Office on Aging

July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013
Annual Report
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; people of all races and ethnicities; people in frail health; and people on very low fixed incomes.

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, 2012, through June 30, 2013.

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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# Table of Contents

Office on Aging Revenue Sources.............................. i
What Is the Office on Aging?................................. 1
CAC & Office on Aging history................................ 2
Council on Aging................................................ 3
Office on Aging programs................................. 4-38
  Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors........ 4
  Daily Living Center........................................... 6
  East Tennessee 2-1-1......................................... 8
  Foster Grandparent Program............................. 10
  Grandparents As Parents Program.................... 12
  Knox County CAC Transit................................ 14
  O’Connor Senior Center.................................... 16
  One Call Club.................................................. 18
  Project LIVE.................................................. 20
  Retired & Senior Volunteer Program............... 22
  Senior Citizens Information & Referral Svc...... 24
  Senior Companion Program............................. 26
  Senior Employment Service............................. 28
  Senior Nutrition Program................................. 30
  Volunteer Assisted Transportation.................. 32
  CHIPS.......................................................... 34
  Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures.................... 35
  Knox PAWS..................................................... 36
  Mobile Affordable Meal Service...................... 37
  Mobile Meals Kitchen....................................... 38
Office on Aging................................................. 39
Office on Aging Volunteers................................. 40
Office on Aging staff list..................................... 41
2012-2013 OOA REVENUE SOURCES
TOTAL= $10,128,056

Federal- $4,343,720 (42.89%)
State- $334,113 (3.30%)
Knoxville- $518,856 (5.12%)
Knox County- $1,145,632 (11.31%)
Private- $3,785,735 (37.38%)
What Is the Office on Aging?

What is the Office on Aging? We are a large group of dedicated people—people who serve other people. We are a staff of about 125 men and women; a collection of about 20 programs. Because we are part of the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) we benefit from its well-deserved reputation for cost effective and efficient service as well as for compassionate and caring staff.

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.

Many of the programs under the Knoxville-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 staff person often walks across the office and discusses the referral with the other program staff, and new services can be 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 at the other end of the county.

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 3), 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.

Our greatest need? YOU. 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. YOU make us stronger. If you haven’t already, please consider becoming a partner of the Office on Aging. There are many ways that you can get involved. Please call us at (865) 524-2786 to get started.

Susan H. Long
Director
Knox County CAC Office on Aging
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 $33 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. Monty retired in April 2013, and Susan Long became the new director at that time.


CAC Board
As of December 31, 2013

Virginia S. Anagnost, Chair
Sam Anderson
Dempsey Andes
Rep. Joe Armstrong
Debbie Black
Councilman Daniel Brown
Commissioner Amy Broyles
Dr. Martha Buchanan
Mayor Tim Burchett
Chris Caldwell
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2
Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging

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.

COA Executive Committee
As of September 30, 2013

Bill Schall, Chair
Zoe Evans, Vice-Chair
Jeanie Fox, Secretary
Bonnie Callen, Treasurer
Laura Faye Berry
Sandy Booher
Ludell Coffey
Jim Hicks
Douglas Hubbard
Jack Lee
John May
Luis Velazquez
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, working with the program manager, 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, which in turn, helps them maintain their health and overall well-being.

Through its information outreach service, AMOS contributes to a better public understanding of Medicare, manufacturers’ free-medicine programs, discounts, and those aspects of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 that affect Medicare and uninsured adults.

A high priority for the AMOS program is to find and assist Medicare beneficiaries whose low income and modest assets make them eligible for financial assistance for their Medicare out-of-pocket expenses. In 2012-2013, AMOS focused its outreach on activities conducted with faith-based organizations including churches and religious associations.

AMOS also helped people apply for free brand-name medicine from pharmaceutical companies through Patient Assistance Programs. Even Medicare beneficiaries, when they are in the Donut Hole gap in coverage, may be eligible for these programs.

**Number of people served**
- 1,663 people were provided information and/or advising. Of these:
  - 387 individuals received general information only.
  - 1,276 people received detailed individual advising.
- 2,532 people attended AMOS presentations and exhibits.

**Services**
- Education for Knox County groups, including seniors, people with disabilities, and families.
- Personalized information for East Tennessee seniors and people with disabilities.
- Training for Knox County health-care and social service professionals.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Assisted 88 Medicare beneficiaries in applying to Social Security for the Extra Help subsidy for Part D expenses.
- Assisted 57 Medicare beneficiaries apply for Medicaid for help with expenses.

**Budget** $61,905

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Federal/State
- Knox County Foundations/Grants
- Community
Mr. J was referred to AMOS by a friend who had heard about the program at his church. Mr. J was going to turn 65 soon and needed help getting his Medicare set up the best way possible. Since he was not familiar with the details of Medicare health insurance, the AMOS adviser began with an explanation of the three main parts of Medicare—hospital, medical (including preventive care), and prescription drug coverage.

The adviser also explained the two different methods of setting up the coverage (Original Medicare vs. Medicare Advantage plans). In reviewing Mr. J’s finances, the adviser learned that his assets were already low and his income was going to decrease substantially when his unemployment compensation ended in a few weeks. The AMOS adviser agreed to contact Mr. J again in two months, at which time she verified that his current income was below the eligibility guideline for the Extra Help and proceeded to help him apply. His application was approved, and he was able to afford to get all of his medicines on a regular basis.

* 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 3.
The Daily Living Center (DLC) 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 day program. DLC 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 or are referred by the Choices program. Referrals from Adult Protective Services from the Tennessee Department of Human Services receive priority. Income eligibility and fee structure are established by the Tennessee Department of Human Services Social Service Block Grant guidelines. The Daily Living Center’s hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 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. Referrals for admission can be made by calling the Daily Living Center at 689-8203.

Number of people served
- 15 unduplicated individuals attended
- 246 days of operation

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Staff worked with several families to improve family member’s daily living skills in an effort to help the client remain at home, avoiding placement in a nursing home or group home.
- All Social Service Block Grant and Child and Adult Care Food Program audits, as well as local and state inspections, resulted in perfect scores with no negative findings.
- Partnered with several local agencies to provide gifts and special events for the participants at holiday times throughout the year.
- Added hand care and hygiene to the existing toenail care program of instruction.

Budget
$131,154

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
A Daily Living Center Story

DLC really changes lives!

When Ms W started coming to DLC, she had been spending her time sitting at home isolated, with very little mobility, and almost no independent skills. She also was wearing Depends and had no interest in her appearance.

After attending DLC for awhile, she began to interact with her peers, she became more mobile, her daily living skills increased, and she began to take pride in her appearance (she even started wearing lipstick!). Ms B’s family caregiver was so excited to see these improvements; she reported, “If it was not for DLC, my loved one would have been put in a nursing home.”

This is the same response we hear from many of the caregivers of people who come to DLC. The Daily Living Center does make a difference in the quality of life of its participants.

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East Tennessee 2-1-1 (also referred to as just 2-1-1) serves as the first point of access to all community services, including shelter and housing, food, substance abuse 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 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, connecting 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 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 our most up-to-date information. This is the most cost-effective way to provide 24-hour service.

Number of people served in East Tennessee
♦ 23,171 calls received
♦ 31,482 referrals provided
♦ 233,258 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.

Budget $100,021
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
United Way
Community contributions
East Tennessee 2-1-1 Callers’ Questions

I need some good rainy-day activities for toddlers!

Where is the income tax assistance site nearest my home in LaFollette?

My granddad’s a WWII veteran who is having trouble with his benefits and wants to get into Ben Atchley State Veterans’ Home. Can you help us?

We don’t have anything to eat. Mama says not to tell anyone, but I’m hungry.

I’m calling from another state. Where can we get help for my aging mom, who lives in Powell?

Can you help me find good prenatal care?
The Foster Grandparents Program provides low-income adults over the age of 55 a chance for meaningful volunteer experience working with children in Knox and Blount County. Volunteers serve through 34 different community agencies, called volunteer stations, such as Knox and Blount County Schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, Head Start, and many more. The volunteers receive 40 hours of pre-service training, a small stipend, and monthly in-service training to update skills. Each Foster Grandparent volunteers 20 hours a week, spending time 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 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
- 125 Foster Grandparents enrolled
- 502 children served
- 34 volunteer stations
- A total of 97,366 volunteer hours were provided.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Partly due to the assistance provided by Foster Grandparent volunteers, station supervisors reported that the mentored children exhibited improvement in the following areas:
  - 89 percent had better all-around behavior.
  - 93 percent improved in at least one of the targeted areas of character, leadership, and technology.
  - 92 percent exhibited improved behavior and social skills when interacting with other children.
  - 93 percent of tutored children showed improvement in targeted school areas of reading, math, or spelling.
  - 91 percent transitioned successfully to the next grade level.
- Partnerships with nine new volunteer stations have expanded the Foster Grandparents Program’s services to northwest and east parts of town.

Budget $485,980
Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National & Community Service
Knox County
Knoxville
Community Contributions
Ms. V. has been with the program since 2011. She volunteers in a preschool program with the Knox County Schools. She works with 2 to 4 year olds and helps in the classroom with self-help and life skills, art projects, and reads to the children. She says that volunteering gives her a reason to get up in the morning. “If you need love, this is the place to be. And if you help give these kids a good foundation, they will grow to be flowers instead of weeds.” She also has words of encouragement to other seniors, stating, “If you’re not working, this will keep your mind going. It is a wonderful resource for seniors who have a lot to give to the next generation.”

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The Grandparents As Parents Program (GAPP) was initially funded by a grant and the CAC Office on Aging. The 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 the death of a parent—can thrust grandparents into the challenging new role of parenting again. Few community services are tailored to assist them. The Grandparents As

Parents Program provides help with information, referrals, and activities as well as the opportunity for grandparents to meet monthly for support sessions.

GAPP’s Volunteer Advocacy Corps, an innovative service, has assisted more than 125 families headed by grandparents and other relative caregivers since the inception of the service. GAPP Volunteer Advocates offer guidance and information for grandparents to petition for custody or guardianship of at-risk grandchildren or help grandparents prepare for and participate in school Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for grandchildren with special needs. The carefully screened and trained Volunteer Advocates may also accompany grandparents to their Knox County Juvenile Court custody hearings, or to school IEP meetings for children in special education. Volunteer Advocates often return to court with a grandparent family to offer additional support.

Number of people served
- 525 grandparent and relative caregiver families raising more than 650 children.
- 25 families were guided through Juvenile Court or school IEP meetings by GAPP Volunteer Advocates.
- 87 new grandparent and relative caregiver families raising more than 116 children were enrolled this year.
- An average 27 caregivers attended each monthly GAPP support meeting.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Assistance and referrals to community services continued to escalate as more families encountered financial difficulties compounded by the increased cost of food, clothing and utilities. The most frequent reasons for the parents’ inability to care for children were drug addiction, incarceration, and mental health issues.
- Monthly Grandparent to Grandparent support meetings provided information and conversation with the opportunity for participants to discuss topics with local experts.

Budget $44,903
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
A grandparent couple, “Ben,” age 57, and “Mary,” 55, were planning for their retirement years. They had worked hard and had saved carefully; they planned to enjoy their modest savings in their upcoming retirement years by volunteering, getting more involved in their hobbies, and traveling occasionally. But now they are in the process of petitioning for custody of an infant grandchild, “Susan,” who was born drug addicted at a local hospital. The baby was in the custody of DCS until the grandparents agreed to assume her care and custody. Susan was born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome due to her mother’s drug addiction. Both of her parents remain addicted with no effort being made toward recovery. Their baby received a continuum of special care during several weeks in the hospital.

The parents have much to accomplish in their rehabilitation before they will be able to contribute to their baby’s care. Mary and Ben do not expect the parents to petition for their child’s custody in the near future, and they are prepared to care for Susan as long as needed. In the meantime, “she has a safe and caring home,” Mary declared. However, there are many needs to be considered as grandparents undertake the care of an infant grandchild. Not the least of these may be the cost of diapers, a car safety seat, a crib and other baby equipment, as well as other needs that will arise over the coming years.

Although Susan is in a safe and caring home, there are many demands on grandparents when they assume care of a child who has been born with drugs in its system. There is also the possibility of special physical needs as the child develops, as well as the immediate problems of sleep difficulties. They may prove to be inconsolable. As one grandmother who has been through this noted, “you need to have a lot of patience” and “you will get very little sleep.” Rearing small children always takes patience and energy, and that is especially true when caring for a child with special needs. “It’s not the retirement we planned for,“ Ben said. “But we’ll just take it as it comes.”

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Knox County CAC Transit provides access to community resources and services by providing safe, reasonably comfortable transportation for Knoxville-Knox County residents who do not have access to KAT services. Transportation is provided 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
- 7,235 unduplicated individuals served
- 207,064 total trips provided

Services
- 108,435 medical trips, including rides to dialysis; cancer and post-stroke therapy; and medical, dental, and mental health appointments, as well as 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.
- 28,985 rides by contract with the Senior Nutrition Program to transport participants to and from dining sites and deliver meals to homebound elderly.
- 1,702 rides by contract with multiple social service agencies for their participants.
- 22,419 employment-related trips through the JOB-RIDE program. 45,523 job-related trips for participants of other employment-based contractors.
- 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
- Received one-time funding from Knox County to provide transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities who are unable to use KAT, and to provide bus passes to low-income seniors who use the KAT fixed-route bus service.
- Received capital funding to buy four vehicles through the Federal Transit Administration, the Department of Transportation, Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization, and Knox County.
- Number of vehicles: 71
- Average Trips Per Day: 840
- Total Miles Traveled: 1,834,147
- Average Miles Per Day: 7,336

Budget
$ 3,400,688

Major Sources of Revenue
Community Services Block Grant;
Corporation for National Service;
Federal Transit Administration; Knox County;
Knoxville-Knox County CAC; Misc. Contracts;
O'Connor Senior Center; Office on Aging;
Passenger Fare/Contribution;
Rural Public Transportation (thru East TN Human Resource Agency); Senior Nutrition Program;
Tennova Healthcare; TennCare;
TN Dept. of Transportation;
Workforce Connections
I want to thank all of the CAC staff and drivers (especially Daniel and Ted) for transportation every day, and particularly on January 25, 2013, during the awful, icy weather. Daniel picked me up at 2:00 a.m. and made sure I got on the bus safely and got to the dialysis clinic. Ted took me home afterwards in the crazy weather and made sure I got into my home safely. He went out of his way even to salt down my steps. These drivers should be recognized for all they have done for people.

—A CAC Transit passenger

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JOHN T. O’CONNOR SENIOR CENTER

The John T. O’Connor Senior Center, located just off Hall of Fame Drive in Caswell Park, is the focal point in Knox County where senior adults age 50 and older 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 and prolong independence.

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.

Number of People Served
♦ 2,951 individuals participated in activities that totaled 70,736 units of service at the O’Connor Center.
♦ 303 volunteers provided 13,198 hours of volunteer service at Center-related activities.

Services
♦ The O’Connor Center provided 3,036 activities, including recreation, education, physical fitness, and health education, and health screening programs.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ From September to November 2012, Center participants walked more than 60 million steps and, for the second year, won first place in the statewide Walk with Walgreens health competition.
♦ The Fall Health Fair and the Fun in the Sun Skin Cancer Screening and Health Fair play an important role in Center life. Many health problems are identified during the various screenings. Some new screenings were included this year, such as pulmonary function, oral cancer, hearing, and balance. Surgery was required to take care of at least two major problems that were identified. Routine mammograms also revealed potential concerns in several participants.
♦ Nearly 40 veterans were honored at a Veterans Day recognition event. The veterans present had served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. As an expression of appreciation and comradeship, these veterans wrote notes of thanks and encouragement to our troops currently serving in Afghanistan.

Budget
$318,624

Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Program income
One thing about the front doors of the O’Connor Center is that people who walk through them are adding years to their life and life to their years! In order to have survived all the ups and downs of years as a senior, Center participants have learned how to cope with change—everything from that first day of retirement, to the loss of a loved one, or maybe the discovery of a life-threatening disease! Nothing is as certain as change, especially at the O’Connor Center, during each painful transition, participants understand that what seems unbearable today, will, in time, become manageable... and so they move forward holding their cup that is half full rather than half empty.

Recently “Margaret” came to the O’Connor Center with a list of questions. Things had recently changed in her life, and she was struggling with some decisions that had to be made. At the Center she was given information and direction as to where she could find the answers to help her make educated decisions. Margaret returned a couple of months later and said, “You know, I found out you can’t go wrong, if you start with the O’Connor Center for direction.”

“Joseph” was diagnosed with a malignant skin cancer at this year’s free skin cancer screening, visited his physician, and subsequently had surgery to remove the malignancy. In a few weeks, however, there was another suspicious “spot” that also required surgery. To date, Joseph has been through four surgeries, and he shared how grateful he is to the O’Connor Center, and in particular, the health services program. In fact, he tells his family and friends that “the O’Connor Center saved my life.”

The O’Connor Center is indeed a place where you can add years to your life and life to your years!

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The One Call Club began offering services in January 2008, providing one-phone-call access for club 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. In 2012, the club decided to open membership to adults of any age to appeal to busy young people, parents, and professionals who could benefit from the services. Examples of services include health-related services, home repair and home maintenance, home safety modifications, computer installation and tech support, pet-sitting, bill-paying, errand services, and junk removal. The program maintains a list of carefully screened service providers, many of whom offer discounts to members. The goal is to assist all persons to remain independent in their homes and avoid being taken advantage of by unscrupulous service providers.

Members pay an annual fee of $50 to join the program (there is a sliding scale for lower-income seniors). The fee covers the cost of the staff who arrange the services. Members are still responsible for paying for services they receive.

Number of People Served
- 371 households totaling 766 individual members
- 48 lower-income households were eligible for a subsidy.

Services
From July 2012 to June 2013, One Call responded to the following 622 requests:
- Transportation: 99 requests
- Personal Care: 6 requests
- Housekeeping: 30 requests
- Home Repair & Maintenance: 306 requests
- Lawn Care & Landscaping: 82 requests
- Appliance repair: 22 requests
- Car Maintenance: 4 requests
- Miscellaneous services: 73 requests

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Participated in the 2013 national survey of Village organizations that was conducted by UC Berkeley’s Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services. The purpose of the survey was to learn more about each organization’s structure and services delivered.
- Relocated to the O’Connor Senior Center as part of the Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service.

Budget $30,477
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Membership Fees
I am so glad I joined the One Call Club. I had doubts that the program would benefit me, given my past experience with con men and such. I just didn’t see how anyone could stop them. I can now say that this program has been a blessing to me, and it has been a very long time since I was able to speak those words after having someone do work at my home. Thank you, One Call Club! I am so glad I gave this program a chance. I am recommending you to my friends and neighbors. I hope they will join. In fact, I am telling everyone about the club, every chance I get!

Ms. M, a new OCC client

A variety of comments from One Call Club members:

“What would I do without you? It has been a struggle ever since my husband passed away, and it is nice to know I have someone in my corner.”

Ms. L

“I join the club year after year. Sometimes I need it, and sometimes I don’t, but it sure is nice to know I have someone checking things out for me, in case a problem comes up.”

Mrs. K

“I tell everyone about the One Call Club and the great people they send out to my home. I’m not sure how I got so lucky, but I sure am glad I joined this program.”

Ms. B

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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 to determine seniors’ need for home-delivered meals, homemaker service, caregiver respite, care management, and other supportive services.

Services provided: case 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, 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 36 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 an extended Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Grant—and a Community Development Block Grant—through the city of Knoxville. Four 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.

Services
- Case Management: 16,868 hours
- Caregiver Support: 151 contacts
- Home Repair: 2,769 hours
- Chores: 2,799 hours
- Visiting: 4,504 home visits

Number of people served
- 2,235 households served

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- 739 volunteers provided 7,240 hours of service.
- Volunteers provided more than 2,769 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
$469,163

Major Sources of Revenue
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
Ms. P is a 90-year-old senior who lives alone on a fixed income. Ms. P has early signs of dementia, but is able to remain independent in her home with a little help. Ms. P has serious breathing issues due to COPD and relies on oxygen through most of the day. When LIVE first began working with Ms. P, she was very confused about her medications and had a habit of calling multiple agencies, looking for help. Since a case manager began working with Ms. P, she has been making regular appointments to see her doctor and, instead of having prescriptions scattered in various pharmacies throughout Knoxville, all of her meds are being coordinated by her case manager and one pharmacy. Ms. P enjoys getting Mobile Meals since she isn’t able to prepare her own meals because she is often out of breath and is a fall risk. She also enjoys visits from the Project LIVE nursing students. Ms. P is on the waiting list for housekeeping services.

Mrs. M is a 60-year-old woman who was referred to Project LIVE by Samaritan Place, a homeless shelter for seniors. She had not been to see a physician for her mental illness in years and ended up being evicted from the home she had lived in with her husband until he passed away. The home was condemned, and she was no longer able to stay there. Mrs. M needed assistance to find a new place, furniture, and housekeeping supplies as well. She also needed assistance with setting up transportation, money management services, food stamps, and to be connected with mental health care again. The Project LIVE case manager assisted Mrs. M with finding an apartment and furnishing it and decorating it modestly. A year later, Mrs. M is stable and is so thankful to have a place to call her own.

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RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program)

RSVP matches 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. Older adults who volunteer and give back to the community are more likely to stay healthy, find a sense of purpose, and avoid depression and loneliness than those who do not volunteer.

RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program) is part of the Corporation for National & Community Service/Senior Corps and started up in Knoxville-Knox County in 1982. It has a participatory advisory council with representatives from enrolled volunteers to members of the community.

Number of people served
410 senior volunteers served

Services
♦ 39,698 hours of service were provided.
♦ 19 nonprofit agencies benefitted 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
♦ 111 RSVP volunteers provided direct services of 15,867 hours for clients with escorted transportation through Volunteer Assisted Transportation and public safety and well-being checks through Senior Citizens Awareness Network (SCAN) of the Knox County Sheriff’s Department.
♦ 113 RSVP volunteers contributed 10,192 hours in community and economic development that benefitted more than 40 nonprofits such as Alzheimer’s Association, Arts Alliance & Council, Visit Knoxville, Ijams Nature Center, Larry Cox Senior Center, Northgate Terrace, South Knoxville Community Center, Habitat Urban Garden Program, and Habitat Urban Garden Stitchers.
♦ 186 RSVP volunteers contributed 13,638 hours ensuring a healthy future for participants of agencies such as Mobile Meals, AMOS, Grandparents as Parents, Senior Companion Program, Tennova Hospice, Arbor Terrace Assisted Living, Knox County Books for the Homebound, and the Ross Learning Center.

Budget $70,774

Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National & Community Service
Knox County
Knoxville
Community contributions
An RSVP Story

At the South Knoxville Community Center, there is a very special volunteer, who for 10 years—with the exception of four weeks when she was recuperating from surgery—has been present EVERY DAY that the center has been open! Ms. P, who lives alone, visited the South Knoxville Community Center one afternoon and quickly recognized that her upbeat personality could be very useful in assisting the volunteer coordinator. From that day forward, she has devoted her time and skills as a volunteer to the South Knoxville Community Center!

Ms. P participates in regular activities at the center; she assists in setting up before and cleaning up after the activities at the center. She also joins the group when field trips are offered from the center and is always a part of the team signing up for RSVP on-call events requesting volunteer participation. Ms. P has participated in such RSVP on-call events as the Revolution 3 triathlon that comes to Knoxville each spring, and putting together registration packets or gift bags for events that come to Knoxville.

The volunteer coordinator at the South Center stated that if she ever needed to be out of the office, “Ms. P would know just what to do and could easily run the place on her own!” Ms. P is a great example of a volunteer who leads by example and brings joy to everyone around her!

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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 will be referred to the program they need. SCIRS, 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 have disabilities. SCIRS also provides information to social service agencies, church groups, and families or caregivers of older residents 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 several 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 8-9). In 2013, the SCIRS program grew again as it began to administer the One Call Club (pages 18-19), CHIPS (page 34), and the new Counseling for Transportation service.

SCIRS also takes applications for and administers the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures (see page 35), and applications for Knox PAWS (see page 36).

**Number of people served**
- 2,059 unduplicated individuals
- 7,976 units of information and referrals provided, including follow-up calls.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Held 12th annual John J. Duncan Sr. Award for Senior Advocacy at the O’Connor Senior Center. This year’s honorees were Deborah Herzel and Ludell Coffey.
- Program manager, Jan Johnson-Nelson, maintained her status as a Certified Resource Specialist in Aging.
- Current employees of SCIRS are AIRS (Aging Information & Referral Services) certified.

**Budget** $70,826

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- United Way
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
A Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service Story

At Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service (SCIRS), even seemingly simple-sounding questions can end up having complex answers. Our staff often must spend a lot of time on the phone or in the office, digging for background information from our callers and visitors before we can properly understand the question. This is what sets SCIRS apart from other referral services that give out numbers and addresses of other agencies. Here are just a couple of examples of typical SCIRS calls.

“Hello, this is Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service. How may I help you?”

“Hi, my name is Eleanor, and I’m calling for my friend, who is a very proud and independent 80-year-old. She has never received any kind of help, but I think she needs some now. She is not taking good care of herself. She forgets to eat, and I’m not sure she even has enough food in the house. She has become withdrawn, and I’m really concerned about her.”

“I’ll send you a Senior Service Directory that might help you to assist her in finding some of the services she needs. I’ll also send a list of senior centers that might help her find ways to become more socially active. From your description, it sounds like your friend might qualify for Food Stamps. Our office can prescreen her for Food Stamps, but we can only do that with her approval. We also recommend that she checks with Project LIVE to see if she is eligible for a case manager.

“The information we’re providing is just a start, as are the materials we’re sending. If your friend will call us herself, and is willing to give us some personal information about herself, we can be of more help.”

It was more than a month later that Mrs. P called. We will never be certain that she was Eleanor’s friend, but she seemed to fit the description. It was clear that Mrs. P had thought for a long time before calling us and was still hesitant to accept help of any kind. But with gentle nudging from the specialist, Mrs. P offered the information needed to help her get Food Stamps that day. Over time, a relationship developed, and Mrs. P would call in for other services. She ended up getting a case manager who made sure that she got proper medical care and self-care. Now Mrs. P eats better, feels better, and is more active, too. She even visits the SCIRS office when she comes to the senior center!

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The Senior Companion Program is unique in that it has the dual purposes of providing low-income adults over the age of 55 an opportunity for meaningful volunteer experience, while also providing companionship and support to many homebound adults in our community. Trained SCP volunteers are matched with 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
♦ 95 Senior Companions
♦ 284 homebound adults served by Companions in their homes.
♦ 37 adults served by Companions at local adult day care programs.

Services
♦ 95 Senior Companions provided 73,945 hours of free in-home assistance to 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.
♦ 95 Senior Companions gained a sense of purpose by serving others.
♦ Companions served 321 frail adults with special physical, emotional, and financial needs. Most were in their late 70s to mid 80s. The oldest client was 104.
♦ The 5th annual Snowflake Ball netted a record $9,600 and was a great success!
♦ Produced revenue to increase the number of Companions by providing service through the TennCare Choices and Family Caregiver programs.
♦ Recognized volunteer efforts through the first-ever Mayors’ Day of Recognition for National Service.

Budget $409,146

Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National & Community Service
State of Tennessee
Knox County
Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
“I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to use the Senior Companion program for my husband, Bill. When we were in dire need, Senior Companions was a lifesaver. It gave Bill a companion, and it gave me peace of mind while I was at work.

“Bill’s companion, Joe, was always on time or early and never left his side. Joe and Bill had much in common with their career backgrounds. Joe went above and beyond what was expected of him. On one occasion, after a serious health scare, Joe rode with Bill in the ambulance and stayed with him in the emergency room until I was able to get there. He didn’t want Bill to be alone during this frightening time. Both my husband and I greatly appreciate the care given to him by Senior Companion Joe. Thank you so much.”

Letter from a grateful wife

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Senior Employment Service offers 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, 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 job seekers, 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.

Senior Employment Service also sponsors Senior Job Fairs where senior job seekers can be assured that the employers who participate truly appreciate the value of the work ethic that is exemplified by the attendees who are seeking employment.

Number of people served
- 162 people attended employment workshops.
- 115 additional people received job counseling and referrals.
- 47 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.
- Two yearly job fairs for seniors.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Of the 277 persons who attended the employment workshops or received other help with finding jobs, 47 were placed in jobs, resulting in a 17-percent placement rate.
- SES sponsored two job fairs, with 31 employers participating in each fair and about 400 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 $17,749

Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County
Knoxville
Thank You Notes from Seniors Who Found Jobs Through Senior Employment Service

Before I came to SES my confidence level was almost zero. You revived my spirits and gave my self-confidence a much-needed boost. I found a job the next week. Thank you.

Senior Employment Service is a most worthy service to our community. I greatly appreciate the assistance I received. Thank you for walking with me through my bad times.

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for all your help in my search for work. I really appreciate the great resume you created for me, as well as your words of advice, and your time. Thanks so much for everything!

Notes from Employers

My staff has consistently found SES to be extremely courteous and helpful. We have interviewed and hired many candidates sent to us because they are always well-qualified and ready to go to work. My overall impression of the program is excellent.

It is a pleasure to call the SES because I always hear a friendly voice answer and truly listen to what I need, then respond with great candidates! Thank you for all you do!

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Through Mobile Meals, the Senior Nutrition Program delivers and serves hot, well-balanced, noontime meals to seniors age 60-plus in Knoxville and Knox County who cannot cook for themselves and have no one to cook for them. Meals are served Monday through Friday, including holidays. The Mobile Meals program has approximately 1,900 volunteers (and some paid staff) who deliver meals. 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.

Seniors who are physically able are served at congregate meal sites, most located in senior apartment complexes 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 deliver meals five days a week, answer phones, sort and pack holiday gifts, and pack emergency and holiday meals. Some volunteers have participated regularly for many years, others help as their schedules permit. Volunteers delivering meals report any problems or concerns, health 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. These meal deliveries allow 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
- 1,377 persons were served in dining rooms in the congregate meal program.
- 1,374 persons received Mobile Meals (home-delivered meals).
- 9 people were served through the Options for Community Living program.
- 69 people were served through the TennCare Choices program.

Services
- 213,060 Mobile Meals were served, an average of 819 meals per day.
- 60,951 meals were served at congregate dining sites, an average of 234 meals per day.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- 70-plus volunteers delivered meals each day, with a total of 1,950 volunteers serving during the year, including at congregate meal sites.
Mr. H is a 63-year-old divorced man who lives alone. Extensive health problems caused Mr. H to become homebound and unable to take care of his many “activities of daily living” (personal care needs), such as preparing meals. His health problems came up quickly, resulting in a loss of not only his physical abilities but also a loss of contact with friends and neighbors. He became very isolated, lonely, and depressed.

The daily visit by the volunteer who delivers his meals is one of his main social contacts for the day, as well as providing a hot, nutritious meal. Mr. H has trouble with balance and uses a walker around his house. Late one evening, though, as he headed to bed, his grip on his walker slipped, the walker went in one direction, and Mr. H went in the other. Unable to reach his walker, Mr. H struggled to get up on his own. He wore himself out until he couldn’t try any longer. Shivering from his effort and the cold, he was able to put a corner of the rug over his legs and curl up on the floor. He didn’t sleep that night, but instead thought about the seriousness of his situation. He couldn’t reach his phone, neighbors would be unable to hear his cries for help, and he was already exhausted. He couldn’t think of anyone who could help him. That’s when he remembered Mobile Meals. “If I can just hang on till they bring my meal tomorrow, I’ll be all right.”

It was a long, miserable night, but the thought that someone would eventually come to his aid kept Mr. H going. He didn’t give up. Sure enough, at the usual time, the Mobile Meals volunteer rang the bell. Mr. H had conserved his strength for this moment, and now, he yelled, as loud as he could, “Help me! Help!” The volunteer heard his calls for help, followed the procedure for emergency situations like this one, and soon, Mr. H was on his way to the hospital to get checked out by a doctor.

Mr. H wrote a note to the Mobile Meals volunteer, thanking her for saving his life. “I hung on because I knew you would come,” he said.

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Volunteer Assisted Transportation is a unique transportation option for Knox County seniors and people with disabilities. The door-through-door program serves those who require aid and assistance to travel safely. Volunteers drive agency vehicles and receive extensive training so that 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 eight Toyota Prius hybrid sedans and seven wheelchair-accessible minivans.

Number of People Served
- 196 people received assisted transportation.
- 737 individuals received transportation counseling, information, and referrals.

Services
- The program’s 50 volunteers provided 4,786 hours of service while providing assistance and transportation to 196 riders on 3,941 trips and traveling 57,995 miles.
- The program sponsored 1,064 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 436 hours of training.
- 1,001 riders—seniors and people with disabilities—are enrolled in the program. Sixty percent of the program’s riders are more than 75 years of age.
- The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging selected the program for an Aging Achievement Award, recognizing the activity as contemporary, effective, and replicable.

Budget $238,689
Major Sources of Revenue
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Passenger Fares
- Community contributions
Volunteer Assisted Transportation Stories

Ms. Louise says she likes to live alone—and for the most part, she can manage. She does admit to feeling “robbed” of the freedom of mobility. She doesn’t have “any concept of how many long months it has been” since she gave up driving, due to vision loss from macular degeneration. “It was quite a shock, one that upset my pleasant disposition!” She knew right away things were going to change. “I had been used to jumping in my car six days a week – I admit to not being very organized about my errands and trips!” When told about VAT going anywhere a driver and car were available, not just doctors and grocery runs, she was very excited. She is very active with friends and community. “Sometimes I like to just go to the movies or just drive around my neighborhood to see what’s new.”

When Ms. Reba tells us that the volunteer drivers of VAT are “very professional” we can take her at her word – she was an Over-the-Road truck driver for 22 years! She drove 18 wheelers for a major oil company as well as made a regional run for the U.S. Postal Service. She is struggling with cancer now and has difficulty with mobility and speech. But she wanted to talk about the volunteers who have been carrying her – two “okey-dokekey gentlemen – and they are rare these days!” She says they are very careful with her, but not “over-careful” and that is important to her sense of independence. When asked to sum up her feelings about VAT, she said “on a scale of 1 to 100, they are a 100-plus!”

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Due to economic and health-related reasons, I am unable to travel as much as I once did. The acquisition of this computer has greatly improved my ability to keep in touch with family and friends and to stay abreast of current affairs. It is also a valuable tool to help me organize my life, i.e., keep appointments, manage my money, and meet obligations; not to mention its entertainment value. I’m certain that I will find many more ways to benefit from its use.

“In today’s technological age, a reliable computer is more than a convenience or a toy; it is a valuable piece of equipment that is a lifeline for many. It greatly enhances the quality of my life.

“I am grateful to the staff of the SCIRS office for once again supplying me with assistance that I could not otherwise afford. [SCIRS (pages 24-25) administers the CHIPS program and accepts applications for the program. —Ed.] Likewise, I am indebted to the volunteers of CHIPS, without whom, I’ve been told, neither I nor anyone else would receive these fine like-new computers.”

—“Mike”

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, 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.

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

Number of people served

- 14 seniors received computers.
- 20 seniors received technical assistance from CHIPS volunteers.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year

- Three full-time caregivers were able to use the computer to participate in online social support services to help alleviate the stress of caregiving.

Budget $2,990

Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County

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Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County

“Due to economic and health-related reasons, I am unable to travel as much as I once did. The acquisition of this computer has greatly improved my ability to keep in touch with family and friends and to stay abreast of current affairs. It is also a valuable tool to help me organize my life, i.e., keep appointments, manage my money, and meet obligations; not to mention its entertainment value. I’m certain that I will find many more ways to benefit from its use.

“In today’s technological age, a reliable computer is more than a convenience or a toy; it is a valuable piece of equipment that is a lifeline for many. It greatly enhances the quality of my life.

“I am grateful to the staff of the SCIRS office for once again supplying me with assistance that I could not otherwise afford. [SCIRS (pages 24-25) administers the CHIPS program and accepts applications for the program. —Ed.] Likewise, I am indebted to the volunteers of CHIPS, without whom, I’ve been told, neither I nor anyone else would receive these fine like-new computers.”

—“Mike”

Number of people served

- 14 seniors received computers.
- 20 seniors received technical assistance from CHIPS volunteers.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year

- Three full-time caregivers were able to use the computer to participate in online social support services to help alleviate the stress of caregiving.

Budget $2,990

Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County

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—“Mike”
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 program started 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. An interest-free loan fund 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 Sight and Hearing programs had minimal waiting lists and were able to start serving those on the waiting lists immediately. The denture program has a much longer waiting list and GOSHD staff were busy recruiting new dentists and new partners in our endeavor to serve our clients. No new names will be added in 2014 in order to reduce the waiting list as quickly as possible.

Number of people served
♦ 174 people received eyeglasses.
♦ 21 people received hearing aids.
♦ 15 people received dentures.

Budget $25,894
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Revolving loan fund payments
Community contributions
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. 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, and are spayed or neutered.

Number of people served
♦ 18 seniors received pets.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ Seniors receiving pets reaped an untold health reward. Pet ownership has many demonstrated health benefits.
♦ 18 older animals found loving homes instead of being euthanized as “unadoptable.”
♦ The program held its second annual PAWS Among the Blooms fund raiser at Stanley’s Greenhouse and raised more than $2,391 for the program.
♦ PAWS applied for additional grants and is expecting to hear from these potential new funding sources in the coming fiscal year.

Budget $12,786
Major Sources of Revenue
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions

Debra has been homebound and isolated for a good part of her life due to severe emotional and physical trauma which resulted in a lot of medical and emotional problems for her. After overcoming a number of her serious issues, she wanted to reach out and adopt a companion dog to help alleviate some ongoing depression. Debra applied to the PAWS program and was approved.

Debra found the perfect dog in Walter, a loving Shih Tzu. She reports, “I was so lonely, but he has been a great companion. He is so smart and loves to take walks. He seems to understand everything I’m saying and is such a friendly dog. I’m very happy since I’ve had Walter as my companion. Thanks to PAWS for helping me get Walter and changing my life.”
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 cost is $3.50 per day for lunch, plus $2.50 for delivery, 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, relatives, or neighbors. 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.

Services provided
- The program served 3,304 meals to people enrolled in the program.

“My children said that I had no business being up on the ladder in the first place,” said Mrs. S, an 81-year-old widow. “But I told them that I’d always pruned the trees by myself before, and I didn’t see why I shouldn’t continue to do so. I’m healthy and active, and I know what I’m doing. I just had an accident and fell, like could happen to anybody.” But after injuring her back and breaking her wrist in the fall, Mrs. S found that she couldn’t prepare meals for herself for awhile.

“That’s when I was so thankful to learn about the Mobile Affordable Meal Service. I’d heard of Mobile Meals, but I didn’t think I needed that. I just needed something to tide me over until I got back on my feet.

“I could afford to pay for the meals on my own, too. I was happy to be able to contribute toward my own ‘upkeep,’” she said with a smile. “The meals were good, and to tell the truth, I got to where I looked forward to the short visits of the people who delivered them. Everyone was always so nice, and always asked how I was coming along. It seemed like no time at all before I was all healed up and back doing all of the things I’d always done—except pruning the trees. My kids made me promise not to do that on my own anymore!”
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 2,003 meals/snacks per day for a total of 500,879 for the fiscal year. 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.

On October 23, 2012, the Kitchen staff returned “home” to 1747 Reynolds Street, after having led a semi-nomadic existence since July 14, 2011, when the ceiling began to collapse as a result of structural damage caused by the “hundred year” storms of that spring. Though the staff had to move from one commercial facility to another during their period of storm-induced “exile,” they continued to serve 1,800 meals a day to Mobile Meals and to other programs that counted on them, and they never missed a single day of service!

**Number of meals prepared**
- 224,451 Mobile Meals
- 68,521 congregate meals
- 134,360 contract meals
- 61,047 after-school snacks
- 12,500 after-school “healthy” snacks

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- The Kitchen had contracts to provide meals at two adult daycare facilities, and a contract to provide an after-school snack program for City of Knoxville Recreation Centers. In addition, 12,500 healthy snacks were provided through a grant from the Knox County Health Department.
- 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 42 weekend meals to seniors through private and state contracts.
- The Kitchen provided an average of 449 meals per day for six senior meal programs in surrounding counties.

**Budget** $1,559,726

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
- Contract sales
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 2012, the Office on Aging offered its annual workshop, Aging: A Family Affair, for the 28th year. The workshop offers practical advice on issues of interest to senior citizens and caregivers, both family members and professionals. In 2012, the keynote speaker, local humorist and longtime News Sentinel columnist Sam Venable delivered his homegrown style of wit about the joys of growing older but not up. Eight workshops were offered in three sessions throughout the day. Participants chose one workshop per session to attend. The 2012 event, held at a new venue, Rothchild Conference Center, was a great success, with more attendees than ever before, and the Office on Aging staff received extremely positive evaluations from those who attended.
  - 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 48,000 copies of the 18th edition in March 2013. The directory is distributed free of charge. The 18th 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 17,000 copies of the 12-page newsletter six times during the year. The newsletter can be read online at www.knoxseniors.org/news. Call 865-524-2786 to get on the mailing list. Send an e-mail to knoxooa@knoxseniors.org to get an e-mail notification for the online version 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 Volunteers: Priceless

Volunteers are not paid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless. —Sherry Anderson

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 volunteers are no exception. Through 13 different OOA programs, more than 4,000 volunteers completed more than 270,000 hours of service this year, with a conservative estimated value of more than three million dollars.

Office on Aging volunteers are a valuable asset to each person they serve, to each program they volunteer for, to the Community Action Committee, to Knoxville, to Tennessee, to the nation. They make the planet a better place to live.

Project LIVE volunteers helped homebound adults with 7,240 hours of chores such as deep cleaning, decluttering, yard work, painting, and other home repairs.

More than 2,200 Mobile Meals volunteers delivered meals to homebound seniors.

Senior Corps volunteers completed more than 214,500 hours of service helping seniors remain independent at home, tutoring and mentoring school age children, and helping retired seniors find meaningful volunteer opportunities in the community.
Office on Aging staff
(as of June 30, 2013)

Office on Aging
Susan Long, Director
Fred Massingill, Asst. Director
Sharon Brown
Kathy Burke
Ann Connelly
Kelley Hampton
Nancy Lofaro
Elizabeth Prater
Jennifer Russell

Affordable Medicine
Options for Seniors
David Holden, Manager

Daily Living Center
Wendy Neloms, Coordinator
Rachel Martin

Foster Grandparent Program
Andrea McGinn, Coordinator

Grandparents as Parents Program
Edna Eickman, Manager

Mobile Meals Kitchen
Karen Estes, Director
Gina Delk, Manager
Steven Allen
Gregory Cazalet
Kaeena Davis
Marcus Garrett
Roger Hyver
Linda Jones
Andrea Kemp
Kenneth Michel
Judith Pelot

Project LIVE
Misty Goodwin, Senior Manager
Scott Bennett
Susan Bradford
Kim Brookshire
Melinda Bryant
Angelia Eastern
Pete Ferri
Rachel Gentry
Yolanda Grant
Crystal Holt

Project LIVE (Cont.)
Carol Lamb
Lutherine Logan
Ann Payne

O’Connor Senior Center
Sue Massingill, Manager
Rebecca Chandler
Cathy Gonzales
Claudia Jewell
Elbert Kern

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Ashley Rex, Coordinator

Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service/2-1-1
Jan Johnson-Nelson, Manager
LaWanna Broderick
Karen Hedden

Senior Companion Program
Florence Dills, Coordinator

Senior Corps Management
Deisha Finley, Manager
Lisa Bush

Senior Employment Service
Bonnie Lyle, Coordinator

Senior Nutrition Program
Alison Taylor, Manager
JoAnn Buchanan
Debbie Clay
Pamela Chambers
Teresa Coning
Marleta Holton
Emil Jones
Chad Lawson
Jennifer Oakes
Judy Pate
Melissa Poole
Lauranita Young

CAC Transit Program
Karen Estes, Director
Kathy Cunningham, Operations Manager
Michael Humphrey, Financial Services Manager
Kevin Atkins
Denise Battle

CAC Transit Program (Cont.)
Mark Berry
Micky Blakley
Carolyn Bomar
Joseph Brown
Jerry Cagley
Scott Cunningham
Heather Davis
Mitchell Edwards
Kenneth Foster
Venissa Garner
J. C. Gullett
Latasha Hall
Beverly Harris
Kimberly Hatchett
Sam Hopkins
Clara Howe
Jack Huffaker
John Jones
Stan Jones
Bill Love
Ronald Martin
Charles Merritt
Crystal Mills
Dennis Moreau
Jason Nelson
Ralph O’Neal
Terrie Parrott
Donnie Peels
Lisa Perry
Billy Pratt
Cheree Robinson
Linda Savage
Teddy Scarbrough
Gary Shoffner
Doyle Shultz
Leonard Smith
Donnas Waller
Eric White
Michelle Wilkins
Perry Williams
Chereña Williamson
Laura Williamson

Volunteer Assisted Transportation
Warren Secrest, Manager
McDonald Vandyke
Nancy Welch
A round of applause
for Office on Aging programs, staff,
and volunteers from those who are served.

“If it wasn’t for DLC my granny
would have been put in a nursing
home. The Daily Living Center
makes such a big difference to our
whole family!”
—relative of a
Daily Living Center participant

“Mrs. R (a Senior Companion) has been a part of
mother’s life for almost a year now and we have
grown to love and value her so very much. My
mother is quite attached to her and looks forward
to her visits with great anticipation!”
—daughter of a Senior Companion client

“If you’re not working, this will
keep your mind going. It is a
wonderful resource for seniors
who have a lot to give to the
next generation”
—A Foster Grandparent,
to other seniors

“Thank you for making me feel like I
‘matter’ again, and thus what I do and who
I am matters. Your gentle and positive reinforce-
ment have proved to be the most lasting motiva-
tion for me to press on and do what I can do for
myself instead of throwing my hands up in the air
and surrendering, with the words, ‘Oh! What’s
the use!’ I thank you for being the catalyst to help
me bring an end to that mentality.”
—a Project LIVE client,
in a letter to her case manager