AUGUST 2026

MEALS on WHEELS WESTERN MICHIGAN

# Volunteer NEWS

YOU'RE AN ESSENTIAL PIECE

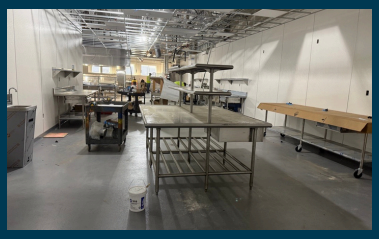
NO SENIOR HUNGRY OR FORGOTTEN

## RENOVATION UPDATE

We're excited to share that our kitchen renovation is in its final stages, and we're getting much closer to the finish line! We can't wait to welcome everyone back and enjoy gathering together again in our refreshed space.

Be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities very soon!







## BLIZZARD BOX DELIVERY DAY: OCTOBER 17

Blizzard Box Delivery Day will be on October 17th. Each fall, we deliver boxes filled with emergency shelf-stable meals to our homebound clients. These “Blizzard Boxes” ensure that even during lake-effect blizzards and black-ice mornings, our seniors will not go hungry. Each client will receive five meals to save in case their normal meal delivery is delayed due to inclement weather.

We need over 100 volunteers to help deliver Blizzard Boxes to over 1,000 clients! Help us plan - details available here: https://vhub.at/blizzardboxday

## HELPING OUR DINING SITES GROW

Did you know that MOWWM provides food for 14 dining sites across Kent and Allegan counties? These dining sites are a great opportunity for seniors to get a hot meal and connect with their neighbors! We are growing this wonderful service. In September, several sites will be hosting a “Bring a Friend” event that gives seniors who have never been to a dining site the opportunity to join, share a meal, and meet new friends. We need volunteers to help with registration at these events. We have regular opportunities for volunteers each week at several dining sites, and we anticipate the need for volunteers will increase in the coming months! Sign up today!

## HELP US CREATE UNFORGETTABLE AUCTION EXPERIENCES

As a valued Meals on Wheels Western Michigan volunteer, you understand that every meal delivered is about so much more than food. This year, you can make an even bigger impact through our Chef's Specialty live auction.

We're looking for unique experiences that guests can't easily purchase on their own, and then we curate packages for bidding at our event. Do you have a vacation home, season tickets, or another special experience you'd be willing to donate? Some ideas include:

- A weekend cottage, lake house stay, or vacation timeshare
- VIP tours or behind the scenes experiences
- A boat cruise, day on the water, fishing trip, or other guided outdoor adventure
- A pair of tickets to your favorite sports team or performing arts venue
- A private chef dinner, cooking class or exclusive dining experiences
- A golf outing at a private club
- Wine tastings or brewery experiences

**Even if you don't have an item to donate yourself, an introduction to a friend, business, or organization that might be willing to contribute would mean so much.**

**These one-of-a-kind experiences help generate excitement during our live auction, raising critical funds so local seniors can continue receiving nutritious meals, wellness checks, and meaningful connections.**

**Please contact Lydia at lvanderhill@mowwm.org or 616-459-3111 ext. 139.**

**Thank you for all you do for older adults in our community!**

## METRO CRUISE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We have been invited to be an official charitable partner of the 28th Street Metro Cruise! Woohoo! This is a fun, family-friendly event in late August. It is an opportunity for us to deepen our relationship with the community, invite new volunteers, and meet seniors/caretakers that could use our services.

We are going to be showing off our new electric van! If you are attending the event, stop by our tent to say hi. The Metro Cruise also asked us to see if any of our volunteers might be interested in helping at the event. See their website for details.

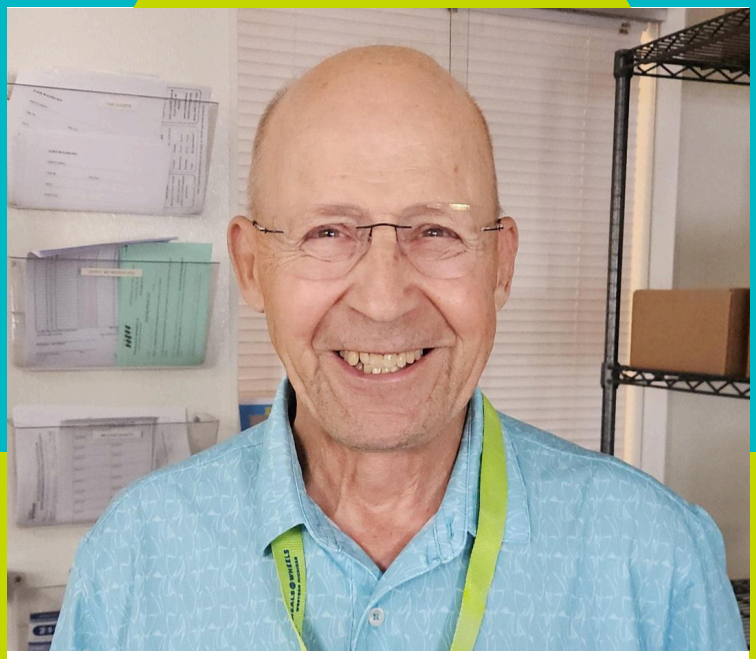



AUGUST 21 @ 9 A.M.

**METRO CRUISE EVENT**

# VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH



MEALS on WHEELS WESTERN MICHIGAN

Larry Bialk

DELIVERY VOLUNTEER

JULY 2026

Larry has been driving with MOWWM for 5 years. Recently, he assisted with our 4th of July Holiday Delivery Day, which can be quite hectic. Check out his shoutout from staff member Stephanie:

**"Larry was already back to the office but went BACK OUT to get a delivery to a client who is an urgent priority but wasn't at home. He was told to deliver to the apartment manager, who wasn't at the front desk. Larry went the extra mile to find someone who worked at the apartment and paged the apartment manager to ensure the meals were delivered. He even had to charm the staff at the apartment to hold on to the meals for the client. I'm sure Larry had plenty to get to today, and it's about 16,000 degrees outside, so getting back out for deliveries is genuinely not pleasant. I super appreciate Larry's commitment to our clients."**

**Thanks, Larry!**

# ANNIVERSARY DATES

- Cal Kooistra, 08-18, Delivery, 2 years
- Mavis and Jim Bottenhorn, 08-23, Delivery, 3 years
- Mary Powers, 08-07, Delivery, 3 years
- Cheri and Daniel Stanton, 08-23, Delivery, 3 years
- Mary Witucki, 08-25, Kitchen, 4 years
- Michael Munch, 08-08, Pantry, 4 years
- Robert Gilman, 08-01, Delivery, 4 years
- Candyce Peterson, 08-02, Kitchen, 5 years
- Maureen Robach, 08-10, Pantry, 10 years

thank you!

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES




## Pack Table Volunteer

We're looking for dedicated volunteers in the early morning to help at our Pack Table! The Pack Table is where meals are sorted, put into bags, and packed into coolers that will be delivered by our drivers. This is an essential role that helps the busy operations in our driver-hub go smoothly each morning.

Pack Table volunteers ensure that homebound seniors receive the correct meals on time! This is a fast-paced, high-volume volunteer opportunity that requires coordination.

**MONDAY - FRIDAY**
**7:00 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.**

**SIGN UP FOR THE PACK TABLE**

**Ever thought about driving? Reach out to the volunteer department to schedule a ride-along! Know someone who would make a good volunteer driver?**

**Please recommend that they check out our website or give us a call!**

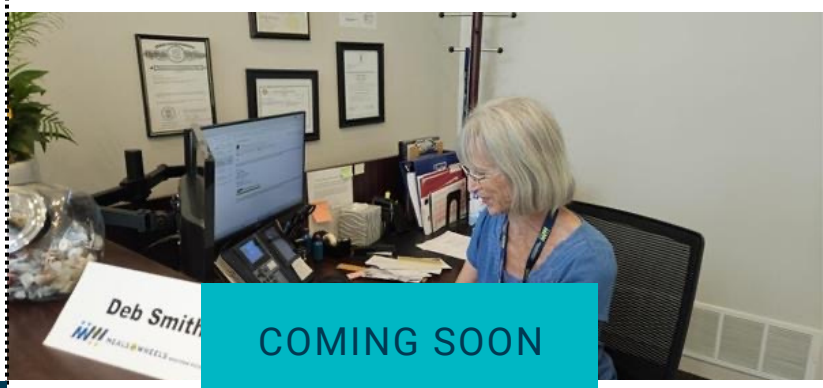


## Delivery Drivers

Volunteer drivers are crucial to our operation, and our volunteer availability has decreased because of life circumstances and moves. This has opened up some routes that were formerly adopted. In addition, we have had trouble filling all the openings when drivers are on vacation, etc.

If you are a volunteer driver with us and are available to take an extra shift or two, it would be helpful. We have a list of volunteer substitute drivers that we contact by email or phone when we have trouble filling openings. Let us know at volunteer@mowwm.org if you'd like to be added to the list.

**SIGN UP TO DELIVER MEALS**




## Administrative Volunteer Opportunities

Our administrative volunteer opportunities suit a range of skills or interests. Whether you'd like to help with mail or data entry, we'd love to accommodate you. Email volunteer@mowwm.org if you are interested.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT




- Thanks to **Therese Labenz** at the pantry: “She is very steady and kind, and it's usually quite busy when she's here, so she's a big help. We never have to worry about making sure she's doing a good job or treating people well.”
- Dining Site Coordinator Mike would like to recognize volunteer **Martha Dove** for her longstanding commitment and outstanding service. Martha has volunteered with MOWWM multiple days a week for the last four years! Thank you, Martha, for your service.

# NO SENIOR HUNGRY OR FORGOTTEN









## KEEP IN TOUCH, STAY INVOLVED

“Insist on believing that good will prevail; that the work will get done; that there will again be love.”
**~Tennessee Williams**

mowwm.org | (616) 459-3111