

The Meals -On Wheels program is sponsored by Family Services of Rochester, MN and the program provides hot nutritious home delivered meals. The meals are delivered by 300 volunteers over the noon hour and often the recipients are frail, convalescing or have disabilities.

Here is how the MOW program and a dedicated Kiwanian probably saved a man's life, in Mike's own words....

“Al Southwick and I (Michael Siverling) went to do our weekly Kiwanis volunteerism of “Meals on Wheels” deliveries in Rochester, Minnesota. We do the same route one day, every week. Al has been the driver recently and I have been delivering the meals to the houses. I have a good knowledge of our customers and their habits. This knowledge became very important that day.

We came to the home of one particular customer, knocked and the customer did not answer. He was a man who never missed being there for his meals – especially in cold weather when it was difficult for him to get out. I was immediately concerned. I knocked louder and yelled his name. I heard no response. Again, I knocked and yelled. I thought I heard a faint response. I knocked again. I heard his faint voice inside beyond the door. I tried the door and I lifted the door and rattled both it and its door knob while I pushed heavily against it. It opened. I followed his voice to the back of his living quarters where he was lying in a hall near his bathroom. He explained how he had fallen in the middle of the night and had been there for over six hours unable to move because of the agonizing pain of whatever was broken in his pelvis or upper leg area.

I determined that he was “shocky” in my opinion, but there was no blood on the floor. Even bundled up, his teeth were chattering and he was shaking. I immediately called 911 on my cell phone and told them of his condition and described to them how they might get to the location which was not a normal address. I gave them landmarks that they would recognize along the way.

I was then asked to give information about him which I got by talking to him and relaying the information over the phone including a medication necklace that he wore around his neck.

Al had come up to the door to see what was going on. I gave him a 15 second update while I continued communicating with 911-operator. Al said that if I was okay with it he'd do some more of our route and then return.

The ambulance had trouble finding the place and I heard them go right by the end of the road. I excused myself from the injured man and ran out and up the road to flag them down.

When they got there I briefed the ambulance crew and police on what I knew of his present condition and his general condition as I knew him as a Meals-on-Wheels client. After the ambulance left, Al called and came to pick me up. He and I then finished the remainder of the Meals-on-Wheels route together.

Later that day I was called by one of the policemen who had been on the scene. The police wanted give me an award. They presented me with the beautiful “**Rochester Police Department - Citizen Recognition Award**” for my efforts in saving the man life.

Mike Siverling

Clearly, Mike's extra effort and personal concern for the well being of a MOW recipient made all the difference on this day. Mike's quick reactions and the police/ambulance teams minimized the danger to a man's long term health.

Here are photo close-ups of the Rochester Citizen Recognition Award medallion, front and back. The Rochester Police Department's Citizen Recognition Award is presented to those citizens, "For your extraordinary efforts in advancing the quality of life in our community."



Congratulations to Al Southwick and Mike Siverling for not only being at the "right place, at the right time" but for doing the "right thing".

As we all know, it generally takes a “whole team” to make a program grow and flourish and that is what these Kiwanis Day Makers have been able to do in the last ten years. Twelve of our Day Makers are committed to delivering the meals one week each month. While most of the daily deliveries are rather uneventful...one never knows when a simple visit, a kind word and a warm meal may make all the difference in the world to a shut-in person. And on March 15th, a fellow Kiwanian made a huge difference in our community, one person at a time.



(front row) - Roger Olson, Al Southwick, Mike Siverling (award), Ella VanLaningham, Pat Horlocker, Jerry Kratz
(back row) - George Heyne, Jerry Steinke, Larry Krob, Larry Scilley, Paul Sodt, John Looft

“Family Service Rochester has provided Meals on Wheels to the Rochester area since 1972. We have approximately 300 dedicated volunteers and they are truly the core of the program and its’ success. Not only do they deliver the meals, but they also have “eyes” on recipients everyday which, you can see by virtue of this story, is priceless! A big **Thank You** goes out to all of our volunteers and the impact they have in our community,” says Jane Buffie, Director of Program Operations.

Thank you all, for all that you do for our community.

Kathy Davis, President
Kiwanis Day Makers Club

PS: For additional information and high resolution photo availability, contact rjowriter@aol.com

Kiwanis Day Makers web site: <http://kiwanisrochester.org>