

#### Happy New Year!

2022 was a record-setting year for Calgary Meals on Wheels. For the first time ever, we broke the 1 million meals made and delivered record – in fact we made 1,096,026 to be exact! And we could not have done it without the generous and humbling support of our community and donors. Thank you so much for showing us that you care about what we do, and for continuing to help us in the fight to eliminate food insecurity in our city. We have no doubt that 2023 will be just as busy!



#### Announcement – Appointment of new CEO for Calgary Meals on Wheels

Calgary Meals on Wheels Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Esther Elder as Chief Executive Officer effective February 6, 2023. Esther has served the non-profit sector for numerous years and has held several senior leadership positions including interim CEO for Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society. Esther comes to us from YW Calgary where she managed the Transitional Housing, Language/Settlement and Economic Prosperity programs. She has a deep understanding of community challenges and opportunities and is passionate about advancing the organization's vision of eliminating food insecurity in Calgary. Long-time executive leader of the organization Janice Curtis is looking forward to her retirement but says "Calgary Meals on Wheels and the team will always be near and dear to my heart." Stephanie Ralph, co-CEO in 2022, has expanded her career goals in a new direction and has decided to dedicate herself full-time to her new purpose.

#### Hot Chocolate Fest is back!!

Now in its 12th year, the 2023 YYC Hot Chocolate Fest will be the biggest and best yet! YYC Hot Chocolate Fest has grown to become a winter institution in Calgary, and with **175** participating cafés, restaurants and chocolatiers participating this year, 2023 will be the biggest the event has ever been.

Every February vendors compete for the coveted awards of YYC's Best Hot Chocolate, Best Spirited Hot Chocolate and "Cup That Runneth Over" – all in the name of helping Calgary Meals on Wheels, with proceeds from each drink sold being donated back to us. For 28 days Calgarians can try all kinds of hot cocoas – from traditional to downright wacky – and then vote for their favourites on the YYC Hot Chocolate Fest app or on the [website](#).

Last year Hot Chocolate Fest raised nearly \$80,000 for this great organization – and with your help this year we can raise even more!

So, [download the app here](#) and then this February get out there and drink some tasty hot chocolates for a good cause!

Thanks to our sponsors:



#### Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal

It is with great pride that we share that Janice Curtis, our soon to be retired Executive Director of 14 years, has been awarded the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal by the Government of Alberta to recognize her significant contributions in our community. When the news was shared with staff, Janice stated that she is honored to be awarded this medal, and she is also humbled, as this award is truly recognition of the hard work of the many people who have worked, volunteered, and supported Calgary Meals on Wheels now and in the past. Congratulations Janice!

#### We need volunteers!

Our volunteer numbers have been steadily declining over the past few years. Historically 700-800 volunteers would help us deliver meals each year, but sadly – thanks in part to Covid – we are down to only 350 wonderful souls as we start this new year. To help get the word out, and to highlight the awesome people who help us do what we do, we will be running a volunteer recruitment campaign over the next few months. So, if you have some time to spare during weekdays, or know someone who might, now is the time to sign up.

Check out this great story Global News made about us to help us recruit some new volunteers: [Global News](#)

#### Cookie Kitchen

Many thanks to all the cookie fans out there who went down to Southcentre Mall in November and December to visit our Cookie Kitchen. All told about 8,000 cookies were decorated for a total donation amount of just under \$22,000! Shout-out to all the amazing volunteers who helped make this happen – about 50 people donated approximately 900 hours of their time to make this magical event come to life! And a big thank you to Southcentre Mall for hosting us again, and for the wonderful fundraising opportunities they provide local charities all year-long.

