



Bob greeted me at the door of the home that he shares with his brother and sister-in-law with a broad smile. He invited me to sit with him at the kitchen table while we talked. Born in Chicago, Bob worked downtown as a mail room clerk for many years. He worked at his last job for twenty years. He proudly stated that when he retired “everyone came to my retirement party and there was a huge cake!”

Bob never married and lived with his mother until her death. He then lived alone in the house they shared, until about a year ago. He was on “strong medication” due to heart surgery and other problems, and this caused fatigue and confusion. Sometimes he ran out of food and needed help with shopping and other daily living activities. He did not drive, so he couldn’t get out much. His doctor recommended that he not continue to live alone.

Fortunately, Bob’s brother and sister-in-law lived nearby and he was able to move in with them. Since they work during the day, the Home Delivered Meals program means that they know Bob will get a nutritionally well balanced hot meal everyday, delivered by a friendly volunteer. Bob’s brother explained that it is a great relief to know that his brother will be getting a well balanced meal and a visit from a friendly, caring person while he is at work.

Bob knows who will be delivering his meal each day and looks forward to the conversations they have about the Cubs and the Sox. “If the regular guy isn’t on, sometimes I call the supervisor to find out when he’ll be back and make sure he’s okay,” Bob states. “They even help with some things here, like bringing in the garbage cans,” he says. “I know all of the people, and all of them are real nice.” I asked if Bob had any recommendations for improvements of the Home Delivered Meals, and he stated, “Don’t change anything; everything is really good!”

The average age of a meals-on-wheels client is 81 years old. Bob is 66 and an example of a younger senior with serious health issues who needs help to remain at home!