

C NNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS OF MEALS ON WHEELS OF RIDGEFIELD, CT

SPRING 2020

We hope this newsletter finds you well in what has been a very difficult time for us all. Meals on Wheels is considered an “essential business” by the state, so our priority remains keeping our kitchen going and delivering meals to you in the safest way possible. You can read below for the latest updates about our procedures and some tips for staying healthy. Information changes frequently and can quickly become overwhelming. In this newsletter we have included some resources for staying connected and some tips for how to calm yourself if you’re feeling stressed.

Spring does have some cheer in store for us: warming days and the reassuring beauty of flowering trees and birdsong will be a comfort when they arrive. We look forward to easier and happier days ahead, and in the meantime, know that we will be here for you. Please call the kitchen if you have any questions or if you need any additional meals.



SPRING MENU HIGHLIGHTS

Soup is off the menu for the warmer months, but you still have a lot to look forward to. We are planning to bring you pasta primavera, spring chicken, frittata, chicken masala, pork medallions, and for those of you who crave some holiday meals year-round, a delicious “Thanksgiving-in-spring” with turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce.



“CRIS’S CORNER” *Kitchen Operations Manager, Cris Nichols*

The kitchen staff and volunteers have pulled together and are working as hard as ever. We are taking extra precautions by keeping the surfaces as clean as possible, minimizing the number of people who are allowed in the kitchen at any one time so we can maintain social distance, having our drivers do “curbside pickup” of meals instead of coming in the kitchen and “contactless” delivery at your home by using coolers or insulated bags.

Did you know that without our volunteers, we would have only three cooks, one cleaning person, and one manager? And I’ll tell you: the five of us could not create, produce and deliver over 30,000 meals a year by ourselves! The backbone of this organization is our volunteers. It is times like these that remind me how truly incredible they are, and how lucky we are to live in a place *(continued)*



with so many generous people.

You have become familiar with our drivers and I hear from many of you how great it is to have the chance to chat, laugh and touch base with another person. We know it's difficult not being able to have the same kind of contact with them that you are used to, now that the food must be left outside the door. The drivers feel the same way, and tell me that seeing you is one of the reasons they love being part of the MOW team. I am fortunate to hear about how their lives are richer because of you. Hopefully we can resume our normal delivery process soon!

Stay well, and please be in touch if you have any questions.

TIPS TO STAY HEALTHY

- Stay home!
- Practice social distancing when at home or outside...stay 6+ feet apart
- Wash or de-sanitize your hands frequently, before and after you eat, and any time you've touched something that may have germs on it
- Wipe down surfaces and any objects you bring into your home (including our meal containers)



RESOURCES FOR HELP DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

To stay informed, see the Town of Ridgefield website at www.ridgefieldct.org, or you can sign up for phone or email alerts at www.CTAlert.gov. The town's emergency response team has offered to send key info from these alerts to you in our lunch bags one or two days a week - you'll get them shortly.

Compassionate Ridgefield has started a program called "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" to help any seniors who may need a friendly ear or someone to drop off groceries. For more information, call 203-431-7000 or email compassionproject06877@gmail.com.



MINDFULNESS TO HELP WITH STRESS

This simple exercise is a good way to feel calmer, and can be done in just a few minutes. Start by sitting still or lying down in a quiet place. Take deep breaths, paying attention to the breath as it goes in your nose and out your mouth. Scan your body from head to toe, noticing any physical sensations your body is telling you about. Whether lying down or standing, check-in

with your posture. Try to think: head over heart over pelvis.



Random thoughts will attempt to distract you, which is totally normal. Acknowledge those thoughts, coming back to your breath when you can. While you are breathing, feel the breath in your belly. When you're ready, take a moment to give thanks for your body and mind, pat yourself on the back for taking time out for you, and notice how you feel. If you do this regularly, even just once a day for a few minutes, it will become easier to connect with your breath and hopefully help your mind take a rest.

It's hard to stay occupied when you cannot see friends or family members, or even go out to shop or sit in a cafe. While you have to stay at home, here are a few things you can do to help combat feelings of loneliness or reduce stress:

- Get fresh air: take a short walk, or open your window or door
- Stay connected: call or email a family member or friend
- Keep your mind active: do a crossword, write in a journal or watch a nature or cooking show

**WE HOPE YOU
STAY SAFE AND WELL!**