One hundred year-old Ken spent his childhood at Waldo Point, Marin County, exploring the bay by canoe, building forts, and helping out around the family property and business, which included a service station below the house which repaired the Model T cars of the day. Growing up during the Great Depression meant that Ken and his 3 siblings helped farm the steep slopes around their house, picking blackberries and making do with hand-me down clothes and shoes that were too small—but he doesn’t remember being otherwise deprived.

He studied Mechanical Engineering at UC Berkeley before being drafted into the US Army in 1938 in World War II. Initially in the infantry, he recalls target practice when he would shoot standing, kneeling, prone, sitting, rapid & slow fire. Ken surprised himself by receiving the Sharp Shooter Award for best marksman out of a division of 2,400 men! This gave him celebrity status around the base and his entire platoon received a week off. “Hitting the target with such success was more thrilling than when shells actually flew overhead,” Ken recalled.

Ken was approached to go to Officer Training School (a chance for him to see some action) which led him to a job with the Signal Corp. in North Africa for two years and in Italy for another two years until the war ended. He was in charge of the photography division. He came back (he recalls it being 1950 when he was discharged) to find long lines to return to college and his father’s health failing, so he joined his father’s business in San Francisco (sandblasting equipment and tools for the stone trade) where he had worked during the summers growing up. He managed the business until around 1995.

He married his wife Margaret in 1956, and they had three daughters in quick succession. While riding a bicycle at dusk, Ken’s younger brother was hit by a car and died. Perhaps as a way to process that loss, Ken led bike trips for the Sierra Club that always started with safety admonishments. Ken took his young family on weekend biking adventures which morphed into nation-wide tours and conferences organized by the League of American
Wheelmen. On the forefront of the Bay Area health craze of the ’60s, Ken and Margaret lent their stature to legislative efforts to divert gas taxes to bikeways and public transportation. Their family joined cyclists to promote the bill by riding the length of the state in a week.

When he retired his bicycle in his 80s, after numerous broken bones and close calls, Ken worked out at the gym daily, needing his leg strength to climb the 38 steep steps to his front door in Kensington (something the MOW volunteers have to do!). Widowed and never having learned to cook, he welcomed the great variety of nourishing food delivered by cheerful Meals on Wheels volunteers (his favorites are the Apricot Chicken, Breaded Fish Fillet and the Veggie Pasta). His children, who live far away, are grateful that someone is checking in on him daily. One day, when Ken was in his 90s, his MOW volunteer turned life saver! Letting herself in the house when he didn’t answer the door, she called paramedics after locating him on the floor with a broken hip! Having outlived his small circle of friends, and with limited mobility, his MOW volunteers are the only contact he has in the day, besides caregivers.

At age 100, Ken can’t greet the volunteers at the door so most come into the house after they catch their breath from climbing the stairs. You can see a beatific grin spread on Ken’s face when it is one of his favorites. Vicki, with whom he shares a love of the deer which graze in his front yard, often plies him with delicious homemade chocolate oatmeal cookies. He eats one and he stashes the second to lift his spirits for a rainy day. In addition to their exchanges, Ken will quote poetry to her and sometimes belt out a song he has learned, a pastime he has discovered in recent years since he rarely leaves the house. With Bill, also, a veteran, he discusses birds, especially the hummingbirds that come to his window. Volunteer Athena makes a point to come in and chat with Ken. Occasionally she will bring him a small treat, such as flowers from her garden or chocolates from a vacation, to brighten his day. As told by his daughter Nanci to Marti Carlson.

KUDOS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!!

Special thanks to all of our Volunteers. Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa could not succeed without your unwavering support and hard work!

Yvonne  Beth, Carole & Regina  Dottie  Robin

Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa provides a nutritious meal to address the specific health conditions of the senior, an in-home safety check to address hazards inside or outside of the home, a friendly visit to combat social isolation and an assessment of any changes that might impact future medical needs, serving as the first line of sight for potential dangers or changes in condition. Supplementing traditional healthcare services with community-based services is a powerful — and cost-effective — way to keep at-risk seniors healthy and reduce avoidable emergency care and healthcare utilization. In fact, Meals on Wheels can serve a senior for an entire year for the same cost as just one day in a hospital or ten days in a nursing home.
**Instant Pot Mushroom Risotto**

**Ingredients:**
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup arborio rice
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 3/4 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1/4 freshly grated Parmesan

**Steps:**
- Set a 6-qt Instant Pot® to the high saute setting. Melt 2 tablespoons butter; add garlic and onion, and cook, stirring often, until onions have become translucent, about 3-4 minutes.
- Add mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 3-4 minutes; season with salt and pepper, to taste.
- Stir in chicken broth, rice and thyme. Select manual setting; adjust pressure to high, and set time for 6 minutes. When finished cooking, quick-release pressure according to manufacturer's directions.
- Stir in spinach and remaining 2 tablespoons butter until the spinach has wilted, about 2 minutes. Stir in peas and Parmesan until heated through, about 30 seconds to 1 minute.
- Serve immediately.

**Yield:** 8 servings

**Note:** If using fresh peas you may need to steam ahead.

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**Healthbeat**

*A note from Dietitian Jeanne Polk*

**Dietary Guidelines on Vitamin/Mineral Supplements**

First and foremost, nutritional needs should be met by eating a variety of foods as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In some cases, vitamin/mineral supplements or fortified foods may be useful for providing nutrients that may otherwise be eaten in less than recommended amounts.

If you are already eating the recommended amount of a nutrient, you may not get any further health benefit from taking a supplement. In some cases, supplements and fortified foods may actually cause you to exceed safe levels of intake of nutrients.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans makes these recommendations for certain groups of people:

- People over age 50 should consume vitamin B12 in its crystalline form, that is, from fortified foods (like some fortified breakfast cereals) or as a supplement.

(Note that older adults often have a reduced ability to absorb vitamin B12 from foods. However, crystalline vitamin B12, the type of vitamin B12 used in supplements and in fortified foods, is much more easily absorbed.)

- Older adults, people with dark skin, and people who get insufficient exposure to sunlight should consume extra vitamin D from vitamin D-fortified foods and/or supplements.

Remember that in addition to vitamins and minerals, foods also contain hundreds of naturally occurring substances that can help protect your health.

In summary, check with your doctor or a registered dietitian about which, if any, vitamin or mineral supplements might be right for you. And remember that while there are circumstances when it may be appropriate to take vitamin/mineral supplements, they are not a replacement for a healthful diet. *Source: Nutrition.gov*
A Grateful Thank You to Our Loyal Donors

Loyalty Donors who have given annually

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We apologize that our limited space does not allow us to list all the names of over 1,800 donors who have generously contributed to Meals on Wheels for a decade but less than 15 years.

Thank you!
On a Roll!

The county-wide Meals on Wheels services you support with your generous contributions to Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa have grown significantly just since the beginning of the current fiscal year in July 2018. Thanks to your generous help, our program now provides nearly 1,850 meals delivered each day to our homebound elderly neighbors throughout the county. That’s 150 more meals each day than just six months ago, and we are still growing!

Some of this fantastic growth represents new homebound elders being reached by the program, while the rest is the result of a new program component which allows us to provide a second daily meal to homebound elders judged to be at the greatest nutritional risk. Typically this means providing a second daily meal to program participants that are determined to have no other reliable source of food in their home other than the one Meals on Wheels delivered meal each day.

I hope that you take as much pride in helping us to make this new milestone service possible, as we take in being able to provide this life sustaining service for our most needy homebound elderly neighbors.

Thank you once again for all you do for our homebound elderly neighbors in need of our nutritious daily meals.

A Note from Paul

A. Paul Kraintz, Director, Senior Nutrition Program: Meals on Wheels/CC Cafe’s, and Secretary Treasurer/Co-Founder, Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa, Inc.

San Joaquin Yacht Club exceeds goal of $500,000 raised over 30 years.

The thermometer exploded!

Donor Survey

We sent out a donor survey via email (you can use this web address/link to complete the survey online):

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/zwgmypn

Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions about your experience donating to Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa in order for us to improve donor relations. You are central to our work to eliminate senior hunger and isolation in Contra Costa County. If you would prefer to have the survey mailed to you, just call Marti at (925) 313-6311.
**DID YOU KNOW?**

- Medicare spends more on socially isolated adults. The human costs of social isolation among older adults are high: socially isolated older adults tend to have poorer health and higher mortality risks. (From AARP Public Policy Institute)

  *Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa addresses this issue by providing a daily visitor who delivers the meal and checks in on the health and well-being of the client.*

- More low-income Americans over 50 (73 percent) expressed interest in emotional/mental health compared to those with higher incomes (64 percent). Energy, muscle health and mobility, and maintaining a healthy appetite also were more likely to have an impact on the diets of low-income Americans over 50.

  Low-income respondents know less about how to translate their diets into their desired health outcomes. For instance, more than one-third (36 percent) of low-income Americans over 50 cannot name a specific food or nutrient to avoid or limit to help with their most important health concern, compared to one-quarter (24 percent) of those with higher incomes. And a little over one-quarter of lower-income respondents (28 percent) cannot name a food or nutrient they would seek out to help with their most important health concern, compared to only 1 in 5 (19 percent) with higher incomes. (From International Food Information Council Foundation.)

  *Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa addresses this issue by providing a daily healthy meal to qualified adults over 60 who meet the federal and state safety guidelines, as well as the nutritional requirements of the Older Americans’ Act. Each meal provides 1/3 of their daily nutritional requirements. In addition, each client receives tips on healthy eating habits.*

**ABOUT OUR WEBSITE:**

*We update our website regularly. Visit now and see recent photos, videos, online newsletters and organizational updates:*  

http://www.mealsonwheelsofcontracosta.org

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**New CC Cafe opens in Danville**

The Danville Senior Center opened a new café on Feb. 1. Open Fridays for now, the café serves lunch catered by Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa’s caterer: Bateman Senior Meals. Over 50 guests enjoyed a hearty meal and amiable conversation with other seniors.
If you would prefer an email version of our newsletter, please email Martha.Carlson@hsd.cccounty.us

Remembering Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels Legacy Circle members are an exclusive group of caring individuals who have made a Planned Gift in their Will or Trust to ensure that Meals on Wheels will be here for all the frail homebound elders who will need us in the years to come. Your planned gift may be in stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, real estate or cash. Such assets can be gifted immediately with many tax advantages, or as Planned Gifts and bequests in the future.

Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa has partnered with the East Bay Community Foundation for their 75 years experience in assisting charitable nonprofit organizations in receiving a variety of gifts. To join the Meals on Wheels Legacy Circle, simply let us know of your intention to make a Planned Gift to Meals on Wheels.

Please contact Paul Kraintz, Secretary/Treasurer of Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa at 925-313-6310 to discuss other planned giving options.

JOIN OUR SUPPER CLUB!

Become a Monthly Donor

Generous donors who make monthly gifts provide Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa with the steady income needed in order to provide food and friendship to homebound neighbors in need.

I would like to make a monthly contribution to support Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa.

Please enroll me in the Supper Club with a monthly gift of $__________.

I authorize Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa to charge my debit or credit card each month for the amount I stated above until I notify Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa of any changes, and they have had a reasonable time to act on it. A record of each payment in my monthly bank or credit card statement will serve as my receipt and Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa will provide me with a statement of my annual gifts.

Sample language that can be used when making a bequest to Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa

“I give, devise, and bequeath to Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa, Inc., federal tax identification number 68-0231350, PO Box 3195, Martinez CA 94553, the sum of $_________ (or describe the real or personal property or portion of the estate) to be used for its general purposes, including its delivery of nutritious meals to frail and elderly neighbors.”

Donate a vehicle through our partnership with Car Donation Services, Inc.

www.MealsOnWheelsOfContraCosta.org

Annual Reports and Form 990 are available on our website

www.MealsOnWheelsOfContraCosta.org

If you would like paper copies please call 866-669-6697

Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa PO Box 3195 · Martinez CA 94553

Business Inquiries about services, call 866-669-6697 or go to www.MealsOnWheelsOfContraCosta.org

Editor: Martha Carlson

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