



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEIGHBORLY'S MEALS ON WHEELS PROGRAM JOINS IN NATIONAL MONTH-LONG MARCH FOR MEALS CELEBRATION WITH COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE

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SUPPORT WILL HELP TO FIGHT SENIOR HUNGER AND ISOLATION IN PINELLAS COUNTY

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA February 15, 2022– Meals on Wheels Pinellas announced today that it will be participating in the 20th annual March for Meals – a month-long, nationwide celebration of Meals on Wheels and our senior neighbors who rely on this essential service to remain healthy and independent at home. Neighborly's celebration will include various activities throughout the month of March, including Community Champions Week, 2nd annual MARCHathon, and launching the MOWjito cocktail campaign in partnership with participating Pinellas County restaurants to promote contributions to the cost of delivering meals to vulnerable seniors. Community partners and restaurants interested in getting in on the fun are welcome!

"Our goal is to raise awareness of Neighborly and help us recruit volunteers needed to serve the 700 seniors currently on the waiting list for Meals on Wheels. In April of last year, we were delivering 4,000 meals per week. That number is now over 10,000 meals each week," said David Lomaka, Executive Director of Neighborly. "With the help of over 1,000 volunteers, Neighborly delivered 635,447 meals to homebound seniors in 2021. We celebrate that during March for Meals with community leaders, elected officials, and business owners who care about our vulnerable neighbors by inviting these Community Champions to deliver meals alongside our volunteer drivers. These meals are a crucial part of keeping seniors well and safe at home." This special month highlights Meals on Wheels and shines the light on the additional services Neighborly provides to Pinellas seniors.

"The Older Americans Act Nutrition Program is the only federally supported program designed to be an antidote for both senior hunger and isolation," said Ellie Hollander, President and CEO of Meals on Wheels America. "Despite decades of proven success and bipartisan support, funding for this program has failed to keep pace with the rapidly growing need for its services. With the nation's senior population increasing dramatically, now is the time to support local Meals on Wheels programs – through volunteering, donating and speaking out – to ensure we are able to deliver for another 50 years."

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ABOUT Neighborly/Meals on Wheels Pinellas: Trusted Senior Service provider since 1966, Neighborly is not only the Pinellas Meals on Wheels provider, they offer Adult Day Care and Transportation Services to thousands of clients each year. Volunteers deliver more than a meal to homebound clients, they offer them encouragement and reassurance that they are not forgotten.

ABOUT National March for Meals: Annual celebration commemorates the historic day in March of 1972 when President Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. Since 2002, community-based Meals on Wheels programs from across the country have joined forces for the annual awareness campaign to celebrate this successful public-private partnership and garner the support needed to fill the gap between the seniors served and those still in need.

For more information on how you can volunteer or support seniors in your Pinellas neighborhood this March, visit www.Neighborly.org/march-for-meals