

THE GRIFFIN GAZETTE

NOVEMBER 2026

Happenings at the
Meals on Wheels of the
Monterey Peninsula
Community Center



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Dear Members and Friends,

As November arrives, our hearts are full of gratitude. In mid October, the Monterey County Weekly Readers Poll named Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula Best Volunteer Organization for the sixth year in a row, and we were also honored as Best Health Nonprofit. These awards belong to every volunteer, delivery driver, kitchen team member, staff member, donor, and neighbor who shows up with kindness day after day. Thank you for making all of this possible, and for being the reason our community feels remembered.

Autumn is a wonderful time to enjoy roasted squash, sweet potatoes, apples, and hearty vegetable soups, which are full of nutrients and comfort. A gentle walk among the fall colors is good for body and spirit, and even ten minutes outside can lift your mood.

Our programs help seniors, veterans, and adults with disabilities remain independent at home through nourishing meals and friendly connection. Our community center is also a welcoming place to share a meal, join an activity, and meet new friends.

Meals on Wheels will be open on Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11 to honor all who served.

Our Center will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 26, and we wish your holiday be full of good food and good company.

With gratitude,

The Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula Team

Nourishing Bodies, Minds, & Spirits

Anna Cutino



Anna Cutino joined our delivery team in May 2026 and says that delivering meals is about much more than food. For Anna, nourishing bodies, minds, and spirits means sharing a meal, a smile, and a little conversation so every person feels seen, valued, and less alone. She hopes clients know she genuinely cares and looks forward to seeing them each day. When she is not on the route, you can find her golfing, gardening, or walking her two English Cream Retrievers along the beach or down at the Wharf.

PEOPLE
behind the
MISSION



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Board of Directors

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Our mission is to empower seniors, adults with disabilities, veterans, and other underserved populations to remain independent by nourishing their bodies, minds, and spirits, and drive out hunger and isolation in our region.

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Six years. ★★★★★★

Thousands of
acts of kindness.

One incredible
community.



Best Volunteer Organization.

(and for the first time - Best Health Nonprofit.)

Six years strong because of
every volunteer who showed up,
every supporter who believed,
and every neighbor who voted.
Thank you.

There's room for you.
MOWMP.ORG/VOLUNTEER



Volunteer Spotlight- College Corps

College Corps is a service program established in partnership with California colleges and universities. Fellows serve on campus or with local nonprofits, focusing on critical community needs such as education, climate action, and food insecurity.

This year, Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula (MOWMP) welcomed three College Corps Fellows in September for a year of service. Each Fellow will complete 450 hours, career experience, professional development, and mentorship.

Meet Our Fellows:

Surieanne Oliveti, originally from Tonga, is completing her nursing prerequisites with the goal of becoming a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.

Deborah Diaz-Ibarra grew up in Salinas and is studying biology, planning to transfer to UC Riverside and become a research doctor in neuroscience or neuropharmacology.

Audrey Sanchez, from Hollister, is studying psychology. Having experienced homelessness herself, Audrey hopes to ask every person experiencing homelessness if they need help.

All three joined to give back to their community while gaining experience for their future careers. Surieanne explained, "I believe I will gain experience working with people from different cultures, backgrounds, and age groups who come together for one purpose: serving the community." Audrey shared, "I'm going to gain good experience by practicing my communication, being a team player, and learning new working skills." Deborah added, "Besides the experience, I will get to meet new people, with all sorts of interests and points of view. I think it is going to be great."

Why Meals on Wheels?

Each Fellow interviewed with several organizations before choosing. Flexibility mattered, since balancing a full course load with 450 hours is no small commitment, and MOWMP could work around class schedules with shifts starting at 6:30 a.m. But it was more than scheduling. "Hunger affects so many people in our community," Surieanne commented. Audrey said, "I leave happy and full of joy." Deborah shared, "This place has become the highlight of my day. I like that it gives me a reason to wake up early."

Learning the Bigger Picture

The Fellows are making a valuable contribution to our daily operations while gaining an inside look at how a nonprofit this size works. All three had the same reaction: "We had no idea" how much goes on behind the scenes. They also shared how welcomed, supported, and appreciated they feel here.

We are grateful that Surieanne, Deborah, and Audrey chose to serve with MOWMP. Their enthusiasm, compassion, and commitment remind us that service benefits everyone involved.



Member Happenings



The Cup is Half Full - Women's Discussion Group

Tuesday, November 3 & 17 • 10:15am–11:15am

Join us for a meaningful conversation guided by retired social worker Ellie Sorkin, where everyone can share, laugh, and connect. Expect thoughtful discussions, a few good jokes, maybe a song or two, and plenty of smiles. It might just be the highlight of your day!

RSVP at the front desk. Center membership is required.

Friends of Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula

Thursday, November 19 • 1:30pm–2:30pm

Join the Friends of Meals on Wheels! Are you seeking a meaningful way to give back to your community and connect with like-minded individuals? We invite you to become a vital part of the Friends of Meals on Wheels.



Fundraising • Advocacy • Community Outreach • Special Projects

You'll make a real impact, enjoy camaraderie, and stay engaged. Your experience is invaluable! Interested? Contact Nikki to learn more: ngarello@mowmp.org. **Center Membership is required.**



Light Conditioning with Janet Light

Mondays • 2:40pm–3:40pm

\$5 per class Fee paid to instructor

Join Janet Light for a gentle full-body conditioning class to improve balance, build strength, increase flexibility, and support heart health. Exercises are performed standing, seated, and on hands and knees, participants must be able to get up and down from the floor, if assistance is needed a chair

can be provided. Wear comfortable clothing and come ready to move at your own pace.

RSVP at the front desk. Center membership is required.

No Class: November 9 & 30

Warmth starts with **one.**

Do you have a coat or jacket that can be donated to a needy child or adult? Drop off your clean coat at the front desk. With your help, MOWMP has donated more than 200 coats through this program.



Donations accepted
November 16 - December 16

Member Happenings



Tech Support - by appointment only

Monday • 10am-12:00pm, Tuesday • 12:15-2:15pm

Wednesday • 10-11:30am, Fridays • 12-2:00pm

Need help with your phone, tablet, or laptop? Book a 30-minute appointment with volunteers Jeanne, Felice, and Mark.

RSVP at the Front Desk for an appointment.

Center membership is required.

**No Tech Support
November 4, 11, 25 & 26**

Yoga & Fitness Training

Tuesdays • 12:00pm-1:00pm

Class limit is 18 students, \$8 per class Fee paid to instructor

Join instructor Gina Puccinelli for safe and gentle movement therapy using a sturdy chair. Gina guides participants through seated and standing yoga poses designed to lubricate joints, improve flexibility, and build strength. With her calm voice and gentle teaching style, you'll explore balance, strength, and serenity at your own pace. **Center membership required.**



Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

Wednesdays • 2:00pm-3:00pm

Drop in every Wednesday at 2:00 PM for a free, ongoing Tai Chi class, perfect for beginners and those already familiar with the form. This welcoming group offers a great way to move, connect, and unwind. Tai Chi is especially beneficial for adults with arthritis, joint concerns, or fall risks. Regular practice can help improve balance, strength, flexibility, and mobility, while also promoting relaxation and reducing pain and the risk of falls. Class are led by certified instructors Leon and Joanne Garden trained by Dr. Paul Lam through the Tai Chi for Health Institute. **Center membership required.**

Game Day!

Fridays • 12:30pm-3:00pm

Friday Fun just leveled up! Join us Fridays for a board game extravaganza featuring Yahtzee, Mancala, Dominoes, Mahjong, Backgammon, Scrabble, Chess, and Checkers! Whether you're a strategic mastermind or just here for laughs, it's the perfect time to play, connect, and have fun. Come get your game on with us! You'll be glad you did! **RSVP at the front desk.**
Center Membership is required.



Member Happenings



Textile Arts Group

Mondays, 12:30pm–3:00pm

Join other folks who enjoy the textile arts. Bring your own supplies and projects and enjoy this creative makers' group. Center membership required.



Knit & Purl Group

**3rd Tuesday of the month
1:00pm–3:00pm**

Enjoy knitting or crochet? Bring your own supplies and enjoy an afternoon with friends. Center membership required.



Tai Chi 24 Forms

Thursdays, 2:30pm–3:30pm

Group practice of Tai Chi enthusiasts. Improvement of muscular strength, fitness, flexibility and wellness. Center membership required.

No Tai Chi 24 Forms November 26



Movement to Music for Strength & Balance with MaryAnn

Tue & Thu, 9:30am–10:10am

Fee paid to instructor
\$5 per class, Register in class.
Center membership required.

Ping Pong*

**Mondays, 1:00pm–3:00pm
Tuesdays, 10:30am–11:30am
Thursdays, 10:30am–1:30pm
Fridays, 12:30pm–1:30pm**

Center membership required.

*Please note: time & day subject to change.

No Ping Pong November 17 & 26

Walk for Health

Mon, Wed & Fri, 8:00–9:00am

Enjoy the benefits of fitness and community with each step.
Meet at the Front Desk.
Center membership required.



Member Happenings



Wednesdays
8:30am until gone

Food Bank Distribution

Pick up a variety of fresh, nutritious produce for free. Quantities are limited each week, so we kindly ask that you take only what you need.



Wednesdays
8:30am–10:00am

Market Day

Weekly specials on the freshest seasonal produce from local farms. The volunteer run Market is a must stop for our community.



Wednesday
November 4
8:30am to 9:15am,
or until supplies last

Mobile Produce Truck

Fresh, nutritious, and **FREE** produce delivered right to The Community Center.

We will be closed Thursday, November 26



Pacific Grove Adult School Classes

Register by phone 831.646.6580 or at the PG Adult School: 1025 Lighthouse Avenue
8:00am-4:00pm • Classes held in-person or hybrid at the Center • pgadulted.pgusd.org

No Classes: November 11, 25 - 28

Circuit Training

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
9:00am–10:00am

Circuit training is a versatile workout that combines strength, balance, and endurance through a mix of standing and mat exercises. It targets different muscle groups, improves fitness, and enhances core stability.

Light Aerobics, Strength & Balance

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
10:00am–11:00am

Cardio exercises with strength, stretching routines with the goal of improving all elements of fitness for the first 40 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of seated conditioning using light weights.

Community Center Happenings

Medicare Counseling by appointment only

Call to schedule

Free, personalized Medicare counseling is available through Alliance on Aging & the HICAP program offering unbiased guidance on enrollment, Medicare Advantage, Medigap, and Part D plans.

Call (831) 655-1334 to schedule your appointment.



Off Season Tax Preparation by appointment only

New appointments will begin in February 2027

Free off season tax services are available through Alliance on Aging. Meet with an IRS-certified volunteer and receive free assistance on your tax returns. Tax preparation services can be scheduled online at allianceonaging.org or by calling 831-655-1334.



MY Well-Being Series



Thursday, November 5 • 11:00am–12:30pm

Join us for the MY Well-Being Series sponsored by Aspire Health. On Thursday, November 5 - gentle mind-body movement designed to support balance, coordination, and overall well-being. Through low-impact exercises, participants will practice neuromuscular reeducation, helping the body and brain work together more efficiently to improve movement patterns.

Classes are free, open to all fitness levels, and led by an expert health coach.

Reserve your spot today at the Front Desk.

Meals on Wheels Community Center is a membership-based organization.

To attend or participate in the classes, programs, and events at the Meals on Wheels Community Center membership is required. The Pacific Grove Adult School classes are the only exception.

Membership directly supports the essential services we provide to our members and our community. Membership includes programs, classes, workshops, special member dinners, and The Griffin Gazette newsletter.

If you're not yet a member or if your membership has lapsed, now is the time to join. Please reach out or stop by. We're happy to answer any questions and help you get started.



Join or Renew Today!

Stay Active. Stay Connected.

mowmp.org/membership



Community Center Happenings



Golden Connections Facilitated by Doris Beckman

Tuesday, November 17 • 1:00pm–3:00pm

Aging well starts with a plan. Join us for Designing Your Plan B! This six-month series offers practical guidance for older adults navigating life's transitions. Each session explores independence, financial planning, housing

options, and building a support network for the unexpected. This series provides meaningful conversations and practical strategies to help you prepare with confidence.

Call 831 204 8260 or email goldenconnections2025@gmail.com to reserve your spot.

Annual
**KNITTER'S
SALE**

Start off the season of giving at our
Annual Knitters Sale!

Find festive, handknit treasures like animals, baby blankets, baby caps, scarves, caps, fingerless gloves, socks, and blankets; the perfect holiday gifts made with love. All proceeds support Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula.

Friday, November 13
8:00am - 12:00pm

Drivers are needed for meal delivery to homebound seniors, adults with disabilities, and veterans.

DRIVERS!

Monday–Friday for approximately 2 hours/day starting at 9:00am.

Visit us on-line for an application at mowmp.org/volunteer or contact Susan for more information.
Susan Elwood Recruitment & Outreach Manager **831.375.4454 Ext. 126** • selwood@mowmp.org

November Fun & Games

Sudoku

6			2	5				
	5	1		4		9		3
2		9						
8	1			2	5	3		
3		5				6		9
		7	1	3			8	5
		4				8		7
5		8		6		4	9	
				8	3			6

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contains all of the digits 1 thru 9.

Word Search

O C O R N B R E A D
P C R W W X L A W B
S G R H J F E U F L
T R H A V W N T A E
U A T R N O X U M S
F T U V G B F M I S
F E R E R G E N L I
I F K S A X H R Y N
N U E T V D E X R G
G L Y H Y K V I Z Y

Autumn • Harvest • Cornbread
Turkey • Gravy • Stuffing • Cranberry
Family • Blessing • Grateful

Joke of the Month

Q: What was the turkey thankful for on Thanksgiving?

A: Vegetarians.

Q: What did Pilgrims use to bake cookies?

A: May-flour!

Did you Know?

Cranberries are one of only a few fruits native to North America that are grown commercially, along with blueberries and Concord grapes.

WHEELS IN MOTION



LEGACY CIRCLE

YOU CAN HELP KEEP OUR WHEELS TURNING!

Planned giving ensures we can continue nourishing seniors, veterans, and disabled adults for years to come. Options include: bequests, beneficiary designations, charitable trusts, gifts of stock, or property.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Contact Jacob Shafer, Senior Director of Philanthropy • jshafer@mowmp.org or 831.375.4454 x120



THE GRIFFIN GAZETTE

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MEALS ON WHEELS
OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

LET'S KEEP SHOWING UP

Your support makes sure our neighbors are not forgotten as the year comes to a close. Will you help us keep showing up in 2027?

Give today: mowmp.org/mcgives

NOVEMBER 2026

MOWMP.ORG