

**ROCKY RIVER LAKEWOOD MEALS ON WHEELS**  
**December 2020 Newsletter**

As 2020 draws to a close, we recognize how very fortunate our Meals On Wheels program is to have the generous support of so many volunteers, donors and community organizations. With their help, we have been able to continue serving our neighbors who, even in normal times, routinely experience isolation and health concerns. This year, we have all gotten a taste of what that feels like, reinforcing our commitment to providing healthy food to those in need.

*To all our volunteers, staff and supporters,  
we extend our deepest thanks and  
wish you a healthy, joyous, love-filled holiday season and New Year!*

**ARRIVALS . . .**

We offer a warm welcome and thanks to the volunteers who have come forward during the past few months to help in various ways: drivers **Mary Amsdell, Cheraly Bagley, Betsy Burns, Nick Dipietro, Jason Gibbons, Cassandra Jones, Mark Reinhold**; substitute drivers **Jane Jarvi, Diane Murphy**; shopper **Becky Lee**; kitchen volunteers **Troy Blackwell, John Dowell, Jen Krebs, Marylu L'Hommedieu**.

In September, the Board of Directors was thrilled to welcome **Kathy Rieg** to its membership. A Rocky River resident, Kathy has been a dedicated volunteer in our kitchen and has recently taken on the role of Safety Officer for our operations. Thank you for your commitment, Kathy!

**. . . AND DEPARTURES**

We will all miss the warmth, compassion and generosity of our long-time **Volunteer Coordinator Bob Burns**, who faithfully served our organization from 2015 until this past September. Bob shared his welcoming and reassuring spirit with our recipients and volunteers alike, devoting many long days and weekend hours to organizing our deliveries, training new volunteers and handling a wide array of administrative details. We look forward to seeing Bob back in our kitchen as a visitor or fellow volunteer!

**FOOD DRIVE BONANZA**

Our volunteers and supporters came through in a big way to support our Giving Tuesday (& Wednesday) Food Drive. Despite the inclement weather, we received hundreds of pounds of needed food items and more than \$500 in gift cards and cash donations. We'd like to extend a special thank you to **Tom Stacy**, head coach of the **Strongsville High School Swim Team**, who rallied his team and their parents to collect and deliver a carload of donations. Thank you all for your generous support!

**STAFF SPOTLIGHT: KATHY BLACKWELL**

We are indeed fortunate to have Kathy Blackwell working as our new Volunteer and Administrative Coordinator. Kathy first came to MOW as a kitchen volunteer in March this year, quickly demonstrating her organizational and multi-tasking abilities, in addition to her cooking skills. Since September, she has done an amazing job recruiting and scheduling new volunteers, streamlining processes and organizing our operations.

Kathy has years of experience working in office and retail management. Born in Buffalo NY, she was raised in Hilton Head SC and relocated to Rocky River in 1991 with her husband Troy. They have a daughter, a son, two grandchildren and a 75-pound lap-dog named Prince. Kathy finds her sanctuary in nature, walking in the woods and being near water. Welcome Kathy!

**AMAZON SMILE**

Tis the season to shop! Many of us are doing our shopping online this year. If you are shopping on Amazon, you can support our program at no additional cost. Just go to AmazonSmile and designate West Shore Meals On Wheels (our parent organization) as your charity. You'll be able to use the same log-in information as always, but a percentage of your purchase amount will be donated to our program. Thank you and happy shopping!

**BILLER WANTED**

If you have knowledge of basic bookkeeping and QuickBooks software, we need your help – we're looking for a new biller for our kitchen. The job requires 10-15 hours per month and can be accomplished mostly from home. If interested, please contact Kathy Blackwell for more information at (440) 333-6298.

## **THANK YOU!**

We are very grateful for the local businesses that give ongoing and generous support to our program. They include **Elmwood Bakery** in Lakewood, **Whole Foods** in Rocky River and **sarita a restaurant** in Lakewood. As a thank you for their support, please consider these businesses when you are shopping or dining. All provide quality foods and excellent service.

A big thank you to **Troy Blackwell**, who dove into our kitchen computer, untangled a mess of software and returned to us an efficient and securely operating system – all on a spur-of-the-moment request. What a huge contribution!

Thank you also to our volunteers who donated, shopped for and assembled our “blizzard packs” this year. Every year, in anticipation of winter weather, we provide our recipients with packages of non-perishable food items that can be used if we are unable to deliver meals because of weather conditions. Blizzard packs are complimentary, funded by donations and packed by our volunteers. Each package provides a balanced meal, including fruit, vegetable, protein and dairy. Of course, we can’t forget dessert! This year’s delivery of blizzard packs arrived just in time to be used December 1, when we had to close because of snow.

## **FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK**

Our Facebook page is a great way to find out what’s happening in our kitchen from week to week. Enjoy pictures of our delicious meals and see some of the people working behind the scenes (also behind the masks)! Our page is listed as Rocky River Meals on Wheels.

## **ROCKY RIVER LAKEWOOD MEALS ON WHEELS 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

We are indebted to this year’s Board members for their selfless investment of time and hard work on behalf of our program. And we thank the following volunteers who have come forward to serve on our Board in 2021:

**Kathy Blackwell** – Volunteer & Administrative Coordinator  
**Louann Buckley** – Vice-Chairperson  
**Deb Denney** – Communications, Fundraising  
**Andrea Dora-Molnar** – Head Cook  
**Tom Esposito** – Representative to Executive Board  
**Frank Grey**  
**Mary Haggard** – Recipient Interviewer  
**Steve Jurak** – Recording Secretary  
**Linda Lewis**  
**Bill Ridmann** – Biller, Executive Board Treasurer  
**Kathy Rieg** – Safety Officer  
**Laurie Rokakis** – Chairperson  
**Candace Vincent** – Recipient Interviewer, Executive Board Secretary  
**Lauren Walsh** – Fundraising, Communications

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