

Dear [],

For many elderly, a visit by one of our Meals on Wheels volunteers not only brings nutritional sustenance, it may also provide emotional nourishment.

For you see, many of our elderly are alone. Many have no family or friends who care enough to visit regularly. And though they are otherwise functional and able to care for themselves, they are unable to leave their homes.

So for many of the elderly we serve, the high point of their day is when our Meals on Wheels volunteer drops by with some hot food and a friendly face. You can just imagine an elderly woman waiting by the window, eagerly watching for her Meals on Wheels friend to show up at the usual time.

And then imagine that one day the volunteer doesn't show up. The woman goes to bed hungry, perhaps wondering if something terrible happened to her volunteer friend. But she waits at the window the next day, and still, no Meals on Wheels volunteer.

And the same thing again the next day, and the next, and the next.

It's a heartbreaking scenario that I've asked you to imagine, isn't it? But here's the worst part – it's not an imaginary scenario. It's happening right now, every day.

And we're powerless to stop it.

We are powerless to continue helping many of the seniors who have come to depend upon us, because like everyone else, the economy has hit us hard. Like any other organization of non-profit volunteers, we depend upon the donations of the kind-hearted citizens of our local communities. And those donations are down – badly.

Now I'd like you to imagine just one more scenario.

The elderly woman has been without her daily Meals on Wheels visit for a day, or 2, maybe even 3. But she still gazes out the window every day at the usual time. She hasn't given up hope.

It's that time of the day right now.

She's sitting at her window, watching longingly, still clinging to hope. And then it happens. Her friend pulls up in the Meals on Wheels van. Can you imagine the joy, relief and gratitude felt by our elderly friend? Can't you just close your eyes and visualize the huge smile of joy on her face as she opens the door for her Meals on Wheels volunteer?

You could be the person responsible for putting that smile on her face.

Won't you help us do that?