



FOOD *for* THOUGHT

Spring 2024

By 2030, 24% of people living in Michigan will be 60 and older. Maria will be among them.

At 59, Maria already suffers from several health conditions that make it difficult for her to leave the house, and impossible to do it alone. She can't prepare a meal or visit the bathroom of her Ypsilanti home without risking a life-changing fall. She's grateful for help from her daughter, who serves as her caregiver, and for Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels, which provides her with food that she can't prepare on her own. But as she approaches her 60s, Maria worries about her future, especially as the country and her own community struggle to care for more seniors than ever before.

Maria wonders whether the help she needs will still be there as she ages, her daughter's life changes, and her own needs increase.

As Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels marks its 50th year of service to the community, we are determined to prepare not only for Maria, but for every neighbor who will need us in the years to come. While we celebrate the good we have already done, we are looking ahead to the work that will be required of us, and of the community.

Our Give More to Feed More Campaign is an ambitious effort to prepare for the "silver tsunami" on the horizon.

The campaign aims to raise enough capital to fund an additional one million meals over the next five years. This means raising an additional \$6 million, representing an overall growth of over 40% through 2028.

The success of this effort depends on all of us. It depends on seniors with few needs to reach out to those with many,

and for today's 40- and 50-year-olds to help us prepare for the needs they may have tomorrow.

With gifts of time, talent and of course, treasure, we can create a community where the seniors of today and the seniors of tomorrow feel nourished, valued and supported.

GIVE MORE TO FEED MORE



TIME

Volunteer to assist with events or meal delivery.

Join our Ambassadors Committee and help raise awareness.

Follow us on social media and share our posts.

Invite us into your space to share our goals and mission with your friends, social group or staff.



TALENT

Volunteer your professional talents to help around the office or with events.

Senior artists can participate in our Meals on Heels art exhibition.

Utilize your talents, or those of your friends, to organize a 3rd-party fundraiser.

Donate your hand-made items to our YMOW Gift Shop, coming in December 2024.



TREASURE

Sponsor an event. We have sponsorship levels to suit any budget.

Save the date for 2024 events, and bring a friend or two.

Form a Lemonade Lane fundraising team. (June – September)

Become a monthly supporter.

Give 15% more than you did last year.

New leadership in place at YMOW Barbara Niess-May chosen as new President/CEO

Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels is proud to welcome Barbara Niess-May as the organization's new President and CEO. Barbara's appointment is the result of an extensive search by the Andrews Group of Ann Arbor for the right person to lead YMOW into its next 50 years.



A proud supporter of the Ypsilanti community, Barbara comes to us with over 30 years of experience in the non-profit world, a proven track record of leadership, and a commitment to making a positive impact in her community. Prior to her most recent position as Development Manager at The King Center, Barbara served as

Executive Director of SafeHouse Center in Ann Arbor, transforming the organization into a progressive service provider supporting survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

"Barbara's experience and dedication align seamlessly with our mission, and we are confident that her leadership will contribute significantly to the continued success of YMOW," said YMOW Board Chair Dieter Otto.

While continuing, expanding and strengthening the nutrition and support services provided by YMOW, Barbara is committed to building partnerships that will support YMOW's ongoing vision of "a community where every senior feels nourished, valued and supported."

Barbara holds master's degrees in social work and public administration from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, as well as a bachelor's degree in political science and journalism from the University of Evansville, Indiana.

Her community involvement expands beyond YMOW to include volunteer roles with the Washtenaw County Circles Program, Rotary Club of Ann Arbor, the United States Adventure Racing Association DEI committee, and the First United Methodist Church Anti-Racism Work Group in Brighton. She will begin

seminary work in the fall of 2024 as she works toward becoming an ordained deacon in the United Methodist church.

In her spare time Barbara trains and competes as an amateur endurance athlete in adventure racing, competitive navigation and mountain bike/gravel racing.

Joining Barbara in leading YMOW into its next chapter is a newly named executive committee consisting of Chair Dieter Otto, Vice President Tara Truax, Treasurer Steve Smith and Secretary Scott Godbold. Visit ymow.org/about/staff-board/board to learn more.



Dieter Otto



Tara Truax



Steve Smith



Scott Godbold



Want to go paperless?

If you would prefer to receive *Food for Thought* via email, please send a note to sandy@ymow.org.

A celebration 50 years in the making

Meals on Heels returns Friday, April 26, as the official kickoff of YMOW's 50th anniversary celebration.

Guests will enjoy Vegas-style gaming, music, hors d'oeuvres, craft cocktails, and two silent auctions. The first is a collection of items and experiences from local businesses. The second is an art auction showcasing the talents of local seniors.

Meals on Heels will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center Ballroom – a fitting tribute to the 50-year relationship between the university and YMOW.

Sponsorship opportunities and tickets are available now at <https://mealsonheels.givesmart.com>, by scanning the QR code, or by texting "mealsonheels" to 76278. For more information, email Dannielle Murphy at danni@ymow.org.

Can't make the event? Consider showing your support by donating a ticket to a volunteer or client who might otherwise be unable to attend.

Calling all senior artists!

Please consider donating one or more examples of your work to our senior art auction! Help us showcase the talents of the senior artists among us while supporting our homebound neighbors. Scan the QR code for details.



Make summer a little sweeter on Lemonade Lane

Lemonade Lane isn't so much an event as it is an opportunity for local groups and organizations to support the Ypsilanti community. Groups and organizations participating in Lemonade Lane expose their name and purpose to thousands who attend Ypsilanti events throughout the summer.

Lemonade Lane is a series of pop-up events coordinated with local festivals and events. It invites groups to provide ingredients, supplies, a signature flavor, or even to host a lemonade stand at a summer event such as Ypsi Pride, Juneteenth, Fourth of July or Festival of the Pollinator. Guests to these events can enjoy a cold, delicious cup of lemonade while being reminded of the work that YMOW and their participating sponsors do in the community.

Teams also are encouraged to hold fundraisers of their own to support Lemonade Lane, and in turn, YMOW and the entire Ypsi community. Teams are provided with their own fundraising page, text-to-give code, and a comprehensive tool kit that makes fundraising efforts as easy as copy and paste. Team signup opens May 6.

Direct sponsorships starting at \$250 also are available. Visit <https://bit.ly/3P8yCzd>, text "YMOWSponsor" to 41444, or email Dannielle Murphy at Danni@ymow.org.

Food for Thought is published by Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. For comments or questions, contact Sandy Bosch at sandy@ymow.org, or 734-217-4578.



YMOW Leadership

Barbara Niess-May

President/CEO

Kelly Schwartz

Director of Operations

Dieter Otto

Board Chair - President

Tara Truax

Vice President

Steve Smith

Treasurer

Scott Godbold

Secretary

YMOW Board of Directors

Dan Carleton

Anna Jackson

Brent Kolb, DDS

Francisca Tehoda

Our Mission

To provide nutritious meals and social contact for the homebound elderly, ill and disabled in eastern Washtenaw County, enabling them to live healthier, safer and more independent lives.

Our Vision:

A community where every senior feels nourished, valued and supported.

Watch your mail!

Spring is on the way, and so is our direct mail fundraising campaign!

Please watch your mailboxes in the coming weeks for your chance to support Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels as we prepare to support our homebound neighbors through the coming months.

Did you know that government funding accounts for less than 10 percent of the money needed to care for our homebound neighbors each year?

Individual donations like yours are essential and needed more than ever.



Look what you helped us do in 2023!



125,152

Meals delivered



171

Hours of case management support



463

Neighbors served



9,500

Pounds of pet food delivered



234

Hours of occupational therapy provided



***15,000**

Pounds of produce/groceries provided



80

Pets supported

*Donated by Food Gatherers from June 2022 to June 2023.