



Nourish

May 2016



A GIANT Surprise

The sky was a perfect hue of blue above a raucous crowd of 42,000 fans, packed in their seats at AT&T Park for the San Francisco Giants season opener on April 7, 2016.

By the end of the second inning, the Giants had already dropped two runs to their arch rivals, the dreaded Dodgers. Despite the early deficit, the mood was festive as the crowd brimmed with excitement for an even year of Giants baseball.

For Consuelo, a recipient of home delivered groceries from Meals On Wheels of San Francisco (MOWSF), attending the Giants season opener was a long-established tradition in her life. She has been to all but four since she immigrated to San Francisco from Cuba in 1962.

Yet this particular opening day would prove to be one that Consuelo would never forget.

Moments after the end of the second inning, photos of Consuelo and her favorite player — Orlando Cepeda — splashed onto the gigantic scoreboard. The ball park camera zoomed in on Consuelo,



Consuelo talking Giants baseball with Hall-of-Famer Orlando Cepeda



Pictured left to right: Conor (MOWSF Volunteer), Consuelo, Hall-of-Famer Orlando Cepeda, and Gustavo Lopez, MOWSF Staff

relishing the grandeur of the moment. At the same time, Giants announcer Renel Brooks-Moon revealed an unforgettable encounter between Consuelo and Orlando that had happened a few weeks earlier. It was the tail end of a GIANT surprise and the beginning of a beautiful and unlikely friendship between Consuelo and Hall-of-Famer Orlando Cepeda.

Consuelo, a resident of a senior living complex run by Mercy Housing — just up river from AT&T Park — has received groceries from Meals On Wheels since 2012. Right around the same time, Conor, a young, energetic software engineer, started as a volunteer for our home-delivered grocery program. The two became fast friends, in part because of their mutual love of the Giants.

With Conor's help, Consuelo's story made its way to the office of the Giants Community Relations department. From there, the club quickly mobilized Orlando Cepeda, a resident of Fairfield, CA, to

masquerade as a driver for Meals On Wheels, and surprise Consuelo with her weekly delivery of groceries.

Once the shock of his visit subsided, a tearful Consuelo recounted the years she'd been a fan, and the two reminisced about growing up in Cuba (Consuelo) and Puerto Rico (Orlando). They became fast friends, and made plans to meet for lunch and even watch some games together; an incredible offering for a woman who had used her limited income to buy tickets for other residents of her senior center.

One might argue the same karma that brought Consuelo and Orlando together inspired an electric comeback on Opening Day. In the 5th inning, the Giants started swinging for the fences and notched a big win against the Dodgers.

On this Opening Day, Consuelo and her team proved to the world, once again, that sometimes life offers a GIANT payback to those who pay it forward!

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

It is rare that I look back on two months with a greater sense of pride and accomplishment than I do in this edition of our Nourish newsletter.

In March and April, our community, our city, and our country came together to rally for homebound seniors in a way I haven't seen for quite some time. From the halls of Congress in Washington, DC, to every corner of San Francisco, people like you championed our cause to provide seniors the nourishment and support they need to live independent and dignified lives.

On a national level, the United States Congress and Senate voted to maintain funding for the Older Americans Act (enhanced in March of 1972 by President Nixon), a key piece of legislation that provides life-sustaining support for seniors across the country.

Here in San Francisco, we honored this historical achievement by inviting elected officials and local celebrities to deliver a meal with us, and join us for our March for Meals campaign to draw critical attention to the plight of homebound seniors. Mayor Ed Lee, Police Chief Greg Suhr, Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White, Giants Hall-of-Famer Orlando Cepeda, renowned chef Nancy Oakes of Boulevard and Prospect restaurants, and every district supervisor of San Francisco participated in this campaign.

Beyond March for Meals, we celebrated our 29th Annual Star Chefs & Vintners Gala on April 17. This epicurean extravaganza brings together hundreds of the region's best chefs, vintners, and sommeliers. I am very proud to report we raised an astounding \$3.3 million, breaking an all-time record for this event! The funds raised from this one evening will cover the cost to prepare and deliver over 650,000 meals.

Lastly, none of these lofty goals could be accomplished without the dedicated support of our faithful volunteers. In this edition of Nourish, you'll read about longtime volunteer Richard, whose service to our seniors goes far beyond just 'meals' and 'wheels.'

This has been a truly exciting season for us, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support. We couldn't do this work without you. Together, we deliver!

Sincerely,



Ashley C. McCumber
CEO/Executive Director



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Nourish is the official newsletter of
Meals On Wheels of San Francisco.

Meals On Wheels Core Services

- **Delivery of 14 Meals Per Week**
- **Safety Checks by Delivery Drivers**
- **Nutrition Education and Counseling**
- **Social Work and Case Management**
- **Support for Client Household Needs**
- **Volunteers to Assist Clients**



The 29th Annual Star Chefs & Vintners Gala raises record-breaking \$3.3 million

Meals On Wheels of San Francisco (MOWSF) raised an astounding \$3.3 million at this year's Gala. Generous donors raised funds that will provide 650,000 meals to homebound seniors in every neighborhood of San Francisco.

The Gala took place on April 17 at Fort Mason Center. Chef Nancy Oakes of Boulevard and Prospect restaurants returned for the 13th year as Gala Chair, recruiting 200 of the best chefs and vintners in the region to donate their time and talent to this fabulous event.

MOWSF would like to thank our Sponsors, Star Chefs, Stellar Vintners, Sommeliers, Patrons, Board and Honorary Board, the Gala Committees and dedicated Gala volunteers for their incredible support to make this event a smashing success.

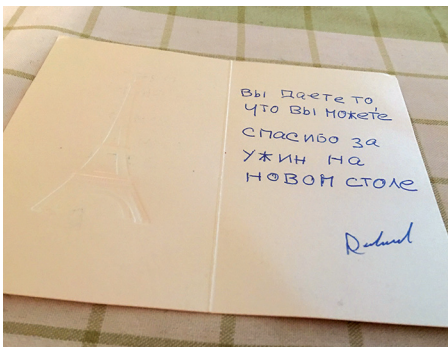
Richard the Lionheart

It was a beautiful day when Richard Levitan knocked on the door of a Meals On Wheels of San Francisco client, toolbox in hand. He was there to set up a table — a simple table — something Marta, the client, had long been living without.

When the door opened, Richard was greeted in Russian by a lovely older woman, her youthful features belying her 87 years. She spoke no English, and her only glimpse into the outside world was through her caretaker and translator who spent two hours with her each afternoon. Richard — affable as can be — entered her warm home, erected her missing table, and waited for a response.

And the response that came was marvelous.

Marta, so elated, so *grateful* to finally have a table at which to eat, insisted on preparing a meal for Richard. That same evening, Richard and Marta christened her new table by sharing a Russian feast for two.



Richard's thank-you note to Marta

Later that night, Richard went home to his wife and told her about his extraordinary day. Wanting to thank Marta formally, but knowing that she wouldn't be able to read English, he and his wife decided to thank her in Russian. Richard wrote out his thank you note, and his wife, using Google Translate, carefully transcribed the note into Cyrillic.

When Marta received Richard's note in the mail, she was brought to tears. Lara,



Richard, ready for a morning of grocery delivery

Marta's social worker, says that she has never seen her so happy. "It was so sweet! She called him 'Richard the Lionheart.'"

When Richard started as a volunteer in our Client Needs Program in January of 2011, he was the perfect guy for the job.

Before long, Richard was doing so much more than helping clients around the house — he signed on to be one of our Home Delivered Grocery volunteer drivers, delivering weekly bags of fresh fruit, vegetables, and dairy. It's been a privilege, he says, "getting a glimpse

"I feel a connection with each client regardless of what I do, or how long."

A semi-retired electrician and contractor, he is as handy as they come, making him the ideal volunteer to deliver microwaves and refrigerators, and help clients with everything from moving furniture around to changing a light bulb.

A San Francisco native, Richard has connected with Meals On Wheels' clients from the beginning. Reflecting on his experience with Marta, he says, "It was a simple thing to do, but she was so happy." And that is the foundation of altruism, Richard has found — the small, simple things we can do to make others so very happy. "I feel a connection with each client regardless of what I do, how often I do it, or how long."

of people who are limited for some reason but somehow keep going. I get to see all this that you don't usually see except when you deliver groceries." Richard says the clients are "inspiring," exhibiting "real courage, strength, resilience, dignity, and humility to ask and accept help."

When asked what he enjoys most about volunteering, Richard says that he is grateful to be given the opportunity to "share a part of life as it unfolds." It is certainly clear that these moments Richard shares with our seniors are as impactful for him as they are for the clients. For this, we at Meals On Wheels are eternally grateful, and — yes — inspired.

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Nourishing the Whole Person Since 1970
www.mowsf.org





March for Meals


This past March, Meals On Wheels of San Francisco joined forces with Meals On Wheels America to honor the historic achievement of the Older Americans Act, amended and signed by President Nixon on March 22, 1972. This legislative accomplishment paved the way for Meals On Wheels as we know it today. At the end of April last month, the United States House and Senate passed a bill reauthorizing the Older Americans Act, which President Obama signed on April 19.

Here in San Francisco, we were honored to include the following dignitaries and community champions in our March for Meals celebration: State Senator Mark Leno; Mayor Ed Lee; every district supervisor; Nancy Oakes, Chef & Owner of Boulevard and Prospect restaurants; Mikkel Svane, CEO of the booming mid-market tech company Zendesk; and Orlando Cepeda, the San Francisco Giants slugger and Hall-of-Famer. Be sure to visit our website (www.mowsf.org) to see a complete photo album of this campaign.

Together, we March for Meals so no senior is forgotten.

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