Almost 62 years ago, a young Sears, Roebuck and Company employee tagged along on a visit to an acquaintance’s apartment. It was there he met a beautiful young employee of a nearby warehouse. It was love at first sight.

Mr. Beasley loves to tell the story of how he met his bride of 61 years. “I just looked at her and I knew. She was so beautiful—she could have been a model! God must have been working that night because I asked her for a date; she said yes. And we’ve been in love ever since.”

In the 61 years the Beasleys have been married, they’ve raised three children and welcomed three grandchildren to their family. Over the years, Mrs. Beasley has sewed thousands of aprons and quilts and as many crocheted crafts as well. “I suppose you could say sewing was my hobby. And I’m pretty good at it!” she says, laughing.

Mr. Beasley, meanwhile, enjoyed exercising through his daily, long walks. Those walks prompted him to purchase a bicycle, which led him to a love of long-distance rides. “There was a time I was riding up to 44 miles round-trip. I really enjoyed those rides!”

As the Beasleys began to get older, their active hobbies weren’t as easy as they used to be. But they still remain active through trips into town and sharing memories and stories of their decades of love together.

Asked for the key to their long and happy marriage, Mr. Beasley says: “The secret is never be mad at each other at the same time. If she was mad at me, I wouldn’t get mad too. One of us always had to keep the peace. And we have always believed that when God put us together, He meant us to stay that way. That’s our secret!”

For the last 51 years, they’ve lived in the same modest home in Ellis County. “We bought this house for $3,500, and have been here since. We’ve made some updates here and there, but this has been our home since our first child was born.”

Being able to stay in their home has meant so much to them. With Mr. Beasley acting as his wife’s full-time caregiver, not having to worry about preparing a hot meal each day is a blessing. “Having meals delivered each day really helps us out. And we love our volunteers. They are so kind!”

Your future gift to Meals on Wheels helps provide healthy meals to families like the Beasleys and others in the community.
As I reflect on the past year as a volunteer and board trustee with Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties, I am grateful for the amazing volunteers who deliver over 720 meals a day and travel over 884 miles a day—yes, a day!

I am grateful for the leadership of past chair Brian Holley. Brian was a longtime volunteer before he ever served on the board. As board chair, he diligently worked with a group of dedicated directors in developing a strategic plan to move Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties forward. Next steps included the purchase of a commercial building in Cleburne and partnering with GA Foods to begin our first SimpleCook™ Kitchen.

As we begin 2019, I realize, as the new board chair, I have enormous shoes to fill. However, I also can be a part of the next big step: duplicating the SimpleCook™ Kitchen in Ellis County! We serve 325-plus daily meals in Ellis County, which means we need a second facility for our 1,700-square-mile service delivery area.

As a volunteer, I look forward to my visits each week on my Cleburne Route 4. One of our clients calls me the “girl with the curly hair,” and I am touched by his friendliness. Many, many times, we are the only people our precious clients see, so it is imperative we make sure we have enough volunteers each day to deliver meals. And it’s more than just a meal—it’s a smile, a touch, a connection with the outside world.

Whether it’s delivering a meal or giving financially, would you consider making a commitment to Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties? We need both to make sure our senior neighbors are not forgotten.

Kindest regards,

Cynthia Allen

Board Chair
Wanda Baker has been faithfully giving to Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties for over seven years. When she and her late husband, Paul, were first married, they committed to becoming philanthropists to causes and charities that align with their beliefs.

“For the first several years of our marriage, we didn’t have the money to help others,” Mrs. Baker says. But with dedication and financial planning, the Bakers began to see their giving goals come true. “Our philosophy has always been that we should all be generous if we’re capable. Our money is no good if we don’t share it.”

The Bakers decided to support Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties after a dear friend passed away. In the obituary, the family requested donations be made to Meals on Wheels in lieu of flowers. The Bakers were touched to hear how helpful our services were to their friend and wanted to make sure we could provide for other seniors in need.

After caring for her husband in his last days of life, Mrs. Baker was determined to continue the legacy of giving they had created together.

“The Lord has blessed me more than I can say,” she says. “I can’t believe I deserve to be able to give like I do. Even after losing Paul, I know the Lord expected me to help others, and so I do. I want to be known for helping people who can’t help themselves. And I am blessed to be generous with Meals on Wheels because you do a lot of good for a lot of people.”

Thank you, Mrs. Baker. We are grateful for you and your incredible support of our mission! Contact Christine Hockin-Boy at 817.558.2840 or 972.351.9943 if you would like to learn more about supporting Meals on Wheels in the future.
Jack and Alice Hunnicutt have been delivering meals in Cleburne since December 3, 1998—more than 20 years! At 90 and 86 years old, they are some of our most active and dedicated supporters.

“We used to deliver meals in Junction where we were from,” Mrs. Hunnicutt says. “We delivered there for about 20 years.” When they moved to Cleburne after retiring, they began delivering here. Mrs. Hunnicutt’s twin sister was delivering meals in Johnson County, and they began helping her. Soon they had their own route, and they’ve been faithful volunteers ever since.

Married for 65 years, the Hunnicutts love to joke with Meals on Wheels staff about who the “boss” is during their deliveries.

“We take turns being the boss! He drives, and I tell him how to load the containers in our car,” Mrs. Hunnicutt says. “But we’re now about 50/50 in being the boss and taking the meals up to the porch and visiting with clients.”

They agree they make a great team—which is obvious based on the strength of friendships the Hunnicutts have established with clients over the years. “We fall in love with the people we deliver to,” Mrs. Hunnicutt says. “We’ve had the same route for eight years now and have such good friendships with our clients.

“We are devoted to Meals on Wheels and love doing what we do!”

The couple is a huge blessing to Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties, says Natasha McCord, Johnson County volunteer coordinator. “The Hunnicutts are always so sweet and willing to help serve.”

We thank them both for their commitment, service and smiles they bring to our clients with each delivery!
Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties has been built with love by so many people, we’ve run out of room in our newsletter for our recognition list! Find it on the web at www.mowjec.org/bread-basket to see the generosity of our donors.

LET’S DO LUNCH! WE’LL DRIVE

Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties doesn’t just bring food to people in our two-county service delivery area. We bring joy. See the smiles yourself—ride along with us as we deliver meals on a local route. You’ll witness seniors’ gratitude for the daily meal and social contact we provide. It will be the best part of your day!

To set up your ride-along, call 817.558.2840 or 972.351.9943.
MEALS ON WHEELS OF JOHNSON & ELLIS COUNTIES’ BUILDING WITH LOVE CAPITAL PROJECT GOAL IS TO RAISE $1.5 MILLION. THIS PROJECT IS A:

• Multiphased project strategically developed with a “best use” of resources approach.
• Conservative solution allowing Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties to serve and meet the ever-increasing needs of our community today and into the future.

**PHASE I—COMPLETE ✔**

Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties has proudly completed the first-of-its-kind Distribution Facility in Texas in partnership with GA Foods.

**MADE WITH LOVE:** SimpleCook™ Kitchen, an innovative kitchen concept, ensuring a fresh-from-the-oven taste, using a sensory analysis technique allowing meals to have maximum flavor, presentation and satisfaction.

**HANDLED WITH LOVE:** Up-to-date integrated pick-up, delivery and distribution system.

**DELIVERED WITH LOVE:** Higher quality of meals, delivered by caring volunteers, with additional menu options.

**PHASE II**

Replicate the Distribution Facility in Ellis County using the sustainable model in Johnson County with the addition of office space for staff.

Ensure the same level of quality and delivery throughout our service area.

**PHASE III**

Build a modest office building for staff on the site of the Distribution Facility in Johnson County.

Provide much-needed office space for staff.

**SHOW YOUR LOVE AND SUPPORT**

To invest in our future, tax-deductible gifts can be made specifically for the Building with Love Capital Project.

Donations can be made online at www.mowjec.org/capital-project.
Pop quiz! What is 5 times 52, plus 2?

Answer: 262, which also equals Love Year-Round

You see, five days a week times 52 weeks, plus 2, equals 262 days of ending hunger and isolation. This plus your monthly commitment gives an absolute result of dignity and independence. Become a partner in giving love year-round and help deliver more than a meal while reaching infinitely more neighbors in need.

Extra Credit: Designate your monthly gift by selecting “Give Love Year-Round” on the included reply card.

You’re an A+ student!
Each year, we host March for Meals, a national campaign to raise awareness about senior issues such as isolation, hunger and loss of independence. Throughout the month of March, hundreds of local Meals on Wheels programs mobilize across the country to reach out to their communities and build the support that will enable them to serve senior citizens all year long.

During Community Champions Week, then Church Partners Week, elected officials and community champions deliver meals in their communities as they help us promote awareness of our program. We are very fortunate to have strong support from many communities and their leaders.

AniMeals, one of the special services provided by Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties, celebrates its 10-year anniversary on February 7. In 2008, we began with 10 routes. Today, we’re up to 23 routes!

Once a month, AniMeals volunteers deliver donated dog and cat food to Meals on Wheels recipients in their community. This important service helps clients with limited resources avoid using their home-delivered meals to feed their pets.

So while those home-delivered meals help sustain the health of our recipients, AniMeals boosts the health of their companion animals, who, studies show, boost the emotional health of the elderly.

There’s more: A new feature of this remarkable program is low-cost or free vaccinations, spaying/neutering and flea treatment.

Happy anniversary to a great program with a mission that brings many smiles to our clients—and their beloved pets, too!