



Torrance-Lomita Meals on Wheels Newsletter June, 2012

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Send ideas for articles to:
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From the President

Next year Torrance-Lomita will celebrate our 40th anniversary serving homebound community residents with 2 meals a day. You special volunteers offer your time and vehicle to deliver these meals with a smile each day. In addition to the volunteers who deliver meals we have other volunteers who work many hours each week at the PV Thrift Store in Lomita which provides a large source of revenue to our Meals on Wheels organization. I can't find words to thank the PV Thrift Store for their support of Meals on Wheels, we are very grateful to them. We also have volunteers who bake birthday cakes for our clients who are so appreciative to be remembered on their special day. All the other volunteer work is so much appreciated by everyone involved.

I also want to mention that Torrance-Lomita has a Board that works extremely hard to keep the organization running smoothly. It doesn't matter what challenges arise they are there and immediately step up to make our organization the best.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the volunteers for your dedication and untiring efforts to improve the quality of life for the homebound residents of Torrance and Lomita served by Meals on Wheels. I commend and salute for all that you do.

Margaret Estrada
Board of Directors President

Save the Date

Torrance-Lomita Meals on Wheels Celebrates 40 Years of
Servicing our Community! Mark your calendars for our annual
Volunteer Luncheon on January 17, 2013

*A Special Thank You to
all our Wonderful
Volunteers, Generous
Donors and Loyal
Sponsors*

*"We make a living by
what we get, we make a
life by what we give."
Winston Churchill*

From the Office

Did you know that we received quarterly payments from our Ralphs Community Contribution Program? With little effort beyond signing up to participate with the program you can help donate much needed funds to our organization. It doesn't take away from your Rewards points either! The instructions for joining are at the office. If you have not done so, please consider doing it at this time. Every little bit helps.

And while I'm mentioning it, we have recently received so many amazing blessings in the form of donations. We have received contributions from Cars for Causes, a City of Torrance grant, the Lucy Ching trust, and PV Resale. We are elated that our organization has been gifted so well.

Our newly remodeled space continues to get improved. We have a new snack area created at the sink space, so the stainless steel cart is gone, and now there is more room for volunteers to sit and visit.

Recently we had one of our long time clients turn 100 years old. Flowers and cake and a well-deserved party for the entire week, as our volunteers showered Alma with well-wishes. She is one of many of our clients who brings a smile to our faces each time we deliver.

Laura Bohm, Office Manager

Get to Know Our Volunteers

Connie Lakowski



Connie Lakowski

Connie Lakaowski is originally from Iowa. She came to California in 1958 for a job with Western Union Telegraph Co. She stayed at home when her children were young and then worked for the Salvation Army for 20 years until she retired.

Connie sometimes volunteers for the Torrance Cultural Art Center and for her church. She has been with MOW about 9 years and with Palos Verdes Resale for 6 years. She worked in the office of MOW and helped get it on the computer system. When she started, we were still doing everything on the typewriter and by hand!

Get to Know Our Volunteers - Cont.

Connie would like to tell you how she got started volunteering with Palos Verdes Resale (PVR).

"Gen and I delivered food to Fran Pitts' mother Helen who was a client of MOW's. Helen's house kept filling up with lots of goodies and I said to her 'what are you doing with all this stuff in your house?' She answered, 'someday my daughter is going to open up a Thrift Store.' I said let me know because I like Thrift stores. Shortly after that we delivered her food to her and she handed me a card and said 'my daughter opened that store, go introduce yourself to her.' I did just that and Fran said to me 'when can you come and volunteer for us?' I told her I would think about it and left my phone number. Fran called the next couple of days and said, 'could you help me out on Tuesday of next week? I said sure.' I have been there volunteering ever since. During all of this I had cancer of the bone in my jaw. Fran Pitts came and supported me faithfully. Pretty soon she was bringing me things to do at home and encouraging me to return which I did. It's been 5 years since my cancer and I am doing just fine now."

PVR donates all of their profits to charity and MOW has been a grateful recipient of their quarterly distributions.

Michael Graf, Outstanding Older American *reprinted from the Lomita Newsline*

Each year the County of Los Angeles' Commission on Aging honors seniors whom contribute significantly to their communities through volunteer service. Lomita's Outstanding Older American for 2012 is Michael Graf, a retired aerospace worker whose talents and boundless enthusiasm are shared with the City of Lomita, as well as surrounding cities in the South Bay. Graf serves as a Parks Commissioner, is a Board Member for the Society of Automotive Engineering, currently volunteers with Meals on Wheels, helps with food and toy drive programs, and has donated his time with the Junior Achievement Program. While adding a high degree of professionalism to whatever project he undertakes, Graf is an inspiration to our community's older Americans.



Michael Graf

History of Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels started in wartime England (WWII) and spread throughout the world. The first Meals on Wheels program in the United States was in Philadelphia in the 1950s. MOW is not a single organization but a very large number of small organizations. Some are independent charities like Torrance Lomita Meals on Wheels. Cities, churches, other governmental bodies, etc. sponsor some. For instance, the Meals on Wheels organization that serves Redondo Beach is run by the Salvation Army. Gardena MOW is run by the city. San Pedro MOW, like us, is independent.

A network of Meals on Wheels organizations serves all of the Los Angeles area. Most of these

History of Meals on Wheels - cont.

individual units participate in a regional area association to support each other, coordinate borders, and help potential customers find their local Meals on Wheels. A national association, Meals on Wheels Association of America (www.mowaa.org), also exists. Neither of these associations exercises any authority over our, or other, individual charities.

Our organization started in 1973 and has been in continuous operation since. During 1973 we worked in conjunction with the San Pedro MOW. In January 1974 we were housed in the Human Needs Center, 1543 Marcelina Ave. In May 1976 we moved to Meadow Park Adult Center, 3860 West 230th St. In July 1986 we moved to Jefferson Community Center, 21717 Talisman Ave. In February 1994 we moved to our current location in the Golden West Towers, 3519 Maricopa. In January 2005 we had to temporarily vacate this location to make way for construction to make the building more earthquake resistant. Lomita-Harbor City Kiwanis Club offered the use of their facility for as long as needed with turned out to be about one and a half years.

We prepared our own meals until a requirement to move out of Golden West Towers left us with no kitchen facilities. We contracted with St. Vincent to cater our operation at that time and have used their services ever since.