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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels Weathers the Storm

ROSENBERG, Texas (Sept. 6th, 2017) In the midst of the chaos and loss caused by Tropical Storm Harvey, faithful volunteers, compassionate citizens, dedicated staff, the Texas National Guard, and a Rosenberg businessman came together with Fort Bend Senior Meals on Wheels to make sure that our most vulnerable citizens received nourishment and reassurance. Always important, the home-delivered meal program became even more so after the catastrophic storm, magnifying the seniors' isolation and fragility.

"Most of our seniors were unable to shop for provisions prior to the flooding or lost electricity which caused their fresh food to spoil," said Manuela Arroyos, CEO of Fort Bend Seniors. "Even though we had provided shelf stable meals to our senior clients earlier this summer, they began to run low on supplies. It was crucial that we resume service as soon as possible, without putting staff or volunteers in danger."

While the storm provided a host of challenges, friends, strangers and neighbors stepped up to overcome them at every turn. The regular food service vendor was unable to provide meals because of the storm's impact on their facilities. Dan Silvestain of GEM Food Service in Rosenberg, Texas luckily had the food and facility to meet the immediate needs of providing box lunches and water. Flooded roads made it unsafe for volunteers and staff to deliver meals to seniors in Waller County, so the Texas National Guard with their special training and equipment braved the floods to reach those in difficult neighborhoods.

To provide enough food to last over the Labor Day holiday, FBS added a special delivery day on Sunday, September 3, a day not normally covered by volunteers and staff. Through the power of social media and emails, a call for volunteers resulted in an outpouring of help on Sunday morning with families and high school students joining FBS drivers and seasoned volunteers to deliver meals, company and hope. Many individuals, who said they were relatively unaffected

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by the floods, said it was therapeutic to help others. "We are so thankful to have so many people join with us in this crisis," said Manuela Arroyos. "In situations like this, it really shows how much people care about our seniors, making sure they are safe and have a meal on the table." While the immediate crisis of serving seniors after of the ravages of Tropical Storm Harvey has passed, Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels welcomes partners in its service to seniors.

Ongoing needs include:

- Financial gifts. Resources, always lean, have been stretched to the limit by Hurricane Harvey. Donations can be made by visiting our website fortbendseniors.org and you will find the Donate button on the Welcome page.
- Join a Volunteer Team by contacting Lisa Camp at lisa@fortbendseniors.org or direct line at 281.633.7053
- Hygiene items for seniors, particularly adult diapers.
- Pet food.
- Supplemental drinks, such as Ensure.

In-kind donations can be delivered weekdays to Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels Senior Center in the Bud O'Shieles Building at 1330 Band Road, Rosenberg between 8-5 pm.

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About Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels

Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels, a United Way Agency, is committed to helping seniors remain independent by enhancing their quality of life through services and resources. Fort Bend Seniors is qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code as a non-profit corporation, and as such contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent as allowed by law. For more information about Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels, visit www.fortbendseniors.org.