



Special Delivery

A NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS OF MOBILE MEALS OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

MANAGING MMSA'S PROCESSES: **ON TRACK WITH TOMAS**

With organizational speed, accuracy and lots of heart, Mobile Meals of Southern Arizona (MMSA) Director of Process Improvements Tomas Smith is hard at work keeping our logistics humming.

We know when Tomas is in the building. Clipboard in hand, he checks the kitchen, the front desk, the facilities, the vehicles, the goals of the day and the morale all around us. If there's something a kilter, Tomas is ready to tackle it.

A coast guard veteran and Tucson native, Tomas once traveled the country for the bead-distributing business he founded with his brother in 1993. Since joining MMSA last year, Tomas enthusiastically focuses his efforts on helping to nourish our community. **"We're strengthening processes that keep MMSA moving on a day-to-day basis. Connecting the dots is what I do,"** says Tomas.

Bringing his decades of experience to bear on MMSA's mission, Tomas looks for inroads to achieving highest levels of service for MMSA clients. That may mean supporting new processes in the kitchen or administrative areas. His daily checklist includes the question: What processes best support client well-being?

"It's essential for us to be intense observers of detail every day," he notes with a smile. "We want operations to be the most effective foundation to serve everyone who needs help obtaining nutritious meals."



(Above, l.- r.) Tomas & MMSA CEO L'Don Sawyer welcome Marsha, student reporter for the newspaper Bear Essentials, and Arunesh Mohan to 6th Avenue to learn about nutrition. (Right) Meal prep underway in the kitchen!



May 2025

Order up!

Remember to place your Mobile Meals orders at the beginning of each month.

Need help ordering?
Call the HelpLine at 520-622-1600

Do You Have A Friend Who Would Benefit From Nutritious, Tasty Meals?

Phone referrals accepted.
Or apply through the website:
mobilemealssoaz.org

Upcoming Holidays No Meal Deliveries:

Memorial Day, May 26
Independence Day, July 4



Welcome New Staff!

David Sullivan
(pictured above) is
MMSA's new
Culinary Manager.

Watch future editions
of this newsletter
for exciting news
about David and
MMSA meal planning.

Mobile Meals of Southern
Arizona (MMSA) is a 501
(c)(3) non-profit
delivering nutrition for
more than 50 years.

Our Mission:
*Delivering nutritious
meals to people in
Southern Arizona
through a network of
caring individuals.*

3355 S. Sixth Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85713
520-622-1600
MobileMealsSoAz.org.

TAKING SERVICE HIGHER

For volunteer Gerald Jeffrey, there's no expiration date to caring about his community.

It's several hours of drive time from his home to his end-of-day deliveries. But for Gerald, driver for MMSA's 6th Avenue Route 3, the trek is an indispensable journey of neighborliness.

"Good food is the essential ingredient in healthy, happy lives," says Gerald, who retired in 2005 after 31 years as a Pima County juvenile probation supervisor. His professional experience also includes coordinating Adult Ed for the Pasqua Yaqui Nation and handling youth programs for the Urban League.

Ever with his trademark smile, Gerald is welcoming as he goes about his deliveries. **Volunteering became a meaningful way for Gerald to give back and stay connected to the city.**

"Each delivery introduces me to good people and helps me experience what matters in community," he says. "Everyone has a story to tell. That's an important part of volunteering with MMSA – We're all about the people, and connecting people with the basic need of healthy eating as well as friendly conversation."

There's nothing insignificant about Gerald's commitment to MMSA. This past month, Gerald generously stepped up to handle deliveries when another volunteer was absent. His dedication and team spirit help ensure that the days for MMSA clients are sprinkled with healthy doses of food and smiles.

"Volunteering is a badge of honor," says Gerald. "We all know who and what we're working for. We want to help make a difference."

*Gerald Jeffrey picks up
his Monday deliveries
from the MMSA 6th Ave.
Headquarters.*





Here's Client Extraordinaire
Kernie Dishaw with pal Bella.

MEET KERNIE AND PAW PARTNER BELLA

You would be forgiven for thinking Kernie Dishaw – a MMSA client for more than five years – was a working comedian. In these days of well-earned retirement, **this 91-year old Tucsonan greets everyone who visits with a smile and a quick slice of wit.** With Yorkie Bella always at his side, Kernie is an enthusiastic MMSA client who believes a positive attitude and good food are keys to keeping you happy and healthy as you age.

“I worked 40 years in the hotel business, traveling around the country renovating facilities. These days I enjoy someone else doing the cooking,” says Kernie. His favorite meals? Lasagna and meatloaf. “I also like the tortillas, the cole slaw and the cookies,” he notes. **“There are super nice drivers who help in so many ways...and when Bella and I come to the door, everyone knows her name.”**

Kernie, who completed his service in the Army as a corporal and clerk-typist, recalls watching Mickey Mouse cartoons every Saturday when the Box Theater was on Congress Street. “I have a photographic memory that ran out of film” he quips, and then continues: “When Mobile Meals drivers come around, it brightens my day. **The drivers always ask, how are you doing?** When I call the office they always help. That just lifts up my day at that moment. They know the community and they know me.”

May Is Older Americans Month...Let's Celebrate YOU!

By 2030, one out of five U.S. residents will be older than 65. As we celebrate Older Americans Month (OAM) in May, Mobile Meals is one of many organizations stepping up to recognize the contributions of older Americans. **“We're working with both national and local groups to help promote a better understanding of aging, and the role of nutrition in ensuring well-being of seniors in our community,” says MMSA CEO L'Don Sawyer.**

The 2025 OAM theme, *Flip the Script on Aging*, focuses on transforming how society perceives and talks about aging. Sometimes we're not able to do everything by ourselves as we age or if we have a disability, L'Don reflects. MMSA is there to help with basic yet essential aspects: nourishment, tasty meals and neighborly check-ins. This year, MMSA is proud to serve hundreds of older Americans in our community.



FLIP THE SCRIPT ON AGING: MAY 2025

A positive attitude helps us all stay engaged and healthy! Did you know... People with more positive attitudes about growing old tend to live longer and healthier lives than those with negative thoughts about aging. According to a study of 14,000 adults over age 50, co-authored by experts at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, people who had the highest satisfaction with aging had a 43% lower risk of dying from any cause over a four-year period compared with those who were the least satisfied.

[If you know someone who would benefit from MMSA's nutritious meals, refer them to 520-622-1600](tel:520-622-1600)