

Irving Business Review

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Volunteers bring food and a smile to area's homebound

By Jess Paniszczyn

Wearing buttons and waving pompoms, Citi employees filled a company parking lot in Irving with enthusiasm as hundreds of employees volunteered to deliver food for the annual Visiting Nurses Association's Meals on Wheels program. Because of a shortage of volunteers, paid drivers deliver more than 200 Meals on Wheels routes in Dallas County. Citi's volunteer effort, known as Deliver Dallas, provides meals for individuals included in paid routes.

"Over 900 Citi volunteers are going to be taking part in the activity today," said Steve Hemperly, an Executive Vice President for Citi. "This is the 11th year Citi has participated in the VNA Meals on Wheels program. To this point, our participation has equaled over 99,000 volunteer days, which is just phenomenal. Our volunteers are going to be delivering meals on 223 separate routes throughout Dallas County.

"Illness, disability and frailty make it difficult for some mem-

bers of our community to prepare their own meals. In the old days, a lot of people would rely on loving family members or friendly neighbors in order to fill the void that we are filling today.

"With the assistance of community volunteers, Meals on Wheels delivers more than 32,000 hot meals each day to homebound elderly and disabled persons in Dallas County."

Robert Carpenter, CEO of the Visiting Nurses Association, spoke with Citi volunteers prior to the start of Deliver Dallas and stressed the importance of delivering meals. "Our service covers all of Dallas County, and there are over 20,000 seniors who are prisoners in their own home," Mr. Carpenter said. "They can't drive, they don't have a vehicle, they can't cook, they can't stand or maybe they have arthritis and can't open a can of food. We have that many people relying on someone bringing food to them.

"Volunteers enable us to get food to these people. Through today's event, over 200 routes will

be delivered. That represents 1,500 meals.

"I hope that those volunteering today recognize that other people have needs greater than they do. They are sharing their blessings with people who are less fortunate. That in and of itself is a reward they will get, and they will realize they have done something good," he said.

Volunteer, Ben Sandoval, usually handles corporate complaints for Citi, but he was willing to forego the excitement of his daily routine to help others.

"Volunteering allows me to get out and work in the community. I hope the people we meet today understand that there are actually people out there willing to help. A lot of times people don't feel there is somebody out there to help them. There are organizations and people who want to help others in need.

"Volunteering helps me feel good as a person, because I am doing something good. And it is beneficial to those who don't have the help or the family support they need," Mr. Sandoval said.



Speaking to the day's volunteers, Robert Carpenter, CEO of the Visiting Nurses Association, stresses the importance of delivering meals to homebound individuals.

Nylo announces management

Provided by Lindsay Stout

NYLO Hotels, which is scheduled to open its second Dallas-Ft. Worth property this summer, announces the management team for the NYLO Dallas/Las Colinas boutique hotel, including General Manager, Brad Ashmore; Area Executive Chef, Wiley E. Bates III; Director of Food and Beverage, Jose

Mateo; and Front Office Director, Michelle Rojas.

"As we look to open our brand's third hotel this year, we continue to focus on recruiting experienced talent that complements our unique style and one-of-a-kind experience," said Patrick O'Neil, executive vice president operations.

Citizens can make their opinions known to DART

Continued from page 1

ture that has made Irving so successful, but that we do everything in our power to guarantee the continued growth and development in the future," said Carter Holston, Chamber Chairman of the Board.

Recently, discussions revolved around the development of a Cotton Belt station along the Orange Line. With a variety of options on the table for this final phase, the Chamber's stance has been clear throughout the process. Several options for this final phase have been discussed, but only two op-

tions meet the specific requirements that the Chamber and the business community have set forth - the original option and the first phase of the newly proposed phased approach.

The DART staff is currently recommending a new phased approach, which entails a three-phase plan for this final segment that has the Orange Line going directly into Terminals A and B and maintains the original 2013 schedule, as well as including a Cotton Belt station. The first phase follows closely the original Orange Line plan and takes

the train into the airport to a Terminal A and B station. At a later time, a potential phase 2, would connect the Orange Line to the Cotton Belt rail line. Phase 3 will reconnect the Cotton Belt station to the Orange Line as it enters the Airport. Once completed, every third train from the airport would travel to the Cotton Belt station before continuing on to Irving and eventually Dallas.

"This phased approach incorporates Irving's request for a direct connection to Terminals A and B," said Chris Wallace, Chamber President/CEO. "The initial proposal looks reasonable, but like all options suggested so far, we are carefully studying and reviewing this phased approach to make sure that it meets the needs of Irving's businesses and that the proposal is economically equitable for Irving.

"The Orange Line, Downtown Dallas to the airport, should have been one of the very first lines DART built. Irving and Dallas have paid into DART for many years.

"If the Orange Line stops in Grapevine between the Airport and Irving with no direct line available, they could incentivize transit oriented developments (TODs) to build near the Grapevine station. We have TODs already planned along the Orange Line. We don't want to do anything that could negatively impact our TODs.

"Not having a direct route to the Airport could also negatively impact DART. The more successful our TODs are, the more successful DART is. That represents more money into their system.

"DART wants our TODs to be

successful, because we are a member city. From a business standpoint, a lot of our development along the Orange Line is depending on the fastest, most direct route from Terminals A and B," he said.

Failing to connect the Orange Line on schedule could negatively impact Irving, Dallas and DART.

"If DART doesn't connect the Orange Line to the airport by 2013, that could have a big impact on our planning for TODs. Developers are committed and are moving forward with the plan that they will have a light rail along their businesses to connect with the airport by December 2013," Mr. Wallace said.

"From what I understand, the DART Board is going to adopt a resolution on June 23 that basically says they are moving forward with the phased approach, which is the first direct connection into A and B, which is what we want. We are asking that they also place into the resolution that any future build out of any other line off of the Orange Line would have to go through the same rigorous, due diligence process that any other line in the system goes through.

"Since joining DART, Irving has contributed at least \$834 million to DART and spent years putting together more than \$4 billion worth of planned development projects along the line's future footprint.

"Irving has been proactive and diligent from recruiting businesses to beginning work on a convention and entertainment complex with the understanding that the trains would directly connect Dallas to D/FW Airport through Irving, any change in that direct con-

nection to the Airport would negatively affect economic development in the Las Colinas Urban Center, the areas surrounding the Orange Line and would additionally impact other parts of Dallas County including the Dallas Hospital District, American Airlines Center and of course Downtown Dallas," he said.

The Chamber is also confident that unless one of these two direct connect options is selected, development opportunities outside the DART service area would occur. These types of developments would negatively effect the growth of sales tax needed to help pay for the construction, operation and maintenance of the DART rail lines and could compete with Irving's transit-oriented development.

In an effort to ensure that Irving's requirements are collectively presented to DART, the Irving Economic Development Partnership is coordinating busses for Orange Line Stakeholders to attend two important upcoming meetings at DART. On June 17, DART will be hosting a public forum for the Orange Line at 6:30 p.m., and the DART Board Meeting, where a vote will be taken on Orange Line options, will be on June 23, at 6:30 p.m. The Irving Economic Development Partnership is sponsoring busses for both of these meetings and they will depart on those respective dates from the Las Colinas Country Club parking lot, 4400 N. O'Connor Blvd., at 5 p.m.

If you would like to ride a bus on these two dates, please register online with the Chamber at www.irvingchamber.com, or call 214-217-8484.

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