Bravo!

Meals on Wheels

by Kim Connolly

Food and Friendship

Mother and Daughter Deliver More than Meals

Tracy Montgomery and her three-year-old daughter Claire look forward to Fridays because they know they get to visit with friends and bond over a warm meal. In their case, their friends are homebound and don't have the ability to shop or prepare their own meals due to age or infirmity. Tracy and Claire are volunteers with Meals on Wheels and have been delivering hot meals to the same "route" for over a year and a half.

Meals on Wheels volunteers routinely bond with the clients they visit, and having a young, irrepressible child as part of the team makes the experience that much more rewarding for both the volunteers and recipients. Many of the clients are senior citizens, and the relationship takes on the flavor of a family visit with a doting grandparent each week. For the clients, the daily meals deliveries are often their only social interaction and serve as an important regular check on their well-being.

"When Tracy and Claire deliver the meals, they are also delivering kindness and compassion and friendship," notes Patty Edson, Volunteer Coordinator for Meals on Wheels. "We imagine that Claire will remember this special experience her mother has provided her for a long time to come."

"I like volunteering for Meals on Wheels once a week," says Tracy, "because it allows me to include my daughter, Claire, while passing on the value of giving back to one's community." This small time commitment to making friendly visits has a lasting impact.

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Kim is the Director of Marketing and Communications at the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area. To explore volunteer opportunities, visit the United Way's Volunteer Center at www.BeAVolunteer.info.