Office on Aging

July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014
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, 2013, through June 30, 2014.

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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2013-2014 OOA REVENUE SOURCES
TOTAL = $4,815,956

Federal $2,233,925 (46.39%)
State $274,275 (5.70%)
Knoxville $649,116 (13.48%)
Knox County $661,249 (13.73%)
Private $997,391 (20.71%)
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 50 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.

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 are 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 emails, 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.

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. And we need you to join the Council on Aging. 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 $29.5 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.

Programs of the Office on Aging include Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors (AMOS, 2002), Computers for Homebound & Isolated Persons (CHIPS, 2008), Daily Living Center (2002), East Tennessee 2-1-1 (2008), Foster Grandparent Program (1976), Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures (1985), Grandparents As Parents Program (2000), Mobile Affordable Meal Service (1992), Mobile Meals Kitchen (2003), John T. O’Connor Senior Center (1978), One Call Club for Seniors (2008), Placing Animals With Seniors (PAWS, 2005), Project LIVE (Living Independently through Volunteer Efforts, 1984), Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP, 1982), Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service (2004), Senior Companion Program (1988), Senior Employment Service (1982), and the Senior Nutrition Program/Mobile Meals (1971). Years in parentheses indicate the year that the programs became part of the Office on Aging.

CAC Board
As of June 30, 2014

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Executive Director
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 a program that provides information, advising, and public education 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.

AMOS contributes to a better public understanding of Medicare, manufacturers’ free-medicine programs, discounts, and other resources. AMOS also assists clients by performing research for copay assistance based on diagnoses and conditions.

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-related out-of-pocket expenses. This includes helping clients apply for Medicaid and for Medicare beneficiary programs such as Extra Help for Part D and Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB).

Number of people served
- 1,667 people were provided information and/or advising.

Services
- Provides education for Knox County groups, including seniors, people with disabilities, and families through
  - Explaining Medicare options
  - Answering questions
  - Assisting with plan comparisons
  - Helping with applications
- Offers personalized information for East Tennessee seniors and people with disabilities.
- Provides training for Knox County health-care and social service professionals.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Assisted 56 Medicare beneficiaries in applying to Social Security for the Extra Help subsidy for Part D expenses.
- Helped 31 Medicare beneficiaries apply for Medicaid for help with expenses.

Budget $80,669
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Knox County
Foundations/Grants
Community
An Affordable Medicine Options for Seniors Story

Mr. M was referred to AMOS by a nurse at his doctor’s office who called on Mr. M’s behalf to request help with his healthcare costs and choosing a Medicare plan. Mr. M was turning 65 and needed help getting his Medicare set up the best way possible. After collecting essential information, the AMOS advisor submitted an application for Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB), which would help with Mr. M’s health and prescription expenses. Further assistance was needed to get QMB coverage and a refund of Medicare premiums that were taken from Mr. M’s Social Security payment.

An AMOS advisor took the time to help Mr. M understand his insurance coverage and how to make the most of his benefits. With help from AMOS, Mr. M was able to get the best insurance coverage for his situation. He can now afford the health care that he needs.

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Not all vulnerable adults need the services of a nursing home, but they may require services that will help them function to their fullest potential. Seniors often need a place that will help them avoid feeling isolated or lonely, and one that will help their family caregivers take some time to rest and care for themselves; some caregivers need that time to work. The Daily Living Center (DLC), a state-licensed adult day care, is critical to helping meet these needs. DLC is partially funded with federal dollars under a Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and seeks to serve low-income Knox County residents age 60 or older, as well as Adult Protective Service clients. Transportation services are provided at no cost to the participant, and income eligibility and fee structure are established by the Tennessee Department of Human Services SSBG guidelines.

The Daily Living Center provides programs for adults who need some level of supervision throughout the day as well as those adults who have physical, neurological, or emotional problems requiring special intervention or care. Daily activities include opportunity for socialization as well as activities that help cognitively or physically-challenged adults maintain or improve their levels of functioning.

The Daily Living Center, located at 3900 Probus Road in North Ridge Crossing, operates from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided in accordance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines.

**Number of people served**
- 20 unduplicated individuals attended
- 240 days of operation

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Under the leadership of a new Adult Day Care Coordinator, participation increased to 16 participants by the end of June 2014—the maximum number that DLC is licensed to serve through the State of Tennessee.
- The new Adult Day Care Coordinator successfully completed the following training events: Heartsaver First Aid CPR/AED, Alzheimer’s 101, the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program, Title VI, Working with your Community, Activities with Mental and Physical Limitations, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, and Stay Active and Independent for Life.
- Partnerships were established with community organizations to provide educational and recreational activities for DLC clients.
- With the help of community partners, the facility received a facelift, including an outdoor garden, new furnishings, and newly painted walls.
- Once again, all local, state, Social Service Block Grant, and Child and Adult Care Food Program monitoring visits resulted in perfect scores with no issues.

**Budget** $148,859

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

Just before Ms. J came to the Daily Living Center (DLC), most of her days were spent alone, with very little companionship. Most of her family lived out of the country, and the relatives that were here had little time to check on her, much less to spend any quality time with her. She began having issues with balance. She had several serious falls, and it was very difficult for her family to rush to her aid. She was becoming more and more dependent on the family that wasn’t there for her! She struggled with losing her independence and very quickly began a downward spiral. She became depressed, was unable to take care of her personal hygiene needs, and both her emotional health and personal appearance began to suffer.

Soon after she started attending the Daily Living Center, things began to change in Ms. J’s life. She tentatively took part in conversations and began interacting with the other participants. She even started to take pride in her appearance once again and began letting a home-health-care aide help her bathe. Ms. J’s family reported that she seemed so much happier and couldn’t stop talking about DLC when they called! The family also commented that had it not been for her Daily Living Center “family,” they would have had to put her in a nursing home.

This is a familiar story at the DLC, where we are able time and time again to bridge the gap and enable at-risk seniors to remain independent in their homes a little longer.

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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.2-1-1tn.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 professionals working to meet the complex needs of their clients. 2-1-1 began in Knoxville as an independent agency in 1998 and has gone through many transitions since then. 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, seven days a week.

Number of people served in East Tennessee
- 15,426 calls received
- 20,847 referrals provided
- 20,822 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 database upgraded with advanced features.
- East Tennessee 2-1-1 has three AIRS-certified I&R specialists on staff, providing information & referral to the region. AIRS is Alliance of Information & Referral Systems.

Budget $99,378
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
United Way
Community contributions
Larry suddenly began losing his eyesight. As his sight decreased, Larry faced a myriad of problems. Larry lost his job and was facing hunger and homelessness. He had no idea where to go for help. The man who never asked for help reluctantly called 2-1-1. The call center specialist was able to get Larry help with food, housing, and specific support for individuals with blindness and other disabilities. The resources Larry needed were not available in the phone book, even if he had been able to see to read it.

*2-1-1 allows resources to become easily accessible to everyone.*

Sarah, an elderly woman, was being physically abused by her caregiver. She was too scared to call Adult Protective Services (APS) herself, but she had been given a 2-1-1 card from a helpful neighbor who encouraged her to dial 2-1-1 and report her trouble. The 2-1-1 resource specialist was able to calm Sarah down and help her feel comfortable with the idea of reporting the abuse. Sarah felt better, but she was still too afraid to make the call herself, so she asked the 2-1-1 specialist to do it for her. 2-1-1 called APS on Sarah’s behalf, made the report, and learned that an investigation would commence immediately. When the 2-1-1 specialist phoned back to tell her of this progress, Sarah said she very much appreciated the help.

*2-1-1 makes people healthier and communities safer.*

Mrs. L, whose husband had just passed away after a long battle with cancer, was left with a large family to support and was on limited resources. At the time of her husband’s death, Mrs. L had no money to pay for his funeral and burial. A friend told her about 2-1-1. She called, and the operator was very helpful in providing several contacts that could possibly assist with the cost. Ultimately the Mrs. L received assistance and was able to see her husband buried with the dignity he deserved.

*2-1-1 helps people in need.*
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 38 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**
- 117 Foster Grandparents enrolled
- 350-plus children with special needs served
- 38 volunteer stations
- A total of 96,620 volunteer hours were provided.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Teacher evaluations showed that children tutored, mentored, or served by FGP volunteers exhibited improvement in the following areas:
  - 86 percent improved in social and/or emotional engagement.
  - 81 percent showed improvement in academic engagement.
  - 93 percent moved to the next grade level.
- 94 children were served by FGP volunteers in child welfare, safety, and health programs.
- Partnerships with 13 new volunteer stations expanded the Foster Grandparents Program’s services in Knox and Blount counties.
- A new Blount County Advisory Council was developed to aid in volunteer recruitment and station expansion.

**Budget** $481,270

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Corporation for National & Community Service
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Community Contributions
This past year, Foster Grandparent Audrey noticed that many of the children she worked with could read, but when asked about what they had just read, they were unable to tell much detail about the content. She recognized that there was a problem with comprehension and asked the director of the program permission to develop a reading comprehension program. She started with a group of five children, which quickly grew to 11 within a few months. Over time, parents and teachers began to notice the improvement these children were having at school and home with their reading. Grades improved and the children began thanking her for the help she was giving because they felt rewarded by the positive praise they were receiving from their teachers and parents. Granny Audrey received special recognition from the center director at a graduation ceremony for these reading “stars.”

This past December, Foster Grandparents volunteer Sharon was recognized for her work with Rosie, a child who was nominated as the Cherokee Turn Around Student of the year. This award is given to a child who shows exemplary improvement in academics during the school year. Sharon contributed to Rosie’s academic achievement by providing her with one-on-one attention and mentoring. Rosie’s family invited Sharon to the award ceremony to show their appreciation for the impact that this Foster Grandparent had had on Rosie.

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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
- 554 grandparent and relative caregiver families raising more than 750 children.
- 18 families were guided through Juvenile Court or school IEP meetings by GAPP Volunteer Advocates.
- 98 new grandparent and relative caregiver families raising more than 116 children were enrolled this year.
- An average 28 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 $60,171
Major Sources of Revenue
Federal/State
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
Mary, age 70 and retired, had not planned to be “parenting again” in her senior years. However, she is the grandmother of a young child who came into her care when he was only three months old. The baby is the child of Mary’s daughter, who like many of the young parents that we hear about in GAPP, was addicted to drugs when her son was born and continues to use drugs. She is not capable of providing care for her child.

The baby was born addicted to drugs because of the mother’s drug use during pregnancy. As a result, the baby had to undergo detox treatment before being released from the hospital to his grandmother’s care.

Even after undergoing treatment for neonatal abstinence syndrome, children born addicted to drugs can continue to suffer—more than babies not born addicted—from stomach cramps, diarrhea, and trouble eating and sleeping. They are often hard to console and need to be held and rocked more than other babies.

Mary said, “I am not a young mother and am finding caring for an infant difficult—especially an infant with special needs.”

Mary finds GAPP’s monthly support meetings helpful, as there are many grandparents there in the same boat that she’s in. They can empathize with one another over balancing the loss of what they thought would be their “golden years” with the obvious love and concern that they have for the children in their care.

“We have such good speakers come to the meeting,” Mary said. “They help by educating me about what’s going on with the baby right now, and they prepare me for some of the issues that are going to come up in the future. The information and support I get in the group really helps me get through the hardest times with him.”

Another aspect of the program that Mary has found useful is referral to community programs that have helped her as she has learned about all of the changes that have taken place in infant care since the time when she was raising her own children.

“I don’t know what I’d do without GAPP and the friends I’ve met there,” Mary said.
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

- 2,275 individuals participated in activities that totaled 100,248 units of service at the O’Connor Center.
- 201 volunteers provided 14,197 hours of volunteer service at Center-related activities.

Services

- The O’Connor Center provided 2,941 activities, including recreation, education, physical fitness, and health education, and health screening programs.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year

- The O’Connor Art Gallery Reception/Open House and Exhibit entitled “Contemplations” was a featured Dogwood Arts Festival event.
- Beginning and Intermediate Spanish classes were introduced into the curriculum.
- Thursday Walkers was created for those hikers/walkers who prefer shorter hikes.
- The Singing Seniors Director donated her time to teach piano lessons on Thursdays.
- Health Screenings and Fairs identified issues that required follow-up.
- The O’Connor Band was formed.
- The first O’Connor Pool Tournament with 16 players took place in the spring.
- Forever Young, the Singing Seniors’ ensemble, was formed and performed throughout the area.

Budget $323,311
Major Sources of Revenue
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
- Program income

14
The Grateful Dead’s 1965 rendition of “Playing in the Band” says it all, “. . . I can’t stop for nothing, I’m just playing in the band....”

It really all started in high school. Being a part of the high school marching band was a big part of the lives of many of the participants at the O’Connor Center, replete with Friday night football games, pep rallies, half-time performances, and of course, probably the most fun was racing to get the back seat on the band bus! What a life! And what fun it is for participants to once again be “just playing in the band”—the newly formed O’Connor Center Band.

Having an O’Connor Center Band was a long-time dream of a retired band director who never lost her baton! In 2013, she waved that director’s baton, and like magic, the O’Connor Center Band became a part of life at the O’Connor Center. Using instruments retrieved from attics or borrowed from the Joy of Music School, or even grandkids, practice started with only two or three interested people. As practice began, familiar notes, as well as a few sour ones, fell on the ears of other “retired” band members and now there are almost 20 seniors who practice weekly at the O’Connor Center. One can hear “Wow! I didn’t know I could still play!” or “I’m having so much fun!” or “I’ve been surprised at how much better I can breathe now!” Folks seem to be so glad to be a part of this group! Those few sour notes quickly turned into sweet music as the O’Connor Center Band performed at various venues throughout the year, and “first chairs” are still available for those who want to be “just playing in the band”!

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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**
- 340 households totaling 551 individual members
- 38 lower-income households were eligible for a subsidy.

**Services**
From July 2013 to June 2014, One Call responded to the following 536 requests:
- Transportation: 11 requests
- Personal Care: 5 requests
- Housekeeping: 12 requests
- Home Repair & Maintenance: 399 requests
- Lawn Care & Landscaping: 44 requests
- Appliance repair: 32 requests
- Car Maintenance: 9 requests
- Miscellaneous services: 24 requests

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Staff continued to attend events to increase public awareness of the program and to increase membership.
- Program staff continued to look for vendors based on clients’ requests for services. Approved vendors are added to the program’s preferred provider list.
- The program again received high ratings on vendors when conducting the final Service Satisfaction follow-ups with members.
- Used volunteers to help with filing and mailings.
One Call Club Stories

We have our house on the market and will be moving to Georgia where our children live. We are in our 80s and need to be close to them. We thank you for the wonderful service you have provided. To be “worry free” when we open the door to someone you provide is such a pleasure! The workers who came to our home were just the nicest people. They had us laughing while they worked and still after they had left. What a nice, sweet, and caring group of people. We thank each of them again.

I was very impressed with the quality of workmanship recently provided by a One Call Club painter. He used quality paint products, and he didn’t charge more when he did extra caulking and work that was not included in the estimate. Everything was provided in writing, so it was clear what we were paying for. Most important was how respectful he was, especially when he was scraping the walls in a bedroom where my ailing and bedbound mother resides. He was quiet and tried to be as noninvasive as possible. He seemed to really care about being respectful to all of our needs. A+ on a job well done.

Although I have recently moved to assisted living, the One Call Club helped me stay in my home as long as I possibly could. I want to thank you for all your help in the past. I have never failed to recommend the One Call Club to friends and will continue to do so. This program has been one of the best things to happen for seniors in the Knoxville area.

* 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.
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 34 for a more detailed description of Knox PAWS.

Project LIVE’s **Homeless Prevention Case Management Project**, continued to receive funding 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’s goal is to prevent and reduce evictions onto the streets.

**Services**
- Case Management: 14,496 hours
- Volunteer Services (home repairs, chores): 649 hours
- Visiting: 2,898 home visits

**Number of people served**
- 3,031 households served.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Project LIVE staff provided case management services to more than 390 seniors in our community.
- 74 volunteers provided more than 649 hours of free labor to 56 seniors.
- Received a grant and several private donations to purchase materials for home repairs and home safety items.
- Partnered with a local church that adopted Project LIVE and has donated proceeds from their annual fund-raiser to go towards supporting low-income seniors in their homes.

**Budget** $428,275

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
Mr. H is a 78-year-old disabled veteran who lives in his own home on an income of less than $1,400 a month. He has considerable health issues that cause him to rely on social service interventions in order to remain independent in his home. Mr. H has moderate-level dementia and a severe heart condition. He is diabetic, a fall risk, and suffers from depression.

Mr. H’s home was beginning to show signs of neglect and, upon further inspection, was found to have several severe safety issues. The heating and air system in Mr. H’s home did not work, a rat infestation was out of control, gutters were neglected, a shed in the back yard was falling apart, and water damage had deteriorated the subflooring and cabinets in the kitchen. Pest control was begun immediately, and the case manager applied for a veteran’s grant with the Rebuilding Together program to help with all of the major home repairs. In September 2013, Mr. H was approved and the nonprofit spent $16,000 to bring his home back into shape.

Earlier this spring, Mr. H’s sewer line backed up; his case manager reached out again to Rebuilding Together, and they donated another $400 to address that problem as well.

This summer, Project LIVE volunteers have visited to do deep cleaning, ongoing yard work and mowing, cleaning gutters, and other odd jobs. It is through the efforts of Project LIVE that Mr. H has been able to remain at home in a much safer, cleaner environment.

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RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program)

RSVP coordinates a large corps of volunteers, age 55-plus, who serve nonprofit organizations that provide a variety of services throughout the community. RSVP volunteers have a wide array of volunteer opportunities to 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
380 senior volunteers served.

Services
- 40,465 hours of service were provided.
- 19 nonprofit agencies benefited from having RSVP volunteers.
- The volunteer service has an estimated value of $814,560.*
  (* Value estimates from the research of INDEPENDENT SECTOR.)

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- 100 RSVP volunteers provided direct services of 16,311 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.
- 112 RSVP volunteers contributed 9,015 hours in community and economic development that benefited 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.
- 158 RSVP volunteers contributed 15,139 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 $80,526

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

Mr. and Mrs. J contacted RSVP in 2009 when looking for opportunities to volunteer in the Knoxville community. Both of them enrolled with RSVP and began actively assisting local nonprofits with tasks such as organizing events, compiling mailings, and keeping track of timesheets. The couple eventually branched out into assisting other programs in the CAC Office on Aging, and now, five years later, these vivacious RSVP volunteers are actively involved with four Office on Aging programs, including RSVP, Mobile Meals, Grandparents as Parents, and Project LIVE!

Mr. and Mrs. J actively assist the Grandparents as Parents manager each month with organizing and attending the program’s monthly meeting for members as well as sending out mailings and assisting with clerical work. These two volunteers have provided great assistance to the GAPP manager as well as developed wonderful relationships with community members who are raising their grandchildren on their own.

Mrs. J has also taken on the responsibility of arranging birthday cards, designed by local elementary school students, for the Mobile Meals recipients on a monthly basis. She receives a birthday list from the Mobile Meals program each month with the seniors’ birthdates for the following month. Mrs. J then organizes the cards for males and females and makes sure each client receives a card recognizing their birthday when the day comes! Mrs. J brings the cards to the Mobile Meals office at the beginning of each month to be delivered by the volunteers delivering the meals. This simple recognition brings much joy to the homebound seniors receiving Mobile Meals!

Mr. J assists Project LIVE with finishing up minor home repairs and delivering items to seniors who are receiving case management through Project LIVE. He also volunteers his time with a variety of RSVP events and the Senior Employment Program’s senior job fairs.

The staff at CAC have come to recognize Mr. and Mrs. J as “regulars” and their dedication to volunteerism continues to bring joy to staff members, as well as the numerous local community members whose lives are touched by their simple acts of kindness.

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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 16-17), CHIPS (page 32).

SCIRS also takes applications for and administers the Gift of Sight, Hearing & Dentures (see page 33), and applications for Knox PAWS (see page 34).

**Number of people served**
- 7,189 contacts
- 2,305 unduplicated individuals
- 11,267 units of information and referrals provided, including follow-up calls.

**Accomplishments/Achievements for the year**
- Held 13th annual John J. Duncan Sr. Award for Senior Advocacy at Bridgewater Place. This year’s honorees were Joy Blazer and Rita Holt.
- The three staff members maintained their status as Certified Resource Specialists in Aging and are AIRS (Alliance of Information & Referral Systems) certified.
- SCIRS has initiated several partnerships to support ongoing efforts to cut program costs.

**Budget** $62,783

**Major Sources of Revenue**
- Federal/State
- Knox County
- Knoxville
- United Way
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions
It was the dead of winter when an elderly lady called, asking in a quavering voice whether this was Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service. The SCIRS information specialist confirmed that it was; the woman hesitated when the specialist asked her for her name.

Edith said that she just needed a little help since we had already given her assistance at another time and she didn’t want to “wear out” her welcome. Edith had children in town, but she had “bothered” them enough and felt she needed to make this call for herself.

She told the specialist that her heat had been cut off. She said that she was “okay for now,” and that she would get her Social Security check the next week and then could take care of most of her bills.

She was not asking for help for herself, but for her grandson, she said. Edith had decided that she might have something she could trade for the help that she needed and asked, “Do you ever do something like that?” Surprised, the information specialist paused while trying to think of how to word her answer.

In the moment of silence, Edith proceeded to explain that she had been a really good seamstress in her younger days; she had made most of her children’s clothes as well as sewed for clients to earn a living. Now she was too arthritic to sew, but she had a beautiful fur coat, and she was willing to trade the coat for a warm one for her grandson.

The information specialist told her that it was a very thoughtful offer, and then she gently explained that, although SCIRS couldn’t accept Edith’s fur coat, they could refer her—at no cost—to an agency that would give her grandson a coat.

With Edith’s grandson taken care of, the SCIRS specialist then addressed her heating situation by working with KUB to find a solution to making her utility payments at a time that coincided better with when she received her Social Security check.

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The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the largest federally-funded program specifically targeting older adults seeking employment and training assistance. Formerly known as Knoxville Senior Aide Program, SCSEP joined the Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging in October 2013 and continues to provide training, jobs, promote well-being, and meet the needs of the senior community.

Providing jobs to unemployed, low-income older adults has been a core mission of SCSEP throughout its history. In 2006, the Congressional Research Service described SCSEP as the primary job creation program for adults.

Most SCSEP participants work part-time at minimum wage in a local nonprofit or public agency serving their communities. Placing older individuals in community service positions strengthens the ability of the individuals to become self-sufficient, provides much-needed support to organizations that benefit from increased civic engagement, and strengthens the communities that are served by such organizations. This paid work experience prepares many of them to find employment not paid for with SCSEP dollars.

SCSEP participants must be

- 55 or older
- Legally eligible to work in the U.S.
- Have a household income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level.

Special consideration is given to people who are any of the following:

- 65 and older
- Disabled
- Limited in English proficiency or in literacy skills
- Living in a rural area
- A veteran
- Considered to have low employment prospects
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Number of people served

- 58 participants—older women and men—were employed in a wide range of training programs in Knox County.
- 10 participants were placed in unsubsidized jobs.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year

- Program relocated from the City of Knoxville to the CAC Office on Aging.
- Trained three staff members for program management.
- Assisted 45 host agencies with employment needs.
- Cosponsored two job fairs that served more than 400 individuals.

**Budget** $288,436

**Major Sources of Revenue**
U.S. Dept of Labor Employment & Training Administration
Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee
A Senior Community Service Employment Story

Mr. A loves working with wood. He runs a custom cabinet shop out of his workshop. Mr. A is a master cabinetmaker who can take a customer’s design and turn it into a beautiful reality in any kind of wood that the customer wants.

To make ends meet, he also works local jobs, typically finishing out homes or office buildings, that require the skills of a cabinetmaker. Those jobs last anywhere from a few weeks to two or three months, and then he has to look for a new project.

Mr. A came to SCSEP (called “CEE-sep” by staff and participants) because he wanted to update his job-search skills. He also was seeking a position at a local company because he prefers stable employment with benefits to the series of part-time jobs that he has pursued in the past. Having run his own business for so long, and having worked through contacts he already knew in the business, Mr. A felt like he needed interviewing skills and even some computer skills to make him competitive in today’s job market.

Having been in SCSEP for a few months now, Mr. A said, “Initially I lacked the confidence to interview for jobs because I did not have the technology skills necessary to compete in today’s job market. However, thanks to the Senior Community Service Employment Program, I am now able to communicate via email, and, through the program’s Collaborators Job Club, I have learned how to interview, search, and apply for jobs online.”

Mr. A reports that being a member of the program has opened doors for him that were previously closed. “The job club introduced me to computer technology, and now, no longer fearful of the computer, I am able to email with confidence,” he said. “I have applied for jobs online that, six weeks ago, was something I was fearful of and resistant to.”

Mr. A concludes, “Being a member of the program has been a rewarding adventure. The professional staff has always extended themselves to assist me with the best information on job searches, job fairs, resume-writing, and other services to keep me encouraged.”

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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
♦ 93 Senior Companions
♦ 291 homebound adults served by Companions in their homes.
♦ 37 adults served by Companions at local adult day care programs.

Services
♦ 93 Senior Companions provided 70,613 hours of free in-home assistance to elderly adults.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
♦ 93 Senior Companions gained a sense of purpose by serving others.
♦ Companions served 328 frail adults with special physical, emotional, and financial needs. Most were in their late 70s to mid 80s. The oldest client was 105.
♦ The 6th annual Snowflake Ball netted almost $11,000 and was a great success!
♦ 93 percent of family caregivers served reported that the respite provided by the Senior Companions allowed them to get rest and attend to their own health care.
♦ 95 percent of the frail adults served were able to remain in their homes and avoid premature institutionalization. Of these, two percent recovered successfully from short-term injuries or surgeries, and about eight percent remained independent at home until their deaths.
♦ Enabled residents of KCDC senior high-rises to help their fellow residents remain independent.
♦ Companions provided in-home assistance to home-health patients after the rest of the home health care team had to pull out due to Medicare limits.
♦ Produced revenue to increase the number of Companions by providing service through TennCare Choices and Family Caregiver Program.
♦ Recognized volunteer efforts through the second annual Mayors’ Day of Recognition.

Budget $396,965
Major Sources of Revenue
Corporation for National & Community Service
State of Tennessee
Knox County
Knoxville
Foundations/Grants
Community contributions
**Senior Companion Program Stories**

“Just a note to tell you how much I appreciate your Senior Companion program. It has been a life saver for me as I continue to be the primary caregiver for my mother who just turned 96. Companion Joy is absolutely SUPER! She is with my mother on Monday and Friday from 12pm to 4pm and is so caring and compassionate. Knowing she is there with my mother enables me to have some time for myself and I come back Rejuvenated! Thank you and please know that there are countless others who feel as I do.”

Letter from a grateful son.

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Senior Companion Saundra was placed with Ms. F for companionship and respite care for the family. Ms. F has Down Syndrome and a recent stroke prevented her from being able to communicate. When Saundra began the assignment she started singing and reading to Ms. F. Saundra later started using colorful blocks and other tools to interact with Ms. F. With all of Saundra’s efforts, Ms. F is now able to engage with her family. Ms. F’s sister wrote in a letter that “Ms. F has made a noticeable improvement, and I am thankful to you for sending such a helpful companion.”

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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 workshops 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
- 128 people attended employment workshops.
- 179 additional people received job counseling and referrals.
- 63 people were placed in jobs.

Services
- Seniors Seeking Employment workshops. Sessions offer information about first impressions, dressing for success, interviewing, skills assessment and resume writing, how to handle 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 307 persons who attended the employment workshops or received other help with finding jobs, 63 were placed in jobs, resulting in a 21-percent placement rate.
- SES sponsored two job fairs, with 34 employers participating in each fair and more than 300 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 $4,828

Major Sources of Revenue
Knox County
Knoxville
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Senior Employment Service Stories

“Thank you so much for taking time to speak with me this afternoon.

It’s been so discouraging to apply for so many different jobs and hear nothing back. I will admit that I was starting to lose confidence and doubt my ability to keep up in today’s workplace.

After speaking with you, though, I’m feeling more positive that there are opportunities out there where my skills could be put to good use. I just have to find them, and the rest will fall into place.”

—Letter from a job candidate

Quotes from satisfied employers:

“As I mentioned to you over the phone yesterday my experience with this program throughout our city has been tremendously positive and truly needful. Without doubt, I am appreciative of your support and willingness to work with us on our staffing needs.”

“Thanks for all of your help and for sending ‘Lynne’ to us, she has been a blessing!”

“‘Roy’ has worked out wonderfully as a permanent employee and member of the ‘Acme’ family. We were so pleased with the quality of job candidates that you sent us for temporary positions that we now have two permanently on staff.”

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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 delivered Monday through Friday, including holidays. The Mobile Meals program has approximately 1,950 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
♦ 1,110 persons were served in dining rooms in the congregate meal program.
♦ 1,153 persons received Mobile Meals (home-delivered meals).
♦ Four people were served through the Options for Community Living program.
♦ 71 people were served through the TennCare Choices program.

Services
♦ 180,981 Mobile Meals were served, an average of 696 meals per day.
♦ 45,759 meals were served at congregate dining sites, an average of 176 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.
Mrs. H, age 94, lives alone and is having difficulty paying her bills. She has hearing and vision problems and frequently falls due to unsteadiness on her feet and arthritis. Mrs. H is daily concerned about her ability to buy food. Her family lives out of town and she relies on neighbors for extra help.

Mrs. W, age 91, with age is having frequent bone breaks and chronic pain. Standing to prepare meals is difficult. With money being tight, and being unable to purchase and prepare food, her lack of good nutritious food has left her with increased weight loss and weakness. With the support of Mobile Meals and friends she is eating better and regaining her strength.

Mr. C, age 92, falls frequently and is unable to prepare his own food. The daily check helps Mr. C remain in his home and gives support to his family that lives in the area. Remembering to eat is difficult for him, so receiving a hot meal at his door reminds him to eat to maintain his strength. He has a great sense of humor and always greets the volunteers with a smile and a few jokes.
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 (Internet service is not included; each user must establish his or her own Internet service). 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
♦ 13 seniors received computers.
♦ 27 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.

John Andrews has been installing CHIPS computers in the homes of older and disabled people almost since the time the program began (about 15 years).

First, he explains to a new CHIPS client how to go about getting an Internet connection in their home—perhaps through their cable or phone company, though there are other broadband suppliers out there, too. Once they have the connection, John brings a computer that has been refurbished by the Tellico Village Computer Users Club to the CHIPS client’s home and installs it. He installs a number of free programs on the computer that will allow the new computer user to listen to music, view and edit photos, write documents, and more. After installing the computer, John makes sure it works, demonstrates the programs on it, gets the client comfortable with using the Internet and e-mail. Each client gets a CHIPS email account. He has their email address and they have his so that they can let him know if they have any major problems with the computer. Although John does not do continuing computer training for CHIPS clients, he said, “If it breaks, I’ll fix it. If it dies, I’ll replace it.

He explained that, for homebound and isolated people, a computer is a window on the world. “They can stay in touch with family, get on social media and contact old friends, view pictures of people they haven’t seen in ages. They are so grateful.”
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 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.) The Gift of Sight is now partnering with Smoky Mountain Lion’s Charities, Inc., to provide glasses at very low cost to our participants.

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 Gift of Hearing has begun eight new applications for the hearing aids that we already have in stock, and we trust that the program will be ongoing.

The denture program is on suspension because of lack of funds, but we have formed a Denture Task Force of influential people in the community who are concerned about and committed to finding a solution for overall dental health care and provision of dentures to those in need.

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

A gentleman recently walked down the hall outside the SCIRS office, smiling and singing a lovely song that he obviously enjoyed.

Just past our door, he did a quick turn and came back to see if he was bothering us. “I never know how loud I’m singing. My hearing isn’t what it used to be.”

He said that he has been singing in choirs most of his life. Just recently, however, he had been relieved of his volunteer vocal involvement because he couldn’t hear well enough to “blend” with the rest of the choir. His obvious love of music was something that gave him joy, as well as keeping him involved in the community.

We signed him up for the Gift of Hearing, and we look forward to seeing him each month hoping we’ll get to hear a little music along with his visit.

Budget $13,664
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
- 15 seniors received pets.

Accomplishments/Achievements for the year
- Seniors receiving pets reaped an untold health reward. Pet ownership has many demonstrated health benefits.
- 15 older animals found loving homes instead of being euthanized as “unadoptable.”
- The program held its third annual PAWS Among the Blooms fund-raiser at Stanley’s Greenhouse and raised more than $3,280 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 $12,450

Major Sources of Revenue
- Foundations/Grants
- Community contributions

Edna was very lonely and depressed, with no reason to get out of bed, and staying mostly to herself. A neighbor who had gotten a dog through PAWS told Edna that getting a pet had changed her life, and that Edna should call PAWS. Edna was approved for a PAWS dog, and that very day, she began looking on the computer for her new companion. She found an 11-year-old dachshund that Dachshund Rescue of East TN was trying to find a home for. Sandy from the rescue group brought Bella over to meet Edna. It was love at first sight!

Edna says, “Bella is the companion I needed. I no longer want to stay in bed all day. We take lots of walks together, so I’m getting more exercise. I’m meeting my neighbors and talking to people more as they say hi to me and Bella.

“I love her so much. She has become my protector; she barks so I know someone is at my door. Everyone loves her, and she allows people to pet her but always keeps looking up at me with her beautiful brown eyes.”
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
- 44 unduplicated clients
- An average of 18 individuals received meals every weekday throughout the year.

Services provided
- The program served 2,986 meals to people enrolled in the program.

Becky and Robert spent the first 15 years of their retirement volunteering for Mobile Meals. After they were no longer able to deliver meals, their daughters began taking turns providing care for them. At one point, one daughter was out of town helping care for a new grandbaby and the other daughter was away for business. Becky and Robert signed up for the MAMS program because they felt they were in a financial position to pay for their meals and wanted to continue contributing to the Mobile Meals program. They love seeing the volunteers, and their daughters love knowing someone is checking on them every day.

Greg and Lois were in Knoxville temporarily in order for Lois to undergo a medical treatment. They were staying in a hotel, so they had limited facilities to store and prepare food. They chose MAMS because they wanted a healthier alternative to eating in restaurants for every meal. Lois particularly liked the option to choose her meals because on some days her medical treatments left her feeling nauseated and weak, and the soups and vegetarian options were easier on her stomach.

Valerie has limited social support in the area. She is able to cook, but does not have transportation to the grocery store. Through the MAMS program, she receives five meals on Mondays that she can heat up during the week. She says she is relieved to know that instead of worrying about how to get to the grocery store, her food is brought to her.
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.
  - The 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 2013, the Office on Aging offered its annual workshop, Aging: A Family Affair, for the 29th year. The workshop offers practical advice on issues of interest to senior citizens and caregivers, both family members and professionals. In 2013, the keynote speaker, local humanitarian and WBIR-TV news anchor emeritus, Bill Williams, presented The Bill Williams GPS (Guide to Personal Success): Stories from the Driver’s Seat. Eight workshops were offered in three sessions throughout the day. Participants chose one workshop per session to attend. The 2013 event, held at 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.
    - Facebook offers a speedy and informal way to communicate information about day-to-day events and happenings at the Office on Aging and its programs. To find us, go to www.facebook.com/knox.OOA. Please be sure to like our page!
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 14 different OOA programs, more than 2,700 volunteers completed more than 249,000 hours of service this year, with a conservative estimated value of more than $5 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.

Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something.
—Anonymous

 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 14 different OOA programs, more than 2,700 volunteers completed more than 249,000 hours of service this year, with a conservative estimated value of more than $5 million dollars.

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More than 1,950 Mobile Meals volunteers delivered meals to homebound seniors.

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

Senior Corps volunteers completed more than 194,500 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
Susan Long, Director
Fred Massingill, Asst. Director
Sharon Brown
Kathy Burke
Ann Connelly
Rosie Cross
Nancy Lofaro
Elizabeth Prater
Jennifer Russell

Affordable Medicine
Options for Seniors
Peggy Ransom, Manager

Daily Living Center
Astin Woodard, Coordinator
Rachel Martin

Foster Grandparents Program
Andrea McGinn, Coordinator

Grandparents as Parents Program
Edna Eickman, Manager

Project LIVE
Misty Goodwin, Senior Manager
Scott Bennett
Susan Bradford
Melinda Bryant
Angelia Eastern
Yolanda Grant
Kathy Harralson
Crystal Holt
Eric Johnson
Carol Lamb
Lutherine Logan
Ann Payne
Jennifer Tackett

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
Brenda Tate, Coordinator
Frankie Slay

Senior Nutrition Program
Judith Pelot, Manager
JoAnn Buchanan
Debbie Clay
Pamela Chambers
Teresa Coning
Zenobia Dobson
Tonya Hill
Marleta Holton
Emil Jones
Judy Pate
Melissa Poole
Norma Thaxton
Shelly Woodrick
Office on Aging Phone Numbers
All phone numbers are in the 865 area code unless otherwise indicated.
All addresses are in Knoxville, Tennessee

Community Action Committee
2247 Western Avenue, 37921
546-3500

Office on Aging
For all OOA programs located in the L.T. Ross Building, located at
2247 Western Avenue, 37921
524-2786

CHIPS (Computers for Homebound & Isolated Persons)
SCIRS office, O’Connor Senior Center, 611 Winona Street, 37917
546-6262

Daily Living Center
3900 Probus Road, 37918
689-8412

Gift of Sight, Hearing and Dentures
SCIRS office, O’Connor Senior Center, 611 Winona Street, 37917
546-6262

Knox PAWS
Application number is for SCIRS. Program is based in Project LIVE at the
L.T. Ross Building, 2247 Western Avenue, 37921
546-6262

O’Connor Senior Center
611 Winona Street, 37917
523-1135

One Call Club
SCIRS office, O’Connor Senior Center, 611 Winona Street, 37917
595-3006

Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service (SCIRS)
SCIRS office, O’Connor Senior Center, 611 Winona Street, 37917
546-6262
We Touch Lives Every Day
Comments from those we’ve served.

“Thank you for making me feel like I matter again, and thus, what I do and who I am matter as well.”
— a Project LIVE client

“I have peace of mind knowing that if a large appliance goes out or costly household repairs are needed I now have options available through the One Call Club.”
— a One Call Club member

“You are a hidden gem. I had never heard of you until a neighbor told me.... You’ve helped me so much, from just helping me find the services I need to helping me apply for programs that I didn’t even know existed. My life is so much better since I found you!”
— a caller to Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service

“What was life like before I got [my cat]? I barely remember. She is the joy of my life. She’s keeping me alive.”
— a Knox PAWS client