

SAY HELLO TO COMPANION CHARLIE

Over the course of 54 years, delivering meals to Greenville County's homebound, we have learned that while daily nutrition is a necessity for these individuals, social connection is just as crucial. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 1 in 3 seniors lived alone and 1 in 4 said they felt lonely (Meals on Wheels America, 2021). While the temporary isolation most of us experienced was new and unfamiliar, that is our homebound neighbors' everyday reality.

"If anything good came out of COVID, it's a better understanding of how loneliness and isolation impact physical and mental health," shared Catriona Carlisle, Meals on Wheels of Greenville executive director. With that, allow us to introduce you to the **Companion Charlie tablet program**.



Companion Charlie uses technology to improve the lives of our clients within their own homes by connecting them with friends, family, and our staff. Participating clients are provided with a tablet outfitted with cellular data for one year—free of charge. These tablets allow them to:

- Receive daily pictures, videos, and messages from those in their circle
- Follow virtual exercises classes
- Play games on their own or with friends
- Watch virtual events like Church livestreams
- Search for videos on YouTube such as their favorite songs
- View the weekly MOWGL menu



**WYFF STORY
ON COMPANION
CHARLIE**



Mother and daughter clients of ours, Janie and Pamela Acker, are both enrolled in Companion Charlie and have found it to be beneficial. While they each live in Greenville, they both face physical and mental health obstacles that keep them homebound. "It's been great to send reminders or check in through the tablets when neither of us are able to be face-to-face or have the energy to get on the phone," said Pamela. "It's also helped us keep in touch with family members out of state and them with us."

Janie has been able to tune-in each week to watch In Touch Ministries sermons, play games like Scrabble, and receive pictures from her best friend from high school, Judy. "I enjoy it, for me it's been kind of a blessing," said Janie. Each week, our staff or volunteers send these clients anything from photos of themselves to trivia questions to simply asking about their days. Companion Charlie has helped us engage with our clients past their front doors and we look forward to growing this program.

GIVE TODAY. CHANGE TOMORROW.
Visit MealsonWheelsGreenville.org/Donate.

"The tablet has been a godsend. I spend a lot of time alone, especially since I have been sick. It gives me other things to concentrate on. Thank you so much for the opportunity to use the tablet." - Monica B. Meals on Wheels of Greenville Client