her kindness and understanding which she hasn't received in a long time. As I held back tears, I thanked her tremendously for the coin and expressed how much it meant to me to have connected with her and be able to support her that day. Moments like these are great reminders of the importance of my social worker position.

Lois: When visiting with a client for the first time, it's satisfying to hear when the meals are appreciated and how MOW is helping to dissolve some stresses in the client's life. For example, I visited a client for her annual visit and assessment. We meet

every year for the past three years in mostly a formal setting. This year's visit was different though — it was much more relaxed, and the client and her family member were more at ease. Matter



of fact, she even offered me coffee and cookies — more like a tea time visit than an assessment. Upon her request, I also helped her write up a driver compliment card and we had a lovely chat about her improving health, thanks to Meals on Wheels, and her fond memories of gardening. It was truly a warm moment shared between two friends who hadn't seen each other in a while.

At the end of the visit she gave me a coin called a "Kindness Token". She said she wanted to give it to me because I showed her kindness and understanding which she hasn't received in a long time. — **Alex**

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP — EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY *by Diane Luce, RDN*

According to the National Institute on Aging, physical activity is an important part of healthy aging. Combining physical activity with good nutrition may improve your quality of life, improve brain function, reduce stress, and even increase longevity.

To begin, be sure to wear comfortable shoes, make an exercise plan, and make it a part of your daily routine. Walk when doing errands, rake and sweep in and around your yard, lift weights out of household items (cans of food and water bottles), walk in your neighborhood or local parks, take an exercise class at your local senior center. Try to include a variety of exercises that include a combination of the four groups listed below.

Endurance Exercises

increases your breathing and heart rate, which keeps your heart, lungs, and circulatory system healthy, and improves your overall fitness and endurance. Exercises include yard work, raking or brushing leaves, dancing, and brisk walking.



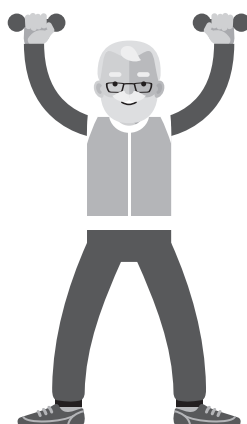
Balance Exercises

help to prevent falls. Many lower body strength exercises will also improve your balance. Exercises include standing on one foot (stand by an upright chair for safety), heel-to-toe walking, and Tai Chi.



Strength Exercises

help make your muscles stronger and may help you stay independent to perform daily activities such as climbing stairs, carrying groceries, and standing up from a seated position. Exercises include using resistance bands, lifting weights, and using your own body weight.



Flexibility Exercises

stretching your muscles can help your body stay limber. Being flexible gives you more freedom of movement for other exercises as well as for your everyday activities like getting dressed. Exercises include shoulder and upper arm stretches, calf stretches, and yoga.



You may have health conditions that affect your ability to be active, so it is recommended that you check with your doctor about exercises that best suit you and how they may impact medications that you take.

Planned Giving

Remember Meals on Wheels in your legacy planning through:

- A will or trust
- Retirement plans, insurance policies, and bank investment accounts
- Charitable gift annuities & charitable remainder trusts

To make a legacy gift, call (415) 343-1267

NOURISHING THE WHOLE PERSON

mowsf.org



CENTENNIAL SENIOR SALUTE!

We wish John, a Meals on Wheels recipient, a Happy 100th Birthday! His daughter tells us he spent the day at the Bayview Senior Center where staff threw a party for him. Former SF Mayor Willie Brown even made a surprise appearance to celebrate with him. Later that night, John and his daughter enjoyed dinner at The House of Prime Rib, where the staff made it clear that “when you turn 100, your meal is free!” **Read more stories at mowsf.org/blog**

