

Emergency winter food delivered by Mountain Meals on Wheels

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Mountain Meals on Wheels (MMOW) is a local nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, which delivers meals five days a week to people who are unable to prepare or shop for their meals or who have a specific medical need. Meals on Wheels delivers hot meals, cooked in the kitchen of Mountains Community Hospital in Lake Arrowhead, to their recipients.

The nutritionist and hospital dietitian ensure a healthy meal, consisting of one entrée with two sides, a drink, fruit and a dessert for each day. They even prepare specialized meals for those with dietary limitations. The meals are delivered in microwavable and recyclable food containers by the volunteer MMOW drivers.

Every winter, because of possible snowstorms that make it impossible to safely deliver hot meals, the volunteers compile and deliver extra emergency food supplies for each recipient so, when inclement weather does arrive, recipients will have healthy food items available to prepare and eat.

Recently, five volunteers of the MMOW board of directors, plus volunteers from U.S. Bank, set up 90 bags of non-perishable food items they had purchased from Goodwin's Market for their recipients. The volunteers spent four hours sorting and bagging up the foods; then they spent the afternoon delivering the emergency bags to the recipients. The board recommends that they put aside the food items, saving them for those snow days, when MMOW delivery is paused due to road conditions.

These extra emergency meals – composed of mostly canned beef stews, canned fruits, soups, dried beans, other dried items, rice, boxed food items and non-refrigerated soy milk – are for those days of non-delivery.

Included in the emergency bags was a knit hat, with an added note: "This winter, one of our mountain community residents, Marie, lovingly knitted warm caps to bless our Meals on Wheels recipients. We are grateful for her generous heart and we hope this handmade gift brings you comfort during the colder days ahead."



Each year, prior to severe weather situations, the MMOW volunteers make up emergency food bags of non-perishable food items for each client.

Mountain Meals on Wheels delivers meals to the west end of the San Bernardino mountain communities, stretching from Green Valley Lake in the east to Cedarpines Park on the west side of the mountain. Becoming a volunteer driver is very simple. Meals on Wheels drivers choose one of four routes to deliver to once or twice a month, which fits within their personal schedule. Meals on Wheels is always seeking more drivers and also has a need for substitute drivers.

If you are a person who wants to help your neighbors and give back to the community and, if you have a curiosity to learn more of the back roads of the mountain communities, you are the type of person Meals on Wheels is seeking as a volunteer driver. Call the director at (909) 436-8065. If you need to receive their services, contact the Recipient Coordinator Debbie McAdam at (909) 486-8065 or email them at mmow@mountainmealsonwheels.org or volunteer@mountainmealsonwheels.org.

Mountain Meals on Wheels is an all-volunteer organization that does not receive federal or governmental grants for funding. They do request recipients with the financial ability to pay a nominal fee for their meals. However, those unable to afford the cost may qualify for a subsidy.

Meals on Wheels is also seeking community members to become "Meals on Wheels Angels," compensating for those unable to pay. A donation of \$65 covers the cost of one month of meals for one recipient. Angels may also choose to contribute \$390 for six months. Email them at Donate@MountainMealsOnWheels.org.

Mountain Meals on Wheels has been awarded GuideStar's Gold Level of Transparency. A Gold Level means Mountain Meals on Wheels maintains complete financial and organizational transparency within GuideStar and has established goals and strategies to maintain a high quality 501(c)(3) organization. GuideStar is the nation's premier database of nonprofit organizations. Only 0.5 percent of nonprofit organizations within the GuideStar community reach this Gold Level. Mountain Meals on Wheels is another amenity available for mountain residents with a need, provided by generous community volunteers.