

## MULTI-LINGUAL SENIOR SPARKLES WITH JOY!

“I was born in the Philippines, but my parents are originally from Canton (Guangzhou), China,” Carmen recently reflected. She was the sixth of ten children. Education was important to her parents and became essential to her. “When we were very young, at the age of five,” Carmen reflected, “my parents said, ‘you have to go and learn English; it will help you.’”

That simple act of learning another language would open worlds of opportunities for Carmen.

At six, she already understood two languages, Chinese and Cantonese. Carmen learned English quickly. She had a knack for it. So, she kept going, learning Bhutanese, Mandarin, Tagalog and a little bit of Japanese.

She married Juanito in 1960; they had been college classmates in the Philippines. He studied Chemical Engineering, and she was in the Business Administration department. With two young children, she and Juanito moved to Guam, a US territory. She



was a step closer to fulfilling her dream of moving to the United States. Those first few months were challenging. She took a job in a bakery, but the ovens were so hot that she fainted. Carmen was told to rest at home for two months.

The experience was formative. Carmen became even more determined to provide a better life for her family. “After two months, I decided I had to be strong enough. Otherwise, I cannot live in the United States,” she said.

Almost defiantly — she came roaring back, taking a second

job while continuing to maintain a household, cooking meals every day and sending her children off to school. For five years, she slept three and a half hours each night.

“I am tough,” she said in a massive understatement.

In Guam, she worked in the tourism industry — of course, it helped that she spoke so many languages. As a result, she became very good at talking with customers. Anyone who has worked with customers will tell you that it can be challenging. But speaking with Carmen, she clearly handled the thorniest situations with her trademarked charm. She worked hard and passed her US Citizenship Exam. A devout Christian, she prayed and prayed and studied and studied. And passed her exam.

When she arrived in San Francisco, she got a job in Fisherman’s Wharf, where she continued to serve customers with class and ease. Carmen and Juanito raised their children and

*(Story continues on page 3)*

## FAREWELL TO ASHLEY McCUMBER

# FAREWELL TO CEO ASHLEY McCUMBER



During October, staff, volunteers, donors, city leaders, and community members gathered together to wish **Ashley McCumber, CEO of Meals on Wheels San Francisco**, a fond farewell as he heads back East.

For the past 15 years, he has transformed our organization from a \$4.5 million operation serving 1,200 older adults per day and delivering 523,000 meals a year, into a \$23 million operation serving almost 4,000 seniors daily and delivering more than 2.2 million meals annually.

In 2016, Ashley led a team to launch our **50th Anniversary Capital Campaign** raising more than \$41 million to build one of the **biggest industrial kitchens on the West Coast**. Today, our kitchen, which was built and opened during the pandemic, now produces between 10,000–13,000 meals daily, nearly doubling our old kitchen's capacity from just a few years ago.

We thank Ashley for his dedication to the Meals on Wheels mission, and for continuing to be a champion for older adults in need in San Francisco and across the country.

## NOW SERVING NORTHERN SAN MATEO COUNTY!

We are thrilled to announce that we've expanded our home-delivered meals for seniors in need into Northern San Mateo County! If you or someone you know are looking for services and live in South San Francisco, Colma, Daly City, Brisbane, or San Bruno, you may qualify for meals! Find out by giving us a call at 415-920-1111.

### 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.

### Contact Meals on Wheels San Francisco:

**Office Phone:** (415) 920-1111

**Fax:** (415) 920-2718

**Web Site:** [www.mowsf.org](http://www.mowsf.org)

**Email:** [info@mowsf.org](mailto:info@mowsf.org)

## MULTI-LINGUAL SENIOR SPARKLES WITH JOY!

*(Continued from page 1)*

became empty nesters. They finally had some free time for the first time in their lives! So they dove into a new hobby, ballroom dancing. They quickly turned their hobby into community service. They hosted senior dances at Pier 39. Carmen would cook noodles and desserts for 250 people, and her husband would spin the music. The proceeds benefited the local senior center.

### A Helping Hand

Nowadays, Carmen lives alone in her home in the Sunset. She and Juanito were married for about 57 years. Unfortunately, Juanito dealt with health issues and passed away five years ago.

She has macular degeneration and glaucoma simultaneously in both eyes, rendering her legally blind. Her condition made it difficult to get around and tough to cook.



"I just threw everything into a pot," she remembered.

Describing herself as shy, Carmen didn't want to ask for help. But she found her way to a senior center in West Portal. After a lifetime of hard work and serving others, she convinced herself to be strong enough to get help. A social worker at the Senior Center helped her get

caregiving services and sign up for Meals on Wheels.

Her vision isn't what it used to be, so she now gets a little help with cleaning and caregiving. Her daughter helps out when she can, but she is currently in treatment for cancer, which makes helping out difficult.

Carmen began receiving Home Delivered Meals in March 2020 as the pandemic began. Having some help, she's been able to join her church's choir. She also loves listening to music.

Carmen is grateful for Meals on Wheels. "The food is so good," she says as she tends to one of the multiple orchids on a beautiful table just below her living room window.

"I'm really very thankful for you. And I am very pleased with Meals on Wheels." She continued, "I cannot thank you enough. It's so touching. I've never met such kind people!"

## SAN FRANCISCO LIBRARY

Trouble getting to a library? Let the library come to you! Any California resident can get a San Francisco Public Library card, and everything is free:

- If you are a resident of San Francisco with a long-term or permanent disability, and unable to come into the library and/or to carry checked-out items home, you can receive and return physical materials by mail (postage paid by the library). For more info, visit [on.sfpl.org/LBM](https://on.sfpl.org/LBM); email [TalkingBooks@sfpl.org](mailto:TalkingBooks@sfpl.org); or call (415) 437-4835.



*San Francisco Public Library*

## WORLD DIABETES DAY

# WORLD DIABETES DAY AND THE GREAT PUMPKIN SEASON

by Carolyn Kamian

Annually across the globe, World Diabetes Day (WDD) is acknowledged, with this year's observance on November 14. This annual day strives to bring awareness to the increased prevalence of diabetes around the world. Similarly, the American Diabetes Association has its own diabetes awareness campaign during the month of November. A 2019 statistical analysis indicated that 37.3 million Americans or 11.3% of the US population are living with diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

The 2022-2023 theme for WDD is 'Education to Protect Tomorrow.' According to their website, "activities will focus on highlighting the need for better access to quality diabetes education for health professionals and people living with diabetes."<sup>2</sup> Organizations and health providers are working to make education resources more accessible to patients with diabetes, people who may want to learn more, or those who wish to assess their risk for developing diabetes. Online resources are available on the American Diabetes Association website, including risk assessments, courses, recipes, and general information about diabetes management. Your doctor can assess your

health history and run simple tests such as fasting blood glucose or hemoglobin A1C as first steps to screening you for diabetes risk.

Of significant note, this year marks 100 years since the first successful insulin injection in patients.<sup>3</sup> Insulin is a hormone critical for managing diabetes as it regulates blood sugar. In type 1 diabetes, insulin is not produced or secreted by the pancreas, so insulin injections are necessary to regulate your blood sugar. In type 2 diabetes, the pancreas secretes insulin, but it is not utilized properly and can cause elevated blood sugar levels. Type 2 diabetes may not always require insulin injections as there are medications and lifestyle management steps that can be taken first to reduce blood sugar. Blood sugar management is important as long-term, uncontrolled blood sugar levels can lead to cardiovascular disease, nerve and kidney damage, reduced vision, and more.<sup>4</sup>

A common misconception with a new diabetes diagnosis is that drastic dietary changes must be made to see improvements in blood sugar levels, or that our favorite foods must be

removed completely from our diets. The American Diabetes Association has created a helpful tool called the Diabetes Plate Method<sup>5</sup> (see image to right) that can assist with planning meals and portions using a standard dinner plate and serves as an initial starting place when making dietary adjustments. Consider filling  $\frac{1}{2}$  your plate with non-starchy vegetables,  $\frac{1}{4}$  with lean protein, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  with carbohydrate foods, and a glass of water or low-calorie beverages. This tool serves as a great starting place for building a balanced meal. Note that each person is unique in their estimated nutrition needs, and your physician or a registered dietitian can assist in determining the proper amount of carbohydrates for you.

Access online resources through the American Diabetes Association or your healthcare provider to learn more about the type of diabetes, prevention measures, and management strategies.

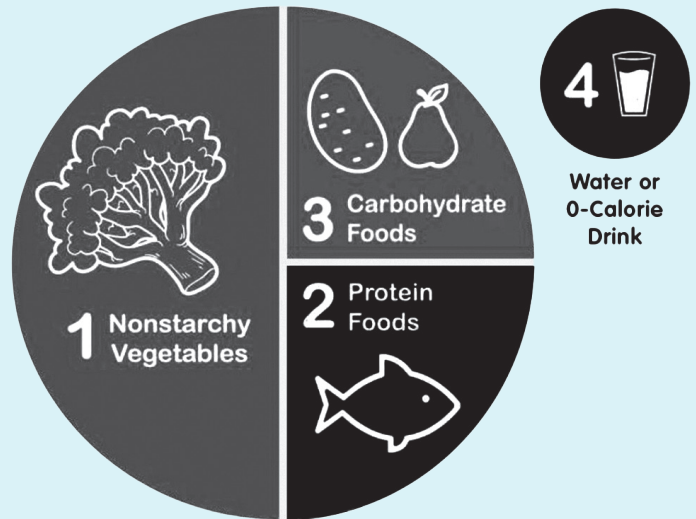
As a Meals on Wheels client, also consider reaching out to our Nutrition Department at (415) 920-1111 to speak to a registered dietitian regarding your questions. Nutrition screenings and counseling are included in our meal program.



## THE GREAT PUMPKIN SEASON

## Did you know?

**Fiber** is a key player in our diet when it comes to managing blood sugar. Fiber slows down the digestion of food and prevents blood sugar from rising too quickly. Reducing carbohydrate (sugar) intake is beneficial for diabetes management. Fiber also keeps you regular and can help reduce LDL (“bad”) cholesterol. In addition to being a good source of fiber, it has a variety of vitamins and minerals that play a role in immunity and eye, skin, and heart health.<sup>6</sup> As we’re approaching the Fall holiday season, consider adding some fiber-rich pumpkin to your holiday treats!

PUMPKIN NUTRITION FACTS<sup>6</sup>

- Immunity: Vitamin C and Vitamin A
- Eye health: beta carotene
- Skin health: beta carotene, Vitamin C, Vitamin E
- Heart health: fiber (binds cholesterol), potassium

One cup (245 grams) of canned pumpkin provide:

- Calories: 137
- Protein: 3 grams
- Fat: 7 grams
- Carbs: 19 grams
- Fiber: 7 grams
- Vitamin A: 209% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Vitamin K: 37% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Copper: 28% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Vitamin E: 22% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Iron: 18% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Magnesium: 13% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Riboflavin: 10% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Vitamin B6: 10 % of the Daily Value (DV)
- Vitamin C: 10% of the Daily Value (DV)
- Potassium: 10% of the Daily Value (DV)

## Sources:

1. [https://diabetes.org/about-us/statistics/about-diabetes#:~:text=Diagnosed%20and%20undiagnosed%3A%20of%20the,seniors%20\(diagnosed%20and%20undiagnosed\)](https://diabetes.org/about-us/statistics/about-diabetes#:~:text=Diagnosed%20and%20undiagnosed%3A%20of%20the,seniors%20(diagnosed%20and%20undiagnosed))
2. <https://worldiddiabetesday.org/about/theme/>
3. <https://insulinat100.org/a-history-of-diabetes/>
4. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetes/symptoms-causes/syc-20371444>
5. <https://www.diabetesfoodhub.org/articles/what-is-the-diabetes-plate-method.html>
6. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/pumpkin-nutrition-review>

## JOE AND JOEY

# A FATHER AND SON DYNAMIC VOLUNTEER DUO!

Buying groceries. It's routine. But sometimes, the errand is more than just getting bread and toothpaste. Sometimes it changes lives. That's the case with father and son team Joe and Joey, volunteers in the Meals on Wheels San Francisco Grocery Shopper program.

"It doesn't just help her," Joe said of Theresa, a Meals on Wheels recipient who they've been delivering groceries to for nearly a year. "We feel our lives are more meaningful."

Theresa, lives close to Joe and Joey. Theresa's husband passed away early in her two sons' lives. So, she raised their kids on her own — and sent them off to Harvard. Now, she needs a helping hand from time to time.

The father/son team pick up her favorite items like cheese, tomatoes, avocados, and bakery items each week. Working together has helped Joe and Joey improve their communication and family bond.

Like all of us, Theresa has preferences that Joe and Joey have noticed. Joe knows what to do when Theresa's favored brand of orange juice is not in stock. They also know exactly how she likes her bananas. These might seem



like minor details, but we all have these preferences.

She also collects coupons. So, they arranged a way to get her coupons mid-week for their Saturday shopping. Joe has become a coupon clipper himself recently!

Over the past half-year, their relationship has blossomed. They've become friends! Now, Joe and Joey help around the house when they can — Joey even helped her fix a garden hose. They also pick up personal care items, like eye drops, when she needs them.

A high school student and a volunteer, Joey is all in.

"I thought it was a great thing to do," he said. "It was on the more relaxed side and not a big commitment." He added, "Meeting Theresa

was great! She was extremely nice, and I enjoy talking to her. The first experience definitely made me more comfortable with delivering later on."

It also has been a learning experience. Joey continued, "I find it really interesting to listen to her point of view because I have never really talked to people from her generation before."

Joe agrees. "It's more than help; it's about making a connection with someone in your community."

Joe works at the University of California San Francisco in genetic testing. For fun, he plays soccer and bridge. He's gotten the whole family involved in the card game, including Joey. They play in the National Bridge Tournament as a team. He loves volunteering because he gets a different kind of interaction than he does at work.

Joey also volunteers with the robotics team at his high school. That usually means helping at Lego robotics events for kids and bringing the robots they make to events.

Volunteering with his son delights Joe. "It is a great father/son activity! It is a wonderful connection."

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE MEAL DELIVERY AT A TIME

*Every day, many meal delivery drivers for our organization get up at the crack of dawn to begin their day. They pack and load up hundreds of pounds of bagged meals daily and navigate city streets to ensure that every homebound senior on their delivery route receives their meals. Ken Leaf is one such colleague and shared this wonderful story and photo essay highlighting his “day in a life” as a Meals on Wheels driver.*

My name is Ken and I work as a delivery person for Meals on Wheels San Francisco. I have been working here for just over a year now. My workday starts at 7:00 am but I often leave for work early before the sun even rises. I enjoy the city in these early hours and I often take the long way for some quiet time before my work day starts. I often bring my camera with me to capture images of the city in the early morning light.



much more about the city than I could have imagined.

I also find many of the clients, case managers, receptionists, and security people that I interact with daily are usually friendly and helpful. The work is not always smooth sailing but I take comfort in knowing that my work is helping them. Some of the clients that I deliver to regularly don't have a lot of contact with many people. I see how happy and excited some of them are when I arrive with their meals. When I am able to I will spend a few minutes with them and chat. I can see that a little human contact can make a big difference in their day.



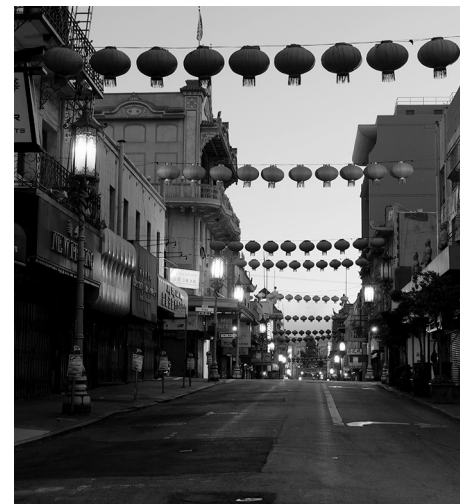
sheets for the day. This brief gathering with these people is one of my favorite times in my work day.

Our work does have challenges. Navigating traffic and parking downtown can be stressful and the work is at times quite physical. My fellow drivers share these experiences with me. They motivate me and are usually cheerful.



I work with a really terrific group of people here. We all meet in the morning to clock in and get our route

I like to be out in the world. Making deliveries to various areas of the City is something that I enjoy. I might start my day in Chinatown and finish in the Mission. I have learned



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**NOURISHING THE WHOLE PERSON**

[mowsf.org](http://mowsf.org)

**Farewell  
Ashley McCumber  
in this issue of  
*Nourish***

**LEAVE A LEGACY**

Did you know you can include Meals on Wheels San Francisco in your will? The legacy gift you leave us today, can help ensure no seniors go hungry or are forgotten tomorrow.

Call us for more details.  
(415) 343-1269.

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