# Table of Contents

Director’s Report..............................................1  
What Is the Office on Aging?.................................2  
Office on Aging Revenue Sources.........................4  
Office on Aging Volunteers.................................5  
CAC & Office on Aging history.............................6  
Council on Aging............................................7  
Office on Aging programs.................................8-44  
  Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors...8  
  Daily Living Center...10  
  East Tennessee 2-1-1...12  
  Foster Grandparent Program...14  
  Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures...16  
  Grandparents as Parents Program...18  
  Knox County CAC Transit...20  
  O’Connor Senior Center...22  
  One Call Club...24  
  Project LIVE...26  
  Retired & Senior Volunteer Program...28  
  Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service...30  
  Senior Companion Program...32  
  Senior Employment Service...34  
  Senior Nutrition Program...36  
  Volunteer Assisted Transportation...38  
  CHIPS...40  
  Knox PAWS...41  
  Mobile Affordable Meal Service...42  
  Mobile Meals Kitchen...43  
  Office on Aging...44  
Office on Aging staff list......................inside back cover
MISSION STATEMENT OF THE
KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY
COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE (CAC)
OFFICE ON AGING

The CAC Office on Aging is a public nonprofit agency. It has the major responsibility in Knoxville and Knox County of planning for services for senior citizens; assessing needs of older citizens and developing resources to meet those needs; coordinating services for the elderly to minimize duplication and avoid overlap—whether provided by public, nonprofit, or for-profit organizations; providing information about services and programs to older citizens and their families and connecting them to those services; and advocating on behalf of older citizens. We are charged with serving all seniors, regardless of life situation, but are mandated to concentrate on those for whom aging often presents the greatest hardship: women and minorities and all who are in frail health or poor.

OFFICE ON AGING CONTACT INFORMATION

This annual report is published by the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging. It covers the year from July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011.

If you would like more information about the Office on Aging or any of its programs, or if you would like additional copies of this report, contact the Office on Aging.

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DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Weathering the Storms

Do you remember the April storms that brought flooding to just about every part of Knoxville and Knox County, along with major hail, wind, and lightning damage to cars, homes, crops, and businesses? “Remember?” you’re probably saying. “How could I forget!”

It was quite a wild spring, weather-wise, and many of our programs were contacted by their participants regarding damages they’d suffered and requests for help. Even now, as we prepare this annual report, we can hear hammers pounding in the background, as roofers still work at fixing the roof damage that occurred in our Western Avenue community back in April and June. Knoxville’s visual icon from the storms seems to be the blue tarp: an all-too-common sight as one drives around in storm-ravaged neighborhoods many months later.

Many seniors all across the country are weathering other kinds of storms. They continue, like their younger family members, to face financial challenges because of a difficult economy. Seniors face a special difficulty, in that they are living on fixed incomes—incomes that were already low to begin with and are now stretched to the maximum as costs go up and retirement benefits don’t. Seniors also face their own individual storms: illnesses or other factors that make it impossible to remain in their homes; loss of spouses, siblings, and old friends that leave them lonely and grieving; and the confusion of living in an ever-increasing technological culture that they no longer feel a part of.

But most of the seniors we know are not despairing. They’ve seen the dark before the storm before. They have faced those storms, and they know that they survived to see the sun shining again after the storm had passed. They may have to put on their blue tarps, but they will survive. Yes, the storms do damage. But the human spirit is stronger than any storm.

The Office on Aging has also faced its own storms over the last year. But we are still here, still providing services for seniors and their caregivers. We like to think that our services provide that “blue tarp” that allows seniors to weather continued storms without sustaining additional damage. Sometimes folks just need to hear a friendly voice on the phone or encounter a cheerful volunteer delivering a Mobile Meal to reassure them that they really can weather a particular storm at a particular time because they have support and encouragement from others.

Is there a storm in your life? Do you need a tarp to cover you and protect you as you weather that storm? How can the Office on Aging help you or your family or your agency? Together, we know that we can weather the storms and come out stronger. We hope to be here for you and yours, just as the community has been here for us when we have needed help.

Barbara Monty
Director
WHAT IS THE OFFICE ON AGING?

What is the Office on Aging? We’ve been doing a lot of thinking about that lately. We are a large group of people—people who serve other people. We are a staff of more than 100 people; a collection of about 20 programs (give or take) that serve senior citizens, family and professional caregivers, and other agencies and organizations that serve seniors; a fleet of about 82 vehicles; with a total revenue of about $9.6 million.

Because we are part of the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) we benefit from its reputation for cost effective and efficient service as well as for compassionate and caring staff. CAC has generous support from both the City of Knoxville and Knox County governments. In addition to monetary support, Knox County provides fiscal accounting, purchasing and payroll services at no charge to the agency. This allows CAC and the Office on Aging to operate with very low administrative costs.

That tells you part of what we are. It tells you less about what we do. And it tells you almost nothing about how and why we do what we do.

In the following pages, you will become acquainted with the programs of the Office on Aging, you will see their individual budgets, their lists of accomplishments for the year, and a few of their stories. Reading the program pages, you will get a pretty good idea of what the Office on Aging is. However, we began to realize as we put this annual report together that the Office on Aging is more than the sum of its parts. We are not just an agency that administers about 20 programs that serve seniors. As a united whole, we—and our programs—are a voice for seniors in our community. We speak for those who can’t speak for themselves. We advocate for new services for seniors and caregivers of seniors when those people would not have the ability to do so themselves. We plan ahead for the services that will be needed in years to come, taking into account how the volume of need will also change and grow. We are an objective source of vital information for seniors and their family members.

Many of the programs under the Knox County Office on Aging umbrella are operated and administered independently in other communities. By bringing together many programs that serve seniors, we are able to provide integrated services in a seamless way for the people we serve, while also providing those services faster, more efficiently, and less expensively than if they each had to pay for the staffing, office space, and other overhead of being run separately.

The connections between the 20 or so programs of the Office on Aging is perhaps our greatest strength. When one of our programs makes a referral to another Office on Aging program, the referring program manager often walks across the office discusses the referral with the other manager, and new services are delivered to the person in need by the end of the day rather than after weeks of playing phone tag, sending e-mails, and having to fax paperwork to agencies on the other end of the county.

Every person who is served by programs of the Office on Aging is assessed for needs other than those that they originally applied for. For example, many of our participants come in...
through the Mobile Meals program. Perhaps they’ve experienced a downturn in their health or been hospitalized recently. They or their families realize that they will need home-delivered meals for a while. However, in assessing an individual’s need for Mobile Meals, our staff often realize that the person also could use the services of Project LIVE or the Senior Companion Program. The assessor may hear about the person’s financial struggles and their feelings of being isolated from the outside world and refer them to Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors, CHIPS, and Knox PAWS. It may become apparent that the individual cannot get around town as they need to and may be referred to CAC Transit or Volunteer Assisted Transportation. Referrals are certainly not limited to Office on Aging programs. When appropriate, referrals are made to KAT, TennCare, Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) and any number of community resources.

If connectivity is our greatest strength, perhaps our greatest role is that of advocate and planner for senior services in Knoxville and Knox County. As members of the Council on Aging (the advisory body of the Office on Aging, see page TK), seniors, service providers, agency staff, community businesses, and concerned citizens can all come together. Together, they make a plan of action, and then, with the authority granted to us as a public agency, we are able to take these plans to both the public and to the elected and business officials who can make them happen. The Office on Aging, through the Council on Aging, gives senior citizens and their family members a powerful voice in our community.

The greatest desire of the Office on Aging is to serve the older members of our community and their family members, and to serve them well. Our desire is to get information out to those faced with major life decisions just as they need that information. Our desire is to see Knox County continue to be a great place to grow older, surrounded by the loved ones and the services that each person needs to see that happen. Our desire is to work closely with seniors, other agencies, businesses, and local government to foresee problems and circumvent them and to resolve problems, for both the individual and for the greater good.

Our greatest need? YOU. Yes, our programs will always need financial and other material support, community involvement, and government leadership and administration. But we realized as we thought about what the Office on Aging is, that we are what we are because of you—each individual in the community. We need you to tell others in the community about us, to direct us as we seek guidance about new services that are needed, to volunteer for our programs, to be our advocate in the community. We are made stronger by each senior we serve, by each grateful family member who contacts us, by each volunteer who provides our services to the public, by each agency or business we partner with, by each staff member who joins us, and by each new service we provide. YOU make us stronger. If you haven’t already, please consider becoming an advocate of the Office on Aging. There are hundreds of ways that you can assist us. Call us at (865) 524-2786 to get started.
2010-2011 OOA Revenue Sources
Total= $9,691,891

- Federal- $4,872,662 (50.28%)
- State- $478,068 (4.93%)
- Knoxville- $416,014 (4.29%)
- Knox County- $891,137 (9.19%)
- Private- $3,034,010 (31.30%)
Office on Aging Volunteers: Making an Impact

“Some of the richest people in the world are not millionaires, they are volunteers.”

If such is the case, then many people in Knoxville are rich in the volunteer service they provide for the Office on Aging. And, in return, the Office on Aging is enriched by the hundreds of volunteers who make our services possible each year. The Office on Aging thrives on, relies on, and is blessed by its volunteers. We couldn’t do what we do if it weren’t for volunteers. If there is one word that describes all Office on Aging volunteers, it’s “dedicated.” Some serve 20 hours a week, every week of the year. Others have been delivering the same meal route, week in and week out, for 20 years or more. Some volunteers have driven thousands of miles providing their services, while others have put in “sweat equity” doing yard work and home repair for seniors. ALL have dedicated themselves to the people they serve by going above and beyond what is asked of them.

Volunteers are a powerful tool for change across the nation, as many of them provide economic and social benefit to the community. The Office on Aging’s volunteers are no exception. Through 13 different OOA programs, more than 4,701 volunteers completed more than 288,955 hours of service this year, with a conservative estimated value of more than three million dollars.

RSVP—the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program—is a federal program that acts, in each local community where it serves, as a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities for seniors and retirees. Last year, 497 local RSVP volunteers reported 48,870 hours of service as tutors; Habitat house builders; consumer and public safety educators; drivers; health-, hospice-, and respite care providers; in-home service deliverers; and much, much more. RSVP is part of the federal initiative called Senior Corps, along with two other Office on Aging programs: Senior Companion Program and Foster Grandparent Program. Together, these two programs have 235 volunteers who served a total of 174,000 hours in the last year. Companions and “Grannies” are a “different kind of volunteer.” They are usually low-income seniors who have come out of retirement and are committed to serving at least 20 hours a week to serve seniors or children in their community. In return for their service, they receive a small stipend.

More than 1,800 Mobile Meals volunteers spent 35,280 hours delivering meals to homebound and isolated seniors. Many of those volunteers serve on a regular basis throughout the year. Project LIVE volunteers helped homebound adults with 16,268 hours of chores such as deep cleaning, decluttering, yard work, and painting, and with 7,820 hours of home repair services to keep seniors and those at risk of eviction in their homes.

The O’Connor Center reminds seniors to add life to their years by participating in activities at the Center. Volunteers are often the life of the Center, with 246 people providing 5,079 hours of services such as teaching classes, providing health-care and office services, leading trips, and helping the center hold fund-raising events. Volunteer drivers in the Volunteer Assisted Transportation program provided 3,340 assisted trips to 162 Knox County seniors and people with disabilities. Trained Volunteer Advocates met with 23 grandparent or relative caregiver families enrolled in the Grandparents As Parents Program to help them prepare for and to accompany them to Juvenile Court custody petitions or school Individual Education Plan meetings for children in their care. CHIPS volunteers helped refurbish computers and placed them with homebound and isolated persons. Senior Employment volunteers helped coordinate senior job fairs at least twice a year. Forty-nine volunteers with Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors contributed 1,561 hours helping seniors and people with disabilities to obtain their prescription drugs through Medicare, government assistance, special discounts, and pharmaceutical patient assistance programs. Even four-footed friends were served by 41 PAWS and Feed-A-Pet volunteers who helped them find homes and brought them food.
History of CAC & Office on Aging

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) is a public not-for-profit agency with the general mission of helping individuals and families break the cycle of poverty and achieve self-sufficiency. Created in 1965 by the Knox County and Knoxville City governments, CAC is governed by a board of up to 33 citizens representing government, the community at large, and the people served by the organization and its programs.

Annual funding, totaling more than $41 million, comes from federal, state, and local governments, as well as private foundations, businesses, churches, individual donors and contributions from individuals receiving services.

Operating within CAC, the Office on Aging has the mission of assisting Knox County’s older residents to achieve the highest possible level of independence, maintaining a high quality of life, and avoiding unnecessary institutionalization. It has served older citizens of Knox County since 1975 through more than 20 programs. The Council on Aging (page 3) is the advisory body to the Office on Aging. Hilton Bolton was the first Office on Aging director. In 1977, Barbara Monty became the second director of the office.


CAC Board
As of June 30, 2010

Virginia S. Anagnost, Chair
Daniel Brown, Vice-Chair
Tim Burchett, Treasurer
Diana Conn, Secretary

Henry Anderson
Joe Armstrong
Debbie Black
Martisha Boyd
Dr. Martha Buchanan
Mark Donaldson
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Alvin Nance
Judy Poulson
Monica S. Reed
John Roberts
John R. Rosson, Jr.
Dr. Sandra Twardosz
Lula Williams
Charles Wright
The Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging (COA) is an independent 501(c)(3) organization that serves as an advisory council to the Knoxville-Knox County Office on Aging.

The purposes of the Council on Aging are to:

- Study the needs of older persons and the resources to meet those needs, including reviewing and recommending allocation of funds from the Older Americans Act for Knox County services.
- Encourage groups and agencies to develop and extend services to meet the needs of older Knox Countians.
- Promote, encourage, and, when desirable, sponsor the initiation of new services.
- Advocate for older citizens of Knox County and consult with other groups concerned with the needs of older citizens.

Both individuals and agencies or organizations are eligible for membership. There are no dues or membership fees. Any person or group desiring membership can join the organization by filling out a membership form (available from the Office on Aging).

An elected Executive Committee handles the council business, but members have a voice at general meetings and vote on all important issues. The Executive Committee meets at 12:30 p.m., before the 2:00 p.m. council meeting on the second Thursday of each month (meetings are not held in July and August). Meetings are usually held at the O'Connor Center.

Notices and minutes are sent to members by mail or e-mail. Programs focus on issues, services, and ideas of interest to seniors. Each member is asked to carry the program information back to his or her group and to bring concerns and ideas from the group or agency to the attention of the council.

Note: client confidentiality

Being respectful of our clients and preserving their dignity while providing them with the services they need to remain independent in their own homes is of the utmost concern to the staff of the CAC Office on Aging. For that reason, the names used in the stories on the following pages have been changed or abbreviated to protect our clients’ identities. All of the stories in this report reflect the real-life situations that our staff members encounter daily; any alterations to those stories are only to make identification of a specific individual impossible. Likewise, any photos that accompany the stories are not necessarily associated with the people in the stories.
Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors (AMOS) is an information, advising, and public education program that assists seniors and people with disabilities to obtain prescription medicines at the lowest possible cost. Trained volunteers work with the program manager to answer general questions, conduct research on the internet, and do individualized personal advising. The program enables people to obtain their medicines consistently at a reasonable cost. This, in turn, helps people to maintain their health and overall well-being. Through its outreach service, AMOS also contributes to public understanding of Medicare, free-medicine programs from manufacturers, and the Affordable Care Act as it affects Medicare.

A high priority for AMOS since the introduction of Part D in 2006 has been to find and assist Medicare beneficiaries whose low income and modest assets make them eligible for financial assistance from Social Security and/or Medicaid. In 2010–2011, AMOS distributed brochures and flyers to pharmacies throughout Knox County and received referrals from other Knox County organizations.

AMOS also helped people apply for free brand-name medicine from pharmaceutical companies through their Patient Assistance Programs. Where useful, AMOS also provided callers with information about special prescription discount programs through local retailers and mail order pharmacies. Even those enrolled in Medicare Part D find these programs beneficial when they are in the so-called Doughnut Hole and cannot afford the co-payments required by their insurance.

Number of people served
♦ 1,198 people were served by the program.
♦ 1,009 people received detailed individual advising.
♦ 702 individuals received general information and referral.
♦ 2,436 people attended AMOS presentations and exhibits.

Services
♦ Information and education for Knox County seniors and people with disabilities.
♦ Individual advising and problem-solving for seniors and people with disabilities seeking to reduce their medicine expenses.
♦ Training for Knox County health-care and social service professionals.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ Assisted 117 Medicare beneficiaries in applying for Extra Help for Part D and/or Medicaid for Parts A and B.
♦ During the 2010 annual Medicare Open Enrollment Period, advised 271 individuals about Part D and Medicare Advantage plans.
♦ Provided 179 people with information and advising about manufacturer Patient Assistance Programs.

Budget  $84,801

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Mrs. G, a widow, attended an AMOS presentation about Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage plans. The presenter pointed out that, nationwide, millions of low-income Medicare enrollees are eligible for—but not receiving—financial assistance to reduce the cost of Part D. The “Extra Help” comes from the Social Security Administration. For many people, the Extra eliminates the “Doughnut Hole” gap in coverage. It also pays part or all of the monthly premium and reduces the beneficiary’s copayment on each medicine.

Mrs. G asked AMOS to find out if she might be eligible for Extra Help. She required several medicines but was skipping some because she could not afford to buy them every month.

Using the financial information Mrs. G provided, an AMOS volunteer adviser determined that she was probably eligible for Extra Help. She also appeared to be eligible for Specified Low-income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) assistance. With help from AMOS, Mrs. G applied for—and received—both kinds of assistance. Mrs. G’s out-of-pocket expense for her prescriptions dropped from over $75 per month to $21.20 per month. Over the year her savings added up to more than $1,000. The help with the Part B premium saved her an additional $1,381 for the year.

Mrs. S became eligible for Medicare in late 2010, two years after she started receiving Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). At the time she contacted AMOS, her most significant medical problem related to her memory. She had been diagnosed as being in the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease. She was also taking prescription medicine for arthritis. Her income was low, and she had exhausted nearly all of her savings. Her family had helped her get government assistance.

Mrs. S and a friend came to the Office on Aging to request help in finding a doctor who would accept her Medicare. As Mrs. S described her situation, however, it became clear that the real issue was that she—even with help from her friend—was not coping well with the complexities of Medicare.

With Mrs. S’s approval the AMOS counselor contacted her son, but, like many middle-aged adults, he did not understand the workings of Medicare either. He was willing to learn quickly, however, and take more responsibility for his mother’s care. In the end, AMOS was needed only to explain to Mrs. S and her son how Medicare works and to clarify what her options were. The AMOS counselor told the son that the program would contact him later in the year about doing research for 2012 options.

* Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients’ identities in this report, see the note on page 7.
The Daily Living Center, a component of the John T. O’Connor Senior Center, is a licensed adult day care program with the mission of providing community-based services to Knox County residents age 60 or older who are in need of a structured program. The program focuses on developing or improving daily living skills, fostering independence through social interaction, and allowing the individual to remain in the community rather than be institutionalized. The program is directed toward senior adults who have low incomes, are referred by the Choices program, or are receiving Adult Protective Services from the Tennessee Department of Human Services. Income eligibility and fee structure are established by the Tennessee Department of Human Services Social Service Block Grant guidelines. Most participants pay little or nothing. The Daily Living Center’s hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Transportation is provided as needed. The program is located at 3900 Probus Road, in KCDC’s North Ridge Crossing housing development. Referrals for admission can be made by calling the Daily Living Center at 689-8412 or the O’Connor Senior Center at 523-1135.

Number of people served
♦ 22 persons attended, for a combined total of 3,007 days.
♦ 246 days of operation.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ Continued to work on developing new relationships with organizations in the community to provide services and small gifts for DLC participants. Two local businesses provided Christmas presents for DLC participants, one also provided Easter baskets, and a local church provided small prizes for bingo.
♦ Made a 97 and a 96 on our health inspections this year.
♦ A pharmacist and nutritionist came to speak to the participants. A health-care speaker also gave talks on diabetes, cholesterol, water consumption, and heart disease.
♦ Received a $500 grant from the Akima Club.
♦ Had our annual evaluation from the state licensing board, and for the ninth year in a row, we passed with no negative findings.
♦ Staff and participants planted a flower and vegetable garden with the guidance and support of a Master Gardener.
♦ There were three specific client cases that the staff worked extra hard on this year. The staff worked with the family caregivers to arrange extra services in the home so the DLC participants did not have to go into nursing homes. (In all three cases, the caregivers were leaning towards nursing home placements.)
♦ A group of eight volunteers come from Tyler, Texas, to work at DLC and do special activities with the participants. The work included weeding the garden and painting the bathrooms, doors, baseboards, and chair railing. The activities included a banana-split social, bingo games, a concert, a cookout, manicures; and dancing.
Almost two years after Mr. W began attending the Daily Living Center, he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. Upon learning of the diagnosis, Mr. W became visibly worried and upset. Over a period of time, and as things began to change for Mr. W, the staff was able to assist him in learning about the disease and even helped him come to grips with his diagnosis. During this time, the staff was also working with his family to help them to better understand the disease and to cope with the diagnosis. Understandably, the family had difficulty dealing with this diagnosis, and, as time passed, other issues relating to Mr. W’s care developed. Over time, the situation really became hard for the family, and one day the primary caregiver came in and shared with the staff that he was at his wit’s end in dealing with Mr. W and all the related issues at home. The staff was able to assist the family in developing a plan that involved all of the caregivers. All of Mr. W’s children were involved in the planning, and, through the efforts of the staff, they developed a better understanding of Mr. W’s needs and the need to share in the responsibility of caring for their father. The plan has worked well for everyone, and most importantly, right now, Mr. W is still able to attend the Daily Living Center. The familiarity of the surroundings, combined with the regular routine, are a source of comfort to Mr. W, and his family continues to express their gratitude for the care he is receiving, as well as the respite they get.

Mrs. B has been with the Daily Living Center for several years. At the time she began, she was having severe anxiety attacks and was an extremely nervous person. It was very difficult at the beginning because she struggled almost daily with anxiety attacks. But after being at the Daily Living Center for some time, she began to have fewer attacks and the staff began to notice a significant decrease in some of her symptoms. She gradually began to interact with other participants and staff and began to show interest in her surroundings. Some time later, she started initiating conversations and even began looking for ways to help the staff and to assist her peers. She joined in such activities as wiping off the tables and cleaning up after daily activities, and her overall level of functioning increased significantly. In meetings with her family caregivers, they shared about changes that were taking place at home as well and the family was extremely grateful and appreciative of the level of care Mrs. B was receiving at the Daily Living Center. Over time, the family continued to express appreciation for the many services provided by the staff at the Daily Living Center and reported that they had seen vast improvements in Mrs. B’s behavior at home. They remarked that Mrs. B had said the highlight of her days was being at the Daily Living Center with her friends.

* Client confidentiality is important to the Office on Aging. For information about how we protect our clients’ identities in this report, see the note on page 7.
East Tennessee 2-1-1 serves as the first point of access to all community services, including shelter and housing, food, substance abuse prevention/treatment, health facilities, mental health services, senior issues, financial assistance, legal assistance, child care, child and elder abuse services, disaster relief, crisis intervention, and volunteer opportunities. When a public crisis occurs, 2-1-1 has been chosen to be the public provider of emergency information for KEMA (Knoxville Emergency Management Agency) as well as other emergency organizations.

East Tennessee 2-1-1 serves as one of several centers in the state that work to provide Tennessee with a statewide information and referral system. 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember telephone number and Internet portal (www.211tn.org) that provides free, confidential, multilingual information and referral services that connect the residents of Knox and surrounding counties to a full range of community, social, health, and government services. Typical callers to 2-1-1 run the gamut from adults in need of services for themselves or for children, to the financially disadvantaged of all ages, to teachers, social workers, judges, nurses, doctors, and other social-service professionals working to meet the complex needs of their clients or of their own lives. 2-1-1 began in Knoxville as an independent agency in 1999 and has gone through many transitions since that time. In July of 2008, East Tennessee 2-1-1 became a program of the Knox County Office on Aging in partnership with Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service, which was already familiar with operating and updating a large database of community resources.

East Tennessee 2-1-1 collects information and updates the 2-1-1 database daily with new information about local services and agencies. East Tennessee 2-1-1 calls are answered by certified information & referral specialists in the Nashville Call Center, which has access to the most up-to-date information, thanks to the information provided by East Tennessee 2-1-1. This is the most cost-effective way to provide the service, and thanks to the information provided by East Tennessee 2-1-1 and the professionalism of the specialists who answer the calls at the Nashville Call Center, the service is provided seamlessly, 24/7, to residents of East Tennessee.

Number of people served in East Tennessee
- 23,608 calls
- 37,502 referrals
- 61,713 web visits

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- 2-1-1 database allows data to be shared between all 2-1-1 centers across the state.
- 2-1-1 website upgraded with advanced features.
- Program Manager received recertification as a Certified Resource Specialist in Aging.
- Program Manager served on the Tennessee Alliance of Information & Referral Services Board.
East Tennessee 2-1-1 Stories

One early summer day, “Tiffany” called the police department’s nonemergency number for assistance. While on hold she heard a message about nonemergency help through 2-1-1. She called 2-1-1, and a certified information and referral specialist answered. Tiffany explained that she was 16, homeless, living on the streets alone, and needed shelter. The 2-1-1 specialist was able to connect Tiffany with a counselor at a youth shelter.

2-1-1 later confirmed that the counselor was working with Tiffany to resolve the overwhelming challenges she faced.

At the 2-1-1 Call Center, the information and referral specialists never know what the next challenge will be, but they do know that they may play a role in making someone’s life better.

Mr. W, age 92, almost lost his lifelong home to predatory lending practices and a dishonest home repair company. A home-repair scam had taken several thousand dollars from Mr. W, who then had to take out loans to catch up with his regular bills. Unfortunately, he fell prey to a loan company with unreasonably high loan terms that took advantage of Mr. W’s situation. Unable to pay exorbitant fees and unaware of where to find help, Mr. W was faced with the possibility of losing his home. With his home foreclosed on, he watched helplessly as his life’s story was piled onto the curb.

In passing, a distant relative saw the unfortunate scene and stopped. She decided to call the community information and referral line, 2-1-1, for help. A trained information and referral specialist, Ms. B, answered the telephone.

“It can be very hard to navigate the system, especially when you’ve never had to ask for help before,” Ms. B said. “Sometimes people think their story is beyond help, or they are embarrassed about needing help, or admitting why they need help. Thankfully, Mr. W’s relative came along not only at the right time but also knew about 2-1-1.”

Ms. B was able to provide Mr. W with information about nearby storage facilities for his belongings, along with contact information for free community legal services for seniors. Mr. W’s possessions were put into storage and he moved in with a family member, which gave them time to explore his legal options. The legal aid attorney was able to work out a settlement with the loan company that allowed Mr. W to find new housing. Ms. B said that she is humbled by her job and constantly reminds herself that she could easily be at the other end of the call in need of help.

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The Foster Grandparent Program began in Knox County in 1976. The Knox County program expanded into Blount County in 1994. Volunteers serve through 47 different community agencies, called volunteer stations, such as Knox and Blount County Schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, Head Start, and many more. The program provides low-income adults who are 55 or older a chance for meaningful volunteer experiences and a small stipend. The Foster Grandparents receive 40 hours of pre-service training before being assigned to volunteer stations, and they attend monthly in-service training to update skills. They help in a variety of ways with disabled and chronically ill children, homeless children, children who have been abused, adolescents with alcohol and drug problems, teenage parents, children and adolescents who cannot read, and juveniles in trouble with the law.

A bridge connecting the generations, the program is built upon the natural bond between young and old. Foster Grandparents enrich the lives of thousands of children, while enhancing their own.

**Number of people served**
- 133 Foster Grandparents enrolled
- 3,500 children served
- 49 volunteer stations

**Services**
- Each Foster Grandparent volunteers 20 hours a week, working with children who have problems caused by abuse or neglect, developmental delays or disabilities, emotional problems, homelessness, juvenile delinquency, language barriers, learning disabilities, physical or visual impairments, or substance abuse.
- A total of 104,400 volunteer hours were provided.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- All of the volunteer stations agree that the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is very helpful to their organizations. They say that the most important assets the FGP volunteers bring are their experience, commitment, dependability, and the level of concern about the children they serve, as well as the high level of respect between the Grandparents and the staff. Volunteer station staff often tell the Foster Grandparent staff how important the “grannies” are to the children they serve.
- Held annual recognition event to thank the volunteers who serve as Foster Grandparents.
- Held 11 in-service training sessions throughout the year to train Foster Grandparents on subjects such as health issues and community resources that can help the Foster Grandparents or the children they serve.

**Budget**

$517,305

**Major Sources of Revenue**

- Corporation for National & Community Service
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Community contributions
“Grandpa R” and “Granny R,” ages 75 and 70, are a husband and wife who volunteer with the Boys and Girls Club. Grandpa R began volunteering with the FGP program in 2006 and Granny R began volunteering in 2009. Grandpa’s first assignment was at a preschool. He saw how the children needed patience and love. He noticed how much the children loved the volunteers, especially older volunteers. Granny R soon noticed how much her husband enjoyed volunteering, and it had seemed to change his life. Volunteering gave him a purpose for living. He looked forward to going to his station every day and had many different stories about the children he was assigned to. This gave Granny R an incentive to be a volunteer too.

Granny G, age 68, has been a FGP volunteer since 2007. Her first assignment was at a local high school where she volunteered for 3 years. Granny G brings creativity and the initiative to do things with children of all ages and cultures. At her second assignment, she saw a great need to volunteer with teenagers in a low-income area. At this assignment, she gives support to teenagers by listening to their problems and she spends quality time working with them. Granny G stated that her assignment “is to be there for the children, help them, support them, and plant mustard seeds of education concerning life matters.”

She is working with a brother and sister, ages 11 and 8, who have anger-management problems. She consistently talks with them when they are upset and helps them work through their aggression. Over the last year both children have improved their behavior toward each other and others at the Boys and Girls Club.

The station supervisor says that Granny G helps with crafts, bulletin boards, and tutoring and mentoring in small groups and a one-on-one basis. Granny G is willing to do anything asked of her. She demonstrates patience and models how to work with others every day.

Many of the children Granny R and Grandpa R volunteer with have an incarcerated parent. They stay in touch with the custodial parents when they arrive to pick up the children. Some days they feel as if they are “sounding boards” for the parents, but they have learned a lot from talking to the parents.

Grandpa R and Granny R feel they have accomplished a lot by letting the children know that someone cares for them and respects them as human beings. They both feel they are at the right place at the right time. The staff at the Boys and Girls Club say they are trustworthy, can handle any situation, and will do anything that is asked of them.

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GIFT OF SIGHT, HEARING & DENTURES

The diminishment of vision and hearing or the loss of teeth affects seniors’ physical and emotional health and safety when they cannot see who is at the door, cannot hear a smoke alarm going off, or cannot chew well enough to eat a balanced diet. In addition, these losses cause many seniors to become withdrawn and isolated, leading to depression and other emotional health problems. Yet many seniors cannot afford the cost of new eyeglasses, hearing aids, or dentures, and the professional examinations that accompany them. Medicare does not pay for any of these appliances, except for when eyeglasses are needed because of certain eye diseases.

The Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures is a revolving loan fund that pays for the initial cost of eyeglasses, hearing aids, or dentures and allows the seniors to pay back the cost over time as they are able. The program was created as the Gift of Sight in 1985. Hearing aids were added to the program in 1995, and dentures were added in 2007. The program—a joint project of the Council on Aging and the Office on Aging, and administered by Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service—helps low-income seniors pay for eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures. (Age eligibility starts at 50 for glasses and hearing aids, and at 60 for dentures.) Participating ophthalmologists, optometrists, audiologists, and dentists donate their time to provide the service.

For four months during 2011, the program administrators decided that they must stop all appointments for all three services because the revolving loan fund was depleted. The staff worked at finding additional funding, which came from a local foundation. Because of the four-month hiatus in service, the overall number of people served was down significantly from previous years.

Number of people served
- 84 people received eyeglasses
- 57 people received hearing aids
- 16 people received dentures

Budget $52,779

Major Sources of Revenue
- Revolving loan fund payments
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
Ms. R, age 66, has worn dentures for more than 30 years. After her current set of dentures broke, she was unable to speak clearly or to eat well. She was also embarrassed about her appearance without teeth, so she rarely went out or saw people. As a result, she began to get depressed.

Because of lack of funds, high demand, and the need for more dental professionals to provide services through the denture portion of the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Denture program, people who need dentures often have to wait for a long time to be served.

Ms. R waited patiently for 15 months to get her new dentures through the denture program. Ms. R has had a lot of health concerns, including having had both ovarian and breast cancer. She lost her twin sister to cancer while she was waiting for her dentures. The loss of her sister just increased her social isolation, making her depression worse. Ms. R was jubilant when her opportunity to get dentures came up.

She is so pleased with her new dentures. She comes by the O’Connor Center every month to visit the staff of the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Denture program, and she is always wearing a big smile when she comes by. Ms. R is now comfortable with her appearance, can eat and talk properly, and is no longer socially isolated.

Mr. N, age 78, was having trouble with his dentures and with his sight. He had a set of very old, worn dentures that no longer fit properly, which made it difficult for him to eat. He did not have eyeglasses and his vision was poor.

Mr. and Mrs. N’s mortgage took up most of their monthly income, and they were behind in their utility payments. Mr. N, a diabetic, had recently had major surgery, and Mrs. N was scheduled to have total knee replacement surgery soon. Their monthly medical bills and medication costs strained an already tight budget. They couldn’t afford to get new dentures for Mr. N or to even consider paying for an eye exam and glasses for him. The combination of his diabetes and his inability to eat well were causing Mr. N to become malnourished, and his health was declining.

The Gift of Sight, Hearing & Denture Program was able to provide new dentures for Mr. N, as well as an eye exam and eyeglasses. In addition, because the program is administered by the Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service, the people who answer the phone for the program are very knowledgeable about other services that can help seniors. The information specialist who took Mr. N’s information for the denture and sight program also referred him to AMOS (see page 8) as well as to CAC Housing and Energy Services to get them some help with the high medication and utility bills that they were struggling to pay.

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The Grandparents as Parents Program celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2010! During a carnival celebration in 2000 to announce the free program, 11 families enrolled in GAPP. The program still benefits from the participation of its original members, our “pioneers” who remain active in GAPP. The Grandparents as Parents Program was initially funded in August 2000 by a grant from the Brookdale Foundation of New York and the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging. The free program is available to any grandparent or other relative who is the primary caregiver of a minor child whose parent is not in the home. A family crisis—often precipitated by parental drug problems, divorce, domestic violence, incarceration, illness, or even the death of a parent—can thrust grandparents into the challenging new role of parenting again, with few community services tailored to assist them. The Grandparents as Parents Program provides help, information, referrals, and activities as well as the opportunity for grandparents to meet monthly for “Grandparent to Grandparent” support sessions.

The Grandparents as Parents Program Volunteer Advocacy Corps, an innovative service created in 2007, has assisted more than 95 grandparents and relative caregiver families since the inception of this service. The carefully screened and trained Volunteer Advocates accompany grandparents to their Juvenile Court custody hearings, or to school Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings for children in special education. A second class of eight Volunteer Advocates received 16 hours of training in 2010 to expand and enhance the service. They offer guidance and encouragement to grandparents during the Juvenile Court process for custody of at-risk grandchildren and help grandparents prepare for and participate in IEP meetings for grandchildren with special needs. Volunteer Advocates often return to court with a grandparent family to offer additional support.

Number of people served
- 427 grandparent and relative caregiver families raising more than 575 children
- 20 families were guided through Juvenile Court or school IEP meetings by Grandparent As Parents Program Volunteer Advocates.
- 83 new grandparent and relative caregiver families raising nearly 140 children were enrolled this year.
- 305 caregivers attended 12 monthly Grandparent to Grandparent support meetings.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- The program has continued to experience phenomenal growth since its creation in August 2000, having served more then 600 grandparent-headed families raising more than 800 children.
- Calls for assistance and referrals to community services continued to escalate with more families than ever before encountering financial difficulties compounded by the increased cost of food, clothing and utilities.

Budget $70,426
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Grandparents As Parents Stories

The majority of grandparents who assume care of their at-risk grandchildren are couples or single grandmothers, yet GAPP also includes many single grandfathers as caregivers. Some have received assistance from the program’s volunteer advocates and staff for the unique challenges of their single parenting role.

- Mr. M, faced with the difficulties of raising two adolescent granddaughters, received help from GAPP to deal with their truancy and Juvenile Court issues.
- Mr. J, also a single grandfather, found some needed “grandparent to grandparent” advice and suggestions by attending GAPP’s support meetings.
- GAPP was able to refer one grandfather, Mr. S, to another agency that gave him a washer and dryer to help him keep up with the accumulating laundry for the two grandsons and a granddaughter in his care.
- Mr. B, an elderly grandfather who was granted custody of his daughter’s three young children, was given assistance by GAPP referrals to other CAC programs. He received an air conditioner through Project LIVE to address a child’s health problems and the family’s deteriorating bathroom was repaired by CAC’s Minor Home Repair Program.
- Congratulations are due Mr. T, as two of the grandchildren for whom he is the sole caregiver graduated from high school this year.

Each year brings additional proof that “family continuity” provided by grandparents and other relatives is usually the best plan for children whose parents cannot care for them (often due to addiction, mental illness or incarceration). However, grandparents often face many obstacles and family crises as they try to provide the security and family stability the children need. One of GAPP’s many compelling stories is about the R family children, ages 3 months, 2 years, and 4 years old. Their grandfather traveled across the country to pick up the three young children who had been placed in state custody in another state. The youngest was hospitalized, suffering serious health conditions caused by prenatal exposure to drugs. They all needed to be very carefully transported to the grandparents’ home. Another grandparent, Ms. J, also had to travel out of state to bring home an infant grandchild born to his incarcerated mother. GAPP was able to offer these families, and others, the support of Volunteer Advocates to assist them through their custody processes, as well as information and immediate referrals to community resources. Included were referrals by GAPP to the Knox County Health Department, Tennessee Early Intervention System for children with special needs, the Department of Human Services for financial assistance and TennCare medical insurance for the children.

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KNOX COUNTY CAC TRANSIT

Knox County CAC Transit provides access to community resources and services by providing safe, reasonably comfortable transportation for Knoxville-Knox County residents who have no other means of transportation. Priority is given to patients of dialysis, cancer therapy, and other medical treatment; therapy for severe arthritis; post-stroke or other trauma; and for grocery store and pharmacy trips and other essential errands. Contracts are also negotiated with nonprofit social service agencies to increase access to community resources and promote coordinated use of vehicles.

Number of people served
♦ 6,766 unduplicated individuals served
♦ 196,830 total trips provided

Services
♦ 90,253 medical trips, including rides to dialysis, cancer therapy, medical and dental appointments, mental health appointments, and post-stroke therapy.
♦ 17,199 essential errands such as rides to the food stamp office, grocery store and pharmacy, as well as delivery of food, medicine, and other essentials by drivers.
♦ 27,392 rides by contract with the Senior Nutrition Program to transport participants to and from dining sites and deliver meals to homebound elderly. (Augments the volunteer-delivered Mobile Meals program.)
♦ 1,936 rides by contract with multiple social service agencies for their participants.
♦ 60,050 employment-related trips through the JOB-RIDE program.
♦ Special contracts make it possible to take individuals or groups on outings. Special contracts can be arranged and paid for by any individual or group who needs transportation on a large or lift-equipped vehicle.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ Number of vehicles: 75 (about 45 are on the road at any given time.
♦ Average Trips Per Day: 800
♦ Total Miles Traveled: 1,582,548
♦ Average Miles Per Day: 6,330
♦ All vehicles have had Mobile Data Terminals with automatic vehicle locator systems installed in them. These terminals can tell the drivers which passengers they are picking up or dropping off next or what their next stop will be. They also act as GPS devices and can record the time and mileage information at each stop that the vehicle makes.

Budget $3,242,553

Major Sources of Revenue
Community Services Block Grant
Corporation for National Service
Federal Transit Administration
Knox County
Knoxville-Knox County CAC
Miscellaneous Contracts
O’Connor Senior Center
Office on Aging
Passenger Fare/Contribution
Rural Public Transportation (through East TN Human Resource Agency)
Senior Nutrition Program
Mercy Health Partners
TennCare
TN Dept. of Transportation
Workforce Connections
Knox County CAC Transit Stories

Knoxville is very blessed to have CAC to help them. It is so hard to get places when you don’t have a car. I thank the Lord above for CAC. They’re excellent—and helpful—people working for CAC Transit. God bless this service and protect each and every one of you all on your daily journeys.

—a CAC Transit passenger

I am so thankful for CAC Transit. If it wasn’t for CAC, I wouldn’t be able to go to the doctors or anything else. We don’t have a car, so CAC Transit is all we’ve got to get us where we need to go. Again, thank you so much!

—a CAC Transit passenger

The CAC Transit drivers are like family to me. I don’t know what I would do without them. They are so kind and considerate and seem to put their best foot forward in helping out, whatever the situation may be. Everything seems to run so smoothly. All of the drivers must be a definite asset to the agency. From my heart, thanks to each and every one of you for everything you do!

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The John T. O’Connor Senior Center, located in Caswell Park, is the focal point in Knox County where senior adults age 50 and over find programs and services that empower them to care for themselves and to enhance their quality of life. The Center promotes community engagement through volunteer opportunities and provides programs and activities that help seniors stay healthy, prolong independence, and delay institutionalization.

There is no membership fee to attend the Center. However, contributions are encouraged and, some classes may have a fee. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., with evening and weekend hours for special events. Lunch is available Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., on a first come, first served basis.

The John T. O’Connor Senior Center continues to be a place where senior adults can “add life to their years and years to their lives.”

Number of People Served
♦ 2,394 people attended education, recreation, physical fitness, and health service programs at the Center.
♦ 246 volunteers supported center activities with 5,079 hours of service.

Services
♦ 33,975 people (duplicated) attended Center-sponsored activities. In addition, 34,059 people attended Center activities sponsored by other agencies and organizations.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ The Center held its annual fund-raising events, the O’Connor Center Open Golf Classic in September and the Pancake Fest in February. Both events were successful and received excellent support from the community and O’Connor Center participants.
♦ Received a grant from the Aslan Foundation to support Health Services.
♦ Partnered with the University of Tennessee in a research study involving “brain aerobics.”
♦ Continued as a congregate meal site, serving 410 seniors.

Budget $314,299

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Program income
The Best Kept Secret in Town

While the O’Connor Senior Center is not physically located in the “Secret City,” we sometimes feel a kinship because often we hear comments like, “I had no idea you were here!” or “I never knew what all goes on down here!” or “Why didn’t somebody tell me about the O’Connor Center!” On those occasions we do feel like we’re “the best kept secret in town!”

But in spite of being “the best kept secret in town,” people do find their way to the O’Connor Center and discover a plethora of activities waiting including everything from toenail clipping to belly dancing, to roundtable discussions in the Dine-A-Mite Diner. It is common for us to hear from people whose lives have been changed because of their involvement in the O’Connor Center. People have shared that being involved in activities at the Center has allowed them to develop an inner strength, to meet new friends, and to become involved in new activities. In their words,

“I came to the O’Connor Center looking for something to do with my time. I was new in town, I had moved in with my daughter, and I didn’t know anybody in Knoxville! Being active at the Center has been a lifesaver for me and has helped me not to be consumed by all the changes at this point in my life.”

— “Grace M.”

“I’ve found that people who are interested in developing a friendship with me are people who are dealing with stuff of their own—maybe they’re wondering how long they will be able to remain on their own or are dealing with issues of adult children—but they’re more apt to understand because they’ve been through a lot too!”

— “Joe G.”

“When I came to a health screening event at the Center I was told that I had a suspicious spot that needed further attention; ultimately surgery was required to remove an advanced malignancy that I had no idea was present! I am so thankful I decided to stop by the Center just to ‘check it out’ and found out about the free annual skin cancer screening event.”

— “Gwen J.”

The O’Connor Center, even though it might be, “the best kept secret in town,” is a place where a network of friends can feel like a team facing a common enemy, and it is a place that is all about finding that just-right balance to stay active with a focus on quality of life, not end of life!

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The One Call Club began offering services in January 2008 as the One Call Club for Seniors. The program provides one-phone-call access for members to reliable, reasonably priced services that seniors need to remain in their homes. In the 2009-2010 year, the program dropped its age limit from 60 to 50 years of age and dropped “for seniors” from its name. Examples of services include health-related services, home repair and home maintenance, home safety modifications, and other services such as computer installation and tech support, pet-walking, bill-paying, errand services, and junk removal. The program maintains a list of carefully screened service providers, many of whom offer discounts to members.

Members pay an annual fee to join the program (there is a sliding scale for lower-income seniors). The fee covers the cost of the staff arranging services. Members are still responsible for paying for services they receive. Included in the membership fee at no additional cost are home safety assessments and transportation for grocery shopping. The One Call Club is funded by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, with local support from Covenant Senior Health, Mercy Health Partners, Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church, and Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, local foundations, and individuals.

Number of People Served
- 410 households totaling 533 individual members
- 154 lower-income households were eligible for a subsidy

Services
From July 2010 to June 2011, One Call responded to the following 1,045 requests:
- Transportation: 202 requests
- Personal Care: 21 requests
- Housekeeping: 53 requests
- Home Repair & Maintenance: 541 requests
- Lawn Care & Landscaping: 104 requests
- Appliance repair: 41 requests
- Car Maintenance: 7 requests
- Miscellaneous services: 76 requests

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Presented program at one annual conference and one regional.
- Completed a training program on communication offered by Spitfire Communications sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- Received $7,500 from three local business to purchase gift memberships to their employees, clients and/or customers.
- Designed a Pre-Retirement Planning program to offer to area businesses to complement their retirement programs and bring additional revenue to the One Call Club.
- Received from members a 96.4-percent satisfaction rate with completed services by various vendors and a 98.4-percent satisfaction rating on One Call Club staff.
- Advocated on behalf of members when service was unsatisfactory.
One Call Club Stories

I have used the One Call service numerous times, with very good results. As a senior citizen, and since I am not a native of this area, I do not have the various connections I would have if I were younger and working. As such, a place that I can call for reliable names in order to keep up my home is extremely important to me. Even more important, though, is the understanding and assistance I get when I call with a problem. I hope that you all realize that you can get anyone to answer a phone, but it has to be a certain type of person that answers the phone with understanding and the personality to interact with the senior citizen calling. You have found the correct personnel with the ladies that are currently in the One Call Center now. Don’t take their job for granted...I certainly don’t.

The Hail Storm of April 2011

I am so thankful to be a member of One Call Club. This is when my membership really paid off. My insurance provider wanted multiple estimates for repair costs, One Call was able to arrange for different vendors to come out, assess my damage and provide written estimates as required. Neighbors who suffered a similar fate during the storms were not as fortunate. They were put on a waiting list just for the estimates with no clear dates as to when repairs could actually be made. I was proud to tell them I had priority status with One Call, and if they were wise, they’d join too!

—from a person who was already a One Call Club member when the hail storm hit Knoxville

I wish I had joined the One Call Club before the recent storms arrived. My neighbor, who is a member, had workers repairing damage to her home immediately. Phone calls I made using vendors from the phone book only resulted in my being placed on a waiting list or being told that they were not accepting new work requests for anyone other than their existing clients.

—from a person who joined One Call Club after the hail storm

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Project LIVE (Living Independently through Volunteer Efforts) coordinates services that allow frail older adults to remain in their own homes and as independent as possible. Project LIVE is responsible for oversight of all Office on Aging in-home assessments for frail, vulnerable seniors to determine their need for home-delivered meals, homemaker service, caregiver respite, care management, and other supportive services.

Services provided: care management, which includes an assessment to determine an individual’s needs and the assignment of a care manager for those who need help to access community resources, services, and support in their homes; supportive services, performed largely by volunteers who perform minor home repairs, cleaning, and lawn care, as well as home safety assessments and installation of safety devices; caregiver support, which provides care management, support groups, and referrals for respite and other services for caregivers of seniors. Project LIVE also manages Knox PAWS (Placing Animals With Seniors), which helps low-income seniors find suitable pets. See page 41 for a more detailed description of Knox PAWS.

Project LIVE’s Homeless Prevention Case Management Project, which was formerly funded by the Knoxville-Knox County Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, continued to receive funding through a Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Grant—which has been extended through December 2011—through the city of Knoxville. Five case managers are placed at four KCDC high rises that have experienced high eviction rates: Northgate Terrace, Isabella Towers, Cagle Terrace, and Guy B. Love Towers. The program continues to have a record of zero evictions onto the streets.

Number of people served
- 2,103 households served

Services
- Care Management: 15,982 hours
- Caregiver Support: 298 contacts
- Home Repair: 7,820 hours
- Chores: 16,268 hours
- Visiting: 6,636 home visits
- Information & Assistance: 28,967 contacts

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- 2,034 volunteers provided 24,088 hours of service.
- Partnered with 25 volunteer groups and hosted more than 175 churches that provided services to clients.
- Volunteers provided more than 7,820 hours of free labor for minor home repairs.
- Received a grant and several private donations to purchase materials for home repairs and home safety items.
- Coordinated monthly caregiver meetings that provide support, information, and encouragement for caregivers of seniors.

Budget $658,427

Major Sources of Revenue
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
Mr. D is a 62-year-old man who has lived by himself after an intruder entered his home and took the lives of his fiancée and son. He was left alone in a home that still had bullet holes in the walls and blood-stained carpet that were constant reminders of that horrible night. Project LIVE received a referral from a community social worker and went out to see how the program could help. The case manager found he had not been eating and was unable to fix his own meals due to a double hip replacement and the chronic pain associated with this surgery; she arranged for Mobile Meals to begin delivering food to him daily. The case manager also was concerned about Mr. D’s isolation and worked with the Senior Companion Program to set up a Companion to visit and help with household chores twice a week. Mr. D’s case manager also worked with AMOS to find a pain clinic that aligned with his health insurance, and linked him to counseling resources such as a support groups and individual therapy sessions. This past summer Project LIVE recommended him to the LIVE volunteer coordinator, who had a group of 24 volunteers go to his home to help replace carpet in his home, fix the doors and the walls that had been damaged by bullets, paint, and complete needed roof repairs for him. His Project LIVE case manager even escorted him to the sentencing of the intruder since he had no one else to be with him and he needed support to make it through that day.

Mr. P was referred to Project LIVE after receiving an eviction notice for paying his rent late at the high rise he lives in. His LIVE case manager started working with him and attended the informal hearing with him to request probation to give the case manager time to help Mr. P with setting up a bank draft for his rent so he would not be late again. This was granted and the rent-payment problem was solved. However, his case manager also learned that Mr. P struggled with anger management and had gotten into several altercations with other residents in the building and was soon going to be in trouble again with the manager of the complex. His case manager worked with him and took him to anger management sessions at Child and Family Services, which helped him develop skills to deal with his anger. Since then his case manager has also assisted him with finding seasonal and temporary jobs to keep him busy, and most recently assisted him with finding a job in Chattanooga with a new car factory there. He wanted to be closer to his daughters, who live in Chattanooga and Atlanta. He moved there and started his new job on July 11, 2011.

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RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program) is part of the Corporation for National & Community Service/Senior Corps. RSVP began in Knoxville-Knox County in 1982. It has a participatory advisory council with representatives from the community. The role of RSVP is to match volunteers age 55-plus with community needs. In partnership with nonprofit organizations that meet a variety of community needs every day, RSVP coordinates a volunteer exchange, offering choices that senior volunteers may choose from based on their personal interests and experience.

**Number of people served**

497 senior volunteers served

**Services**

- 48,876 hours of service were provided.
- 71 nonprofit agencies benefited from having RSVP volunteers.
- The volunteer service has an estimated value of $892,964*.

(*Value estimates from the research of INDEPENDENT SECTOR.)

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**

- 203 RSVP volunteers provided direct services to clients through agencies such as Senior Citizens Awareness Network (SCAN), Volunteer Assisted Transportation, Mobile Meals, Knoxville Library, Senior Companion Respite, Volunteer Ministry Center, Children’s Hospital, Thompson Cancer Survival Center, St. Mary’s Hospice, Grandparents As Parents Program, AMOS, and Westview Towers.
- 91 RSVP volunteers in senior housing and assisted living facilities reported 14,521 hours assisting nonprofit agencies with collating promotional, training, and consumer-education materials. Some agencies that benefited include: CAC Weatherization and Energy Services, CAC Community Gardens, Knoxville Sports & Tourism, Boy Scouts, Alzheimer’s Association, Empty Stocking Fund, Urban League of Knoxville, Second Harvest Food Bank, Cherokee Health System, Knoxville Zoo, Arthritis Foundation, and Muscular Dystrophy Association.
- RSVP, along with the other two programs of Senior Corps—Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions—as well as AmeriCorps, hosted the Martin Luther King Day of Service on January 15 with letter-writing to active military personnel serving in Iraq, and mapping and cleaning at Oddfellows Cemetery. More than 200 volunteers attended.

**Budget** $94,602

**Major Sources of Revenue**

- Corporation for National & Community Service
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Community contributions
RSVP Stories

When “Louise” began her GED classes, she soon realized the math section was far too difficult for her to understand. She asked her instructor for additional help, and that is when she met “Gary”– her RSVP volunteer math tutor.

Last fall, Gary began his RSVP volunteer assignment to tutor students enrolled at the L.T. Ross Learning Center. At the time, he was not absolutely certain his professional experiences in math and reading would really benefit adults studying for their GED, but he was certain those educational skills are essential, and he was willing to make a good effort.

GED, General Education Development, was created in 1942 as a testing program for high school equivalency for veterans returning to civilian life. Communities throughout the U.S. continue the high school certification testing to help those who are not able to continue their high school education. That was the case for Louise, who at a very young age dropped out of school to raise her younger siblings. Louise has two children, a disabled husband, and no job. She and her family are living with relatives in a small apartment.

After several sessions, Gary knew Louise needed help with more than basic math principles because she was not improving her test scores, seldom prepared for classes, and often asked questions related to the well-being of her children and ways to gain family self-sufficiency. Gary then became a mentor as well as a tutor. He taught Louise how to seek community resources that would help her and her children. Today, Louise is participating in outreach programs at a nearby church, and her children really like their new after-school activities. Gary noticed that as Louise’s coping skills, parenting skills, and self-advocacy skills improved, her confidence grew as well. Soon, Louise was mastering math concepts that before had been too difficult for her. Gary reports that Louise has greatly improved her test scores, and she will be taking the GED exam soon. Gary added that he is so proud of Louise for her achievements and for setting goals for self-sufficiency. He also now realizes how rewarded he feels as an RSVP math tutor.

Eight dedicated RSVP volunteers from the South Neighborhood Center are always stars because they participate in so many community events. On Saturday, January 15, they celebrated MLK Day of Service with more than 200 other Senior Corps and AmeriCorps volunteers to hand-write notes to military members serving in Iraq. Each letter began with Our Service is to Honor Your Service. More than 500 letters were written that day, and the RSVP volunteers continue to send letters and cards to active military members.

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With one phone call to Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service (SCIRS), seniors in Knoxville and Knox County can get their questions about services answered and be referred to the services they need. The program, begun in 1968 as an independent agency, has long been a provider of information and referral (called “I & R”). In February 2004, SCIRS became a program of the Office on Aging. SCIRS is the entry point into the network of services for people age 60 years and older and persons who are disabled. SCIRS also provides services to social service agencies, church groups, and families of the disabled and older citizens of Knoxville and Knox County. SCIRS links people to services and services to people with as little confusion and as much dignity as possible. Information & referrals are provided in numerous areas including health, employment, housing, transportation, legal services, recreation, support groups, emergency assistance, in-home services, and minor home repair. In 2008, SCIRS assumed responsibility for East Tennessee 2-1-1 (see pages 12-13).

SCIRS also takes applications for and administers the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures (see pages 16-17), and applications for Knox PAWS and CHIPS (see pages 40 and 41).

Number of people served
- 11,038 units of information and referrals provided, plus follow-up
- 3,337 unduplicated individuals

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Held 10th annual John J. Duncan Sr. Award for Senior Advocacy at the O’Connor Senior Center. This year’s honorees were Pat Green and Thomas “Tank” Strickland.
- Janice Johnson-Nelson, the new program manager since May 16, 2011, received certification as a Certified Resource Specialist in Aging.
- Program manager served on the Tennessee Alliance of Information & Referral Services (TNAIRS) Board of Directors.

Budget $104,405

Major Sources of Revenue
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- United Way
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
Doris B. is one of many Knoxville residents who is still dealing with damage and debris from the terrible April 2011 storms that raged through Knoxville and surrounding areas. More than 50 tornadoes and violent storms ravaged personal property and left houses and cars severely damaged.

Mrs. B. is elderly and alone. When the storms were gone, she saw that a big oak tree in her yard had barely missed falling on her house but had toppled onto her neighbor’s fence. Still, she felt lucky that the tree was the only crisis she had to deal with. Mrs B called her insurance company and was told that the tree wasn’t included in her coverage. The tree was so large that she was afraid to let a neighbor cut it down on his own. Mrs. B is on a low, fixed income and could not afford to have the tree cut up and then hauled off. She lives in Knox County, which doesn’t have curbside service to pick up such debris.

So Mrs. B had two problems: one was getting the tree off the fence and the other was hauling the debris away. A friend recommended that she call Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service (SCIRS). The SCIRS information specialist she talked to knew that CAC’s Housing and Energy Services had just received funds for minor services, including help for problems—just like hers—left from the recent storms. She was referred to the program and got on a waiting list to receive help. She was so grateful for the help and was able to tell her neighbor that the tree would soon be removed safely from his fence.

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The Senior Companion Program is a unique program that has a dual purpose. It provides low-income adults over the age of 55 an opportunity for meaningful volunteer experience, while providing companionship and support to many homebound adults in our community. The trained volunteers are matched up with frail and elderly adults who need help with meal preparation, household management, shopping, and other activities of daily living to maintain their independence and dignity. Senior Companions work with home health clients who are recovering from illness; they are a much-needed source of respite for family caregivers who often have no other support; they provide understanding and comfort to hospice patients; they become the support system and family to those who are alone and ill. The Senior Companion volunteers receive a small stipend for their service that helps them purchase necessities such as food and medicine; however the satisfaction of feeling needed and appreciated is a better reward than any amount of money. A special bond of trust and friendship is formed during the time Companions spend taking care of clients who have no other support system.

Number of people served
- 102 Senior Companions
- 310 homebound adults served by Companions in their homes.
- 52 adults served by Companions at local adult day programs.

Services
- 102 volunteers provided more than 70,000 hours of free in-home assistance to frail, elderly adults.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Enabled residents of KCDC senior housing apartments and developments to help their fellow residents remain independent in their own homes.
- Allowed many home-health patients to receive in-home assistance after the rest of the home health care team had to pull out due to Medicare limitations.
- Provided volunteers to adult day care programs, giving more one-on-one attention to the participants.
- 102 Senior Companions, most of whom are low-income seniors, gained a sense of purpose by serving others.
- Companions served 362 frail adults with special physical, emotional, and financial needs. Most were in their late 70s to mid 80s. The oldest client was 103.
- Held annual volunteer recognition luncheon.
- Held Senior Companion Dance fund raiser.
- Produced revenue to increase the number of Companions by providing service through the Medicaid Waiver and Family Caregiver programs.

Budget $404,395

Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National and Community Service
State of Tennessee
Knox County
Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Senior Companion Program Stories

Mrs. B has a diagnosis of progressive Multiple Sclerosis, which has caused a significant decline in her health over the past few years. She is bed-bound, unable to speak, only able to eat through a feeding tube, and has a deteriorating short-term memory. Her primary caregiver is her husband, Mr. B, who works a full-time job to be able to provide for his wife and keep her out of a nursing home. A Senior Companion, Ms. K, provides bathing assistance and supervision for Mrs. B—a much-valued free service for the family. Mr. B receives respite services from the Senior Companion Program, which allows him to go to work and run to the grocery store. He indicates that without the support of the Senior Companion Program, he would not be able to keep his wife at home.

Mr. C, a Senior Companion, was recently assigned to assist 94-year-old Mr. F, who lived alone in his own home. After Mr. F’s wife was transferred into a nursing home, he became very depressed, isolated, and stayed in bed all day. Mr. C was able to get Mr. F out of his bed, walking, talking, and eventually eating again. The social interactions, supervision during meal time, and scheduled walking activities have helped Mr. F improve his physical and emotional health. Mr. F’s family say that the Senior Companion “has truly helped him overcome his depression.”

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Senior Employment Service offers employment workshops for seniors who are seeking employment for any reason: some were laid off or forced to retire, some are re-entering the job market after a period of retirement because they want something to do, while others need to enhance their retirement income because of the rising cost of living or other economic factors. Others are seeking jobs that are more equal to their level of skills and experience than their current jobs. For all of these senior workers, Senior Employment Service offers valuable job-search training in a four-session workshop held each month. Employers come and speak to the participants about the qualities they are looking for in job candidates. The program also offers individualized help in job counseling and job-seeking.

Number of people served
- 252 people attended employment workshops.
- 88 additional people received job counseling and referrals.
- 67 people were placed in jobs.

Services
- Seniors Seeking Employment workshops. Each four-week workshop offers sessions on attitude and first impressions, interviewing, skills assessment and resumes, dealing with different personalities, and reasons why many employers prefer older workers.
- Job-search assistance.
- Help with writing resumes, cover letters, and filing online applications.
- Semiannual job fairs for seniors.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Of the 340 persons who attended the employment workshops or received other help with finding jobs, 67 were placed in jobs, resulting in a 20-percent placement rate.
- SES sponsored two job fairs, with 31 employers participating in each fair and more than 200 seniors attending each time.
- SES staff helped job candidates prepare resumes, write cover letters, file online job applications, and fax resumes to prospective employers.

Budget $17,425

Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County
Knoxville
Mrs. S came to the Community Action Committee to ask for housing assistance on the same day as the spring Senior Job Fair was being held by the Office on Aging’s Senior Employment Service. She had lost her job and her home, and had been living with a friend. She noticed the job fair and decided to go in. Walgreens and another retail store offered her jobs, and she went to work for Walgreens. She came to the Senior Employment Service office in person a few days later to express her appreciation and gratitude for the Senior Job Fair. She said because of the fair, she has been able to take a “huge step forward.” She said her job at Walgreens not only provides her with an income but also now provides her with health insurance that she so badly needed, plus, she will be able to get her own apartment in a few months.

The Senior Employment Service performs a little known, but extremely helpful purpose in helping seniors find hope, jobs, and self-confidence. The workshops are “life savers” to those of us who feel unemployable.

The Senior Employment Program is a great asset to the senior community. It provides guidance and referrals to participants and employers alike. Without job fairs, seniors would not know what employers are open to hiring them.

I have been very impressed with the meetings. It has given, I think, all of us some hope in being hired in the near future.

I’ve learned much about preparing a resume and being prepared for questions posed during an interview. Without this encouragement, I would have felt totally lost. Thank you!

—Excerpts of letters from SES workshop attendees

As a human resources recruiter, I have been working with the Senior Employment Service for about 2-1/2 years. I attend all the job fairs, which are always well planned and have a lot of potential candidates for my company in attendance. Plus, I have attended the program’s workshops and have found the people there to be respectful, attentive, and ready to learn. I highly recommend the Senior Employment Service.

Our company has found great success working with the Senior Employment Service. The first time I discussed my requirements for employees and I stated what an ideal candidate with my company would have to be, I was invited to attend a workshop and ultimately hired my first of several employees from the program: a retired professional who is now my “go to” caregiver. If I needed a homemaker-companion for a member of my own family, it would be this person I found through the Senior Employment Service. Each time I am asked to participate in and/or contribute to anything planned for the Senior Employment Service, I always say YES!

— from two employers who hire

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SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Nutrition Program serves hot, well-balanced, noontime meals to frail seniors (age 60-plus) in Knoxville and Knox County. Meals are served Monday through Friday, including holidays. The Mobile Meals program had approximately 1,800 volunteers (and some paid staff) to deliver meals to homebound seniors. For many, the Mobile Meals volunteer is the only person they will see all day. The meal-delivery program also provides a daily safety check for these isolated elders. Seniors who are physically able are served at congregate meal sites throughout Knoxville and Knox County. These meal sites provide an opportunity to enjoy good company while they eat the same nutritious meals served in the Mobile Meals program.

Mobile Meals volunteers are the core of the Senior Nutrition Program. Volunteers answer phones, sort and pack holiday gifts, pack emergency and holiday meals, and deliver meals five days a week. Some volunteers have participated regularly for many years, others help as their schedules permit. Volunteers delivering meals report any problems or concerns, health-care issues, as well as home repair needs, that they encounter in the course of delivering their routes. This enables the office to follow up with additional services or emergency responses when necessary.

The Senior Nutrition Program also contracted with the East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging & Disability to deliver meals to those who qualify for the TennCare Choices program or the Options for Community Living program. This meal delivery allows many individuals to remain in their homes and receive other needed services. An average of 26 individuals received meals every weekday through these two programs in the last year.

Number of people served
♦ 1,036 persons were served in 9 dining rooms in the congregate meal program
♦ 1,406 persons received Mobile Meals (home-delivered meals)

Services
♦ 209,722 Mobile Meals were served, an average of 807 meals per day.
♦ 56,014 meals were served at congregate dining sites, an average of 215 meals per day.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ 80-plus volunteers helped deliver meals each day.
♦ A total of 1,800 volunteers offered their services during the year, including at congregate meal sites.
♦ Many people from local businesses, civic organizations, and churches delivered meals regularly.
♦ Every person who received Mobile Meals also received a Christmas gift donated by individuals, organizations, and businesses throughout the community.
♦ Fruit and other treats were delivered at Thanksgiving.
♦ Groups from civic, school, scout, and church-based organizations helped pack more than 15,000 holiday and weekend meals.

Budget $1,834,061

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Knoxville
United Way
Empty Stocking Fund
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Senior Nutrition Program Stories

Mrs. W has dementia and lives alone. Her son and daughter-in-law check in on her as much as possible, but they both work and do not live near enough to provide meals for her every day. They are very concerned about the nutrition choices she makes. She does not remember how to cook, so she eats whatever is easiest, which does not provide the best nutrition to keep her healthy. Mrs. W’s daughter-in-law called and asked whether Mobile Meals could help her mother-in-law. She began receiving Mobile Meals, and her son and daughter-in-law now report that her health is better and they have great peace of mind, knowing that she is eating a nutritionally balanced diet.

“The meals program is wonderful, and I wish that I had signed mom up sooner. The man who found my mother when she was on the floor was a true hero. He assisted her in moving up to a chair and stayed with her until my sister arrived to take mom to the hospital. Please thank him for us.”

—letter from a woman whose mother received Mobile Meals and was rescued from a serious fall by a Mobile Meals volunteer

Mr. and Mrs. C, ages 86 and 84, live in their home of 53 years. Mrs. C has late-stage dementia and is bedbound. Mr. C is her full-time caregiver, in spite of having health problems of his own (he has a heart condition and uses a walker to get around). They want to stay together in their own home for as long as they can. They are able to manage pretty well, but because of his caregiving duties, Mr. C does not have time to cook the healthful meals that he knows he and his wife need. Their son lives in another state but visits as often as he can. Mr. C reports that receiving Mobile Meals is a huge weight off his shoulders. Getting the meals, he says, is such a big help that it makes him feel much more capable of providing the rest of the care that his wife needs without feeling so stressed. Mr. C says, “I’m really not a cook. We both enjoy the hot meals much more than the sandwiches that I was making.”

Mr. C also enjoys the contact with the “outside world” when the Mobile Meals volunteers greet him with a smile. “It does a body good just to see someone every day, and to know that they’re coming,” he says.

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Volunteer Assisted Transportation is entering its third year as a unique transportation option for Knox County seniors and people with disabilities. The program is designed to serve those who require aid and assistance to travel safely. Volunteers drive agency vehicles and receive extensive screening and training so program riders can be assured they are in the hands of ‘professional’ drivers who have the rider’s safety first and foremost in their minds. Training includes AAA’s Driver Improvement Program, certification in CPR and First Aid, passenger assistance techniques for safely assisting seniors and people with disabilities, and a comprehensive vehicle orientation. While there is a modest fare for the service, no one is turned away based on finances. There are no restrictions on trip purpose, but more than 75 percent of the trips have been for medical appointments and related errands. The fleet is made up of five Toyota Prius hybrid sedans and two wheelchair-accessible minivans.

Number of People Served
♦ 162 people received transportation.
♦ 747 individuals received transportation counseling, information, and referrals.

Services
♦ The program’s 43 volunteers provided 3,766 hours of service while providing assistance and transportation to 162 riders on 3,340 trips and traveling 45,570 accident-free miles.
♦ The program sponsored 1,285 rides for seniors and people with disabilities to various social, recreational, and entertainment venues, using the services of CAC Transit.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the Year
♦ Volunteer drivers logged 437 hours of training.
♦ 572 riders—seniors and people with disabilities—are enrolled in the program.
♦ A third round of funding was secured from the Federal Transit Administration’s New Freedom program.
♦ An additional wheelchair-accessible minivan was delivered to the program in July 2010.

Budget $282,939

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Passenger Fares
Community Contributions
Ms. S called Volunteer Assisted Transportation (VAT) to ask for help. She had been taking her 94-year-old mother to the doctor about twice a month, as well as grocery-shopping weekly, and taking her to visit her mother’s younger sister in the nursing home every week. Ms. S’s mother was very alert, but had problems with her balance and needed a steady- ing arm to get around safely. Her mother really wanted to visit her sister more often, but Ms. S was close to the breaking point. Ms. S works full-time and her employer was expressing concern about her too-frequent absences from work. VAT staff determined that Ms. S’s mother needed assistance to travel safely and was eligible for VAT services. Volunteers were available to transport her to doctor appointments, as well as visits to the nursing home. Ms. S’s employer was happy, and she felt her job was more secure. Ms. S was much relieved and was able to enjoy the weekly grocery-shopping outing with her mother, knowing that VAT was taking care of her other transportation needs.

Ms. L is a charming 85-year-old woman who lives alone, with all her family living in west Tennessee. She has been diagnosed with early-stage dementia but wants to stay independent in her own home as long as possible. She also has moderately severe arthritis and uses a walker to provide some support. She used the KAT LIFT for two years, but the last time she went to the doctor’s office she got turned around in the building and could not find the correct office. Her physician suggested she call Volunteer Assisted Transportation (VAT). Now she feels more secure because a cheerful and helpful volunteer comes to her home, escorts her all the way to her doctor’s office, and then takes her home. They frequently stop on the way home to get her prescription filled, and maybe also stop at the grocery store. The VAT volunteer helps her carry the groceries into the house and makes sure she has called VAT to schedule her transportation for her next doctor’s appointment.
CHIPS: COMPUTERS FOR HOMEBOUND & ISOLATED PERSONS

CHIPS provides donated computers to seniors who are isolated by illness, disability, or by their role as a full-time caregiver of a homebound senior. The CHIPS program equips homebound and isolated persons who are age 55 and older to use e-mail and the Internet to overcome social isolation, connect with people and resources, assert more control over their own lives, and contribute to their community. Volunteers are recruited and trained to refurbish donated computers in the CHIPS lab, to install the equipment, and to serve as mentors to help the participants learn to use and maintain the equipment. Participants learn how to use e-mail, search engines, and safely use the Internet. The use of e-mail is a great way to overcome loneliness by providing a point of contact with friends, family members, and neighbors.

Office on Aging assessors make a home visit to assess each applicant to determine eligibility and identify any special needs for using a computer. Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service takes all requests for CHIPS and gathers basic application information.

Number of people served
- 22 seniors received computers
- 7 seniors received technical assistance from CHIPS volunteers.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Two full-time caregivers were able to use the computer to participate in online social support services to help alleviate the stress of caregiving.
- Plans are under way to recruit and train new CHIPS volunteers.
- Plans are under way to provide computers for two subsidized-rent senior housing facilities to establish computer labs for residents to use.

I am a disabled senior citizen. I have a hard time finding someone to take me to the bank, the post office, and the store to get stamps and envelopes to mail in my monthly bills. Paying bills online is probably the best thing they came up with for senior citizens. When my computer went down, I did not know what I was going to do until my sister told me about the CHIPS program. I was very doubtful that I would qualify, but I did!

Thanks to the CHIPS program I am now back online, and I am able to pay all of my bills on time, which was my problem.

A CHIPS volunteer, who was very kind, courteous, and patient, delivered a computer to my house. He explained everything that he had done and all of the programs he put on my computer. I want to thank this program and the volunteers for this service.”

—letter from a CHIPS recipient
Knox PAWS (Placing Animals With Seniors)

Knox PAWS matches eligible seniors with adoptable pets. Research indicates that pets improve seniors’ physical, emotional, and mental health. The Knox PAWS program started in late 2004 when the Office on Aging partnered with the Young-Williams Animal Center to match senior pets with senior citizens. Office on Aging’s Project LIVE staff match income-eligible seniors with adoptable older pets. The program depends on contributions from the community. This year, the program hired a part-time employee to help coordinate the program and recruit additional volunteers. The program also expanded its partnerships to other local shelters and rescue groups in Knoxville and formed relationships with additional veterinarians in the community.

To be eligible, an individual must be 60 years of age or older, a resident of Knox County, income-eligible, and live independently in a pet-friendly environment. If participants cannot afford pet food, it is provided through the Feed A Pet Project (a partnership of the UT College of Veterinary Medicine and Project LIVE). Pets adopted by Knox PAWS participants receive an initial medical exam, vaccination, a microchip, are spayed or neutered, and are provided with six months’ worth of heartworm and flea prevention medication.

Number of people served
- 8 seniors received pets

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Seniors receiving pets reaped an untold health reward. Pet ownership has many demonstrated health benefits.
- 8 older animals found loving homes instead of being euthanized as “unadoptable.”
- The program held its first PAWS Among the Blooms fund raiser at Stanley’s Greenhouse and raised more than $4,000 for the program.
- PAWS applied for additional grants and is expecting to hear from these potential new funding sources in the coming fiscal year.

Five years ago Mrs. R’s beloved miniature dachshund, Darvin, died in her arms, and she swore then she would never have another pet. Mrs. R became severely depressed and would not get out of bed for several months. Her husband was her full-time caregiver and was also experiencing isolation and depression because he didn’t want to leave her alone. That was before they found out about the Knox PAWS program. Once Mrs. R heard about it, she decided it was time to find another companion because she missed her beloved Darvin so much. She called Knox PAWS and, with their help, she adopted an adult chihuahua, named her Angel Baby, and made her part of the family. Since then, Mr. and Mrs. R have made an amazing turn-around. They started taking Angel out and about in a doggy stroller and even attended the “PAWS Among the Blooms” fund raiser and were the hit of the event. Mrs. R was so proud of her “baby” that she wanted to show her off. Everyone was thrilled to meet her and hear her story, and she said that she was so “thankful to have somewhere to come to show off my baby and help raise money so other people could adopt an animal.”

Budget $6,210

Major Sources of Revenue
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
MOBILE AFFORDABLE MEAL SERVICE

The Mobile Affordable Meal Service (MAMS) provides meals (the same menu as Mobile Meals) five days a week for individuals who pay a fee for the service. There are no public funds involved and no eligibility requirements. The Senior Nutrition Program administers MAMS, and meals are delivered by the CAC Transit Program and volunteers. The cost is $6.00 per day for lunch, with an initial minimum order of $30.00. A cold supper and breakfast are also available for an additional cost. Every effort is made to keep the cost affordable. In some cases, the cost of MAMS is covered by churches, by relatives or neighbors, or by agencies, such as the Medicaid Waiver and Options for Community Living. MAMS has helped meet the needs of individuals who are not eligible for Mobile Meals because they are too young or because their situation does not meet the criterion that there is no one in the home who can cook. Family members will sometimes order MAMS to be delivered to their older relative while the family is at work or for people who are temporarily unable to cook for themselves while they recover from an illness or an injury.

Number of people served
♦ 42 unduplicated clients
♦ An average of 18 individuals received meals every weekday throughout the year.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ Meals ........5,592

Mr. and Mrs. D, both in their early 70s, have always been active in the community, and were enjoying their retirement. Then Mrs. D became sick and had to drop out of her activities. She began having medical treatments for her illness, to which Mr. D took her each week—or more often, if needed. Because it was so important that Mrs. D get good nutrition during her illness, and that Mr. D take care of himself while caring for her, they decided that they needed to get healthful meals delivered to their home. They called Mobile Meals, and learned then about Mobile Affordable Meal Service, which they felt was perfect for them. They were able to pay the fees involved, and they liked the flexibility of the program.

As she began to get her strength back, Mrs. D wrote the following to the MAMS program: “My husband and I want to thank you for the healthy and tasty meals you provide for us, and the faithful people who deliver them. We really appreciate this service, but hope that my health will improve so that I am able to cook again.”
Mobile Meals Kitchen

The Mobile Meals Kitchen opened in August 2003 to prepare and package meals for the Senior Nutrition Program and for other nonprofit programs in the community. Meals must be nutritious, safe, and sanitary, but above all, they must taste good and be attractive to tempt the sometimes poor appetites of seniors. Keeping the costs low is a high priority so that the maximum number of seniors can be served with the available funds. Contracts with nonprofit programs help to cover the fixed costs of utilities and staffing, keeping the costs low for everyone.

The kitchen produced an average 1,954 meals/snacks per day. It was designed and built with the capacity to produce 5,000 meals each day, in order to be prepared to meet the needs of the growing senior population in the years to come.

Number of meals prepared
♦ 220,524 Mobile Meals
♦ 72,893 congregate meals
♦ 195,318 contract meals
♦ 67,430 after-school snacks

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ The kitchen had contracts to provide meals at three adult daycare facilities, and a contract to provide an after-school snack program for City of Knoxville Recreation Centers.
♦ The Kitchen prepared cold lunches that could be refrigerated and heated later for seniors who wanted to eat a little later in the day. Meals that are going to be consumed later are safer when delivered cold rather than hot meals that are allowed to cool.
♦ The Kitchen provided approximately 66 weekend meals to seniors through private and state contracts.
♦ The kitchen provided an average of 565 meals per day for six senior meal programs in surrounding counties.

Budget $1,506,029

Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Contract sales

Comments from some of the seniors who eat Mobile Meals every day:
“Thank you so much for the healthy meals. They are not only good for me, but they also taste good, too.” —Berna M.

“Thank all of them that work in the kitchen, preparing our meals. Even though we will probably never meet, I think of those cooks and other kitchen workers every day when I eat my meal. I am so thankful for them.” —Ed G.

“To be honest, I didn’t think the meals would taste all that good. I was really surprised when I started getting them and they were quite good. I especially like the Salisbury steak and the barbecue. Oh, and all of the desserts!” —K. C. M.

“Those kitchen workers do a fantastic job making our meals! I’m so grateful they do what they do. It must be a real job, cooking so many meals every day. Please give them a hug for me!” —Patricia C.
OFFICE ON AGING

The Office on Aging has a core support staff that offers administrative support to all of the OOA programs listed in this annual report, providing each program with efficient, coordinated, and cost-saving services. Some of the activities of the core staff include:

♦ Administrative and financial oversight
♦ Identifying and developing additional funding sources such as fund-raising activities and grant opportunities
♦ Public awareness and information, which includes
  • Participating in health fairs, community exhibits, and church mission fairs
  • An Office on Aging web site: http://knoxseniors.org, which is home to the online versions of the Senior Service Directory and Elder News & Views (see below for both).
  • Maintaining a speakers’ bureau
  • Offering aging information periodically through local media, including Community Television’s Aging Advantage, composed of 15-minute interviews of aging-network professionals
  • In November 2010, the Office on Aging offered its annual workshop, Aging: A Family Affair, for the 26th year. The workshop offers practical advice on issues of interest to senior citizens and caregivers, both family members and professionals. In 2010, the keynote speaker, Jim McConnell, discussed “The Future of Aging: Adult Care Homes.” Nine workshops are offered in three sessions throughout the day. Participants choose one workshop per session to attend.
  • Printing and distributing information:
    • The Senior Service Directory is a compact, easy-to-use directory of services and information for Knox County senior citizens, family caregivers, and professionals who work with senior citizens. The Office on Aging publishes a new edition of the directory every other year; the office printed 50,000 copies of the 17th edition in March 2011. The directory is distributed free of charge. The 17th edition of the directory is online at http://knoxseniors.org/directory.
    • Elder News & Views is the Office on Aging’s newsletter. It contains monthly schedules and calendars for the O’Connor Senior Center and articles about Office on Aging happenings, events around town, and issues and topics of interest to senior citizens in Knoxville and Knox County. The newsletter is available free to anyone in Knox County. The office distributed about 16,000 copies of the 12-page newsletter six times during the year. Printing and mailing was supported by Mercy Health and the Knoxville News Sentinel. The newsletter can be read online at http://knoxseniors.org/news. Call 865-524-2786 to get e-mail notification of the newsletter.
    • Weekly Update provides news about the Office on Aging and the O’Connor Senior Center schedule of activities in the Sunday Knoxville News Sentinel.
Office on Aging staff
(as of October 2006)

Office on Aging

Affordable Medicine
Options for Seniors

Daily Living Center

Family Friends &
Grandparents as Parents
Program

Foster Grandparent Program

Mobile Meals Kitchen

Project LIVE

O’Connor Senior Center

Retired & Senior Volunteer
Program

Senior Citizens Information
& Referral Service

Senior Companion Program

Senior Employment Service

Senior Nutrition Program

CAC Transit Program
In their own words
Thoughts about the Office on Aging programs, staff, and volunteers from those who are served.

“Thank you so much for caring, and sharing these meals with me. It means a lot to me, knowing I’ll see a beautiful smile and food on the other side of my door! May God continue to bless and keep all of you who provide, cook, and deliver the meals.”
— a woman who receives Mobile Meals

“The best senior program by far! I don’t know where I’d be without y’all. I’m so happy and grateful for this service.”
— a Volunteer Assisted Transportation passenger

“It’s a dream come true! A porch that I have dreamed of being able to sit on and enjoy the outdoors, a new bathroom, outside of my house pressure-washed, and back porch painted. I am so happy! Thank you, thank you, thank you!”
— a person served by Project LIVE

“This program is remarkably helpful to seniors. Thank you for being such a terrific resource for finding jobs, as well as an encourager, and for helping me find a job.”
— a person who attended Senior Employment Service’s job workshop

“I am very thankful to be able to use the service you provide. Riding this van is very helpful to me because I don’t drive. I have chronic asthma and arthritis real bad in my hip. I don’t know what I would do without CAC. Have a blessed day.”
— a CAC Transit passenger

“It’s a privilege to be in the RSVP Program. I really believe it makes a difference in people’s lives.”
— RSVP volunteer with Senior Citizens Awareness Network

“I want to tell you how much Mom and I are enjoying this computer! She wanted me to mention to you how awesome the photography is that you put on our computer! We have found some old friends on Facebook that we had not been in touch with in years. It is certainly a blessing to be able to communicate with them after all these years. Thanks again!”
— A caregiver and her elderly mother who received a computer through CHIPS (Computers for Homebound & Isolated Persons)

“I want to express my deep appreciation for the Senior Companion Program. It provides an invaluable service for those of us who are primary caretakers for our elderly family members, but due to work or other obligations, cannot be with our loved ones full time. Thank you so much!”
— a woman served by the Senior Companion Program

“If you weren’t here, I don’t think I’d come to the rec center. You are such an inspiration to me, just like a real grandmother!”
— a child who attends an afterschool program that is served by the Foster Grandparents Program