

Sip, Smile, Support: Fundraisers keep Meals on Wheels rolling

By Riley Murphy

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Town of Caledon has approved a grant of \$4,000 for Caledon Meals on Wheels (CMOW) at April 22's Council meeting.

"It truly is a critical grant for us," explained CMOW Executive Director Kim Rodrigues. "It provides the coverage to be able to utilize the community kitchen at the Albion Bolton Community Center."

Rodrigues explained that they apply for an annual in-kind grant to allow them to use the community kitchen.

CMOW offers home-cooked meals for their program, and without the grant, Rodrigues said she doesn't know if they would have been able to continue the work they do there three times a week.

Rodrigues shared that CMOW prides itself on being one of the Province's only Meals on Wheels programs that cook their meals and serve them hot.

"We're really happy to be able to continue to offer fresh, not frozen, cooked from scratch that day meals to our seniors three days a week," said Rodrigues. "If we had to rent a kitchen, the cost of that perhaps would make it such that we wouldn't be able to cook meals."

Aside from the grant, CMOW has also been active in the fundraising world in recent weeks to continue raising money for the program.

Starting with the Sip 'N' Savour event at the Home and Lifestyle show on April 11, right into Smile Cookie Week for Tim Hortons.

At the 2025 Home and Lifestyle show in Caledon, all net proceeds from tickets purchased for the opening night Sip 'N' Savour event went directly to CMOW.

Then, from April 28 to May 4, at participating Tim Hortons locations, one hundred per cent of the proceeds from smile cookies went to CMOW.

"We're out waving at people, connecting with people in the drive through," said Rodrigues.

Even Cookie Monster came out to support the cause this year.

"Our fundraising is a big part of what we do. We need to fundraise more than \$200,000 yearly to keep our doors open and our costs low for our seniors," explained Rodrigues.

Rodrigues shared that although there is a cost for seniors to purchase meals, many can apply for additional subsidies.

"A lot of these fundraising dollars go towards that. In our past fiscal year, which we've really just closed up at the end of March, we had more than \$30,000 in subsidies for our meals program. That meant that seniors who couldn't purchase meals were still fed or were fed at a lower cost," said Rodrigues.

"These fundraisers really allow us to continue to offer and reduce any barriers that a senior or somebody with a disability may have to accessing our program," said Rodrigues. "Whether that's meals or senior wellness programs."

CMOW offers their senior wellness program, where they see over 250 seniors weekly throughout the community.

It is because of their core funding and fundraising opportunities that they can do so.

?What's really important for us is the fundraising that we do, and it stays right here in our community, which I think is critical,?
shared Rodrigues.

Residents can visit cmow.org to see CMOW's other programs or to volunteer and connect.