



For Immediate Release
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aniMeals on Wheels has to scale back deliveries for the first time due to decreased donations

Seniors will only receive half of the food they normally would for their pet companions; the program, which helps alleviate some of the burdens seniors experience, is low on pet food donations.

(Houston, TX...June 26, 2008) For the first time since the program began in February 2007, aniMeals on Wheels is experiencing a donation shortfall. All of the nearly 200 seniors on the program will only receive half of the food they normally would for the month and after those deliveries are made, the program's shelves will be completely bare.

aniMeals on Wheels is a program of Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston which provides a home-delivered meal to more than 3500 homebound seniors in the Greater Houston area. aniMeals began because seniors in the Meals on Wheels program were sharing their home-delivered meal with their pet or having to make the difficult choice of feeding their pet or purchasing medications. aniMeals helps to alleviate the tough choices seniors have to make.

“We believe donations have tapered off during the summer months because many of the groups who conduct drives for us are school groups which are on vacation,” states Tiffany Harris, IM Volunteer Manager. “We are getting by with delivering half of what we normally would but after this month’s delivery we are completely without food.”

David Roberts, IM’s Director of Senior Nutrition Services states, “The seniors represent the most frail and isolated and they depend on the love of their animal companions. We want to prolong that love for as long as possible but we need the help of the community.”

Senior Larry Montgomery enjoys the help the program brings for his Basset Hound “Hogie.” “He’s all I have left, my wife died 4 years ago, we got him together.”

The program is also concerned because two volunteers had to step down last month, when asked why they cited the rising gas costs as their reason for leaving. The program is completely dependent on volunteers both to deliver the pet food and to donate pet food, any loss in volunteers or support significantly hampers the program’s efforts.

The program, which can’t accept cash donations, is asking for donations of dog and cat food, both wet and dry, and gift cards to local pet stores.

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Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston is a community service of Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston (IM). IM's programs and services touch the lives of more than 6,000 seniors and refugees each year in addition to our interfaith education and disaster preparedness opportunities.