

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Interfaith Community Services

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Mobile Meals recipients face summer shortage

Some homebound seniors and disabled persons on Tucson's northwest side may be left wondering where their next meal is coming from this summer.

That's because many regular Interfaith Community Services volunteers will be leaving soon for summer vacations, creating a shortage of drivers to deliver the Mobile Meals that help recipients remain independent and living at home.

To highlight the need for short-term ICS summer replacement volunteers, Oro Valley Mayor Paul Loomis will help deliver Mobile Meals on Friday, May 30. He'll be joining ICS volunteers Peter and Inger Graf on their route.

Each weekday except Thanksgiving and Christmas, ICS drivers deliver two special diet meals to homebound or convalescing seniors and disabled individuals. ICS currently has 16 Mobile Meals routes serving up to 116 recipients on Tucson's northwest side.

Typically, ICS loses about a fourth of its drivers in the summer as they migrate to cooler climates, and most other drivers are gone at least a couple of weeks, according to Pete Perona, Mobile Meals Coordinator. That always leaves the agency scrambling to fill the routes.

In April, 142 volunteers drove 9,152 miles delivering the meals, according to ICS statistics. Drivers are eligible for mileage reimbursements under the Regional Transit Authority, currently at 50.5 cents per mile. The ICS Mobile Meals program serves the area east of Interstate 10 to Swan Road and north of Roger Road to Rancho Vistoso.

Interfaith Community Services serves disadvantaged families, seniors and the disabled year-round with food, transportation, emergency financial assistance and health needs through the support of 620 volunteers and 45 faith communities. Its main office is at 2820 W. Ina Road.

For information on volunteering at ICS, call Sandi Brickley at 297-2738 ext. 217. To learn more about ICS, visit the website at www.icstucson.org.

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