



Neighbors Helping Neighbors since 1987

Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties
Post Office Box 5953 • Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5953 (mail)
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865.425.0256 • www.adfac.org

THE NEWSLETTER OF AID TO DISTRESSED FAMILIES OF APPALACHIAN COUNTIES

HOLIDAY EDITION • NOVEMBER 2022



Dear ADFAC Friends,

As we enter this holiday season, on a personal level I am grateful for family, health, friends, a roof over my head and meals on the table. From an ADFAC perspective, I'm grateful for the community that truly cares about ADFAC and our mission every day of the year.

That community includes the ADFAC Board of Directors that lead with dedication, volunteers who continually amaze me with their commitment to helping ADFAC and our clients, solid partnerships with our local United Way, service organizations, corporations, foundations, religious organizations, and fellow nonprofit providers. The ADFAC community also includes each person who provides financial support – YOU! This multi-faceted support is what makes ADFAC a stable and effective organization that continues to meet the goal of helping our neighbors on their own path to self-sufficiency.

ADFAC is providing a mix of important services in Anderson, Campbell, Morgan, and Roane Counties. Our priorities focus on families in need of safe, decent housing, those who struggle with emergent needs of rent, utility assistance, or food to maintain a stable home environment for their families, and students who need school supplies to begin each school year ready to learn. Most clients we serve live at or below the poverty level.

When ADFAC was established nearly 36 years ago, the mission was 'neighbors helping neighbors' and our commitment to helping those in need has not changed. Each day our doors are open, we are helping families during times of great difficulty, and ensuring they are treated with dignity and compassion.

With your continued help, we can continue helping our neighbors. Each donation we receive is essential to our ability to answer requests for assistance, particularly as we face increased need for our services.

On behalf of the thousands of individuals we serve, thank you.

With warmest wishes for happiness and good health,

Annie Cacheiro
Executive Director



Coming in 2023

SCHOOL SUPPLIES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

ADFAC's School Supplies Program will celebrate its 30th year in 2023! From serving just a few hundred in the beginning to 4,400 students in 2022, the program has seen much growth and change over the years. Please plan on joining Becky Hook, Jaclyn Levy, and the rest of the ADFAC team to make it the most memorable year yet! Details to be announced in the spring.



APPALACHIAN HOUSING PARTNERS

AHP is gearing up to have a very busy 2023. With months of prep work already finished, we expect two new homes in Oak Ridge and home repairs for Anderson and Roane county seniors to be completed in the first half of the year.

HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Already underway, the seasonal SAFE and ASSIST utility assistance programs will serve hundreds of families in need of essential energy during winter months. Customers of City of Oak Ridge Electric, Oak Ridge Utility District, Clinton Utilities Board, and Powell Clinch Utilities District can make automatic monthly donations to these programs. For more information, visit www.adfac.org/utilities.html or contact your utility provider.

FUN-RAISING!

The ADFAC Egg Spectacular, Murder Mystery, and Bow Tie events will all be back in 2023 to raise funds to support ADFAC's mission and programs.

Lady with a Legacy: Pat Postma honored at 10th Bow Tie event

On Saturday, November 5, ADFAC supporters, volunteers, friends, and family gathered to honor Pat Postma, recipient of the 10th Bill Wilcox Bow Tie Award.

In recognition of her contributions to the vitality of the Oak Ridge community, education, the arts, and nonprofits, the theme for the event was, "Lady with a Legacy." From her work developing the Executive MBA program at the Haslam School of Business to numerous activities promoting the International Friendship Bell in Oak Ridge, Pat has left, and continues to leave, an indelible mark in the region.

Event emcee Elaine Graham led the evening with stories and humorous anecdotes about Pat's many accomplishments. Guests had the opportunity to add their own stories, and a slideshow and video production provided additional glimpses into Pat's love of family, friends, travel, art and design, Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club, and much more.

Event attendees not only celebrated Pat but raised thousands of dollars to support ADFAC through event sponsorships, ticket purchases, donations in honor of Pat, and bidding on auction items. Nearly \$50,000 was raised, making it the most successful Bow Tie celebration since the inception of the event in 2013! Half of the funds raised will be placed in the Bow Tie Endowment to support the short- and long-term stability of ADFAC.

The 10th Bill Wilcox Bow Tie Celebration & Fundraiser was supported by Platinum Sponsors Consolidated National Security, MCLinc, and ORNL Federal Credit Union. Gold Sponsors of the event were Centrus, Jim & Becky Dodson, NorthWind, Oak Ridge Utility District, One Bank, and the Wilcox Family. Wendie Aurin – Realty Executive Associates, East Tennessee Foundation, Leidos, Mortgage Investors Group, Peggy Sells Homes, TNBank, and Willow Ridge were Silver Sponsors. Bronze sponsors were Chuck's Car Care Center and Flatwater Tales. Additional support was provided by previous Bow Tie recipients as well as BBB-TV, Estate Sale Professionals, DoubleTree, Jim Ball, Sheryl Howard, and Trish Polfus.



Our stories: the lasting impact of the pandemic

Sometimes it still seems surreal, but for the most part we are now accustomed to the ebb and flow of COVID-19. We are thankfully past the days of school and office closings and 14-day quarantine periods just for exposure. For most of us, life is normal again. That is not the case for everyone, though. Some are still getting seriously ill, or experience Post-COVID Conditions. And then, there are the businesses that had no choice but to fold during various COVID peaks, and the implications of those closures still resonate in our communities. This is where we find Beth and Brad, a husband and wife whose careers were upended by the pandemic and came to ADFAC for first time assistance.

Beth and her husband Brad, both in their early 50's, had successful careers and had been able to pay their bills and be self-sufficient. They were proud of their grown daughter who was working and taking care of her bills.

For 15 years, Brad was a superintendent for an agricultural business. Beth was working at her dream job with a local company. Then COVID-19 hit. In March 2020, as many businesses had to close, Beth's employer could no longer afford to pay her as the business slowed to a standstill.

For Brad, the organization he had worked at for years, suddenly shut down and he was out of work. It took several months before

Brad's unemployment began and though he was able to receive these benefits for about five months, the benefits stopped unexpectedly and he has been unable to obtain his remaining benefits. Health issues related to his career have prevented Brad from pursuing other work.

Now the couple had no income. They could not afford to repair their car which made finding work without transportation an extremely

difficult process. The couple's daughter and the client's sister were doing what they could to help but their incomes barely covered their own financial needs.

Beth and Brad needed any type of assistance that ADFAC could provide. Beth shared that ETHRA had recently helped with their electric bill and provided some food, otherwise, she said that their electricity would have been cut off. Beth still felt under tremendous pressure with their financial situation. The Household Assistance Program was able to pay half of their rent payment for the month. The social

worker assisting the family reached out to a partner organization and the partner organization agreed to pay the remaining rent payment. The Household Assistance Program was also able to pay the family's gas utility bill. To help the family further, a food gift card and food items were provided to help them during this tough time and to provide some needed hope.

With their rent paid up for the month and their utility bills paid, this couple felt that they could now take a breath and take another step towards their financial goal of becoming financially stable again.



HOUSING HAPPENINGS: LOCAL HOMEOWNERS TO RECEIVE ESSENTIAL HOME REPAIRS

Over the next few months, Appalachian Housing Partners will complete needed repairs for three local homeowners:

- Mr. & Mrs. R, Clinton, Over 60. They help care for their grandson with Leukemia. They are getting new floors and replacing a door due to water & fire damage.
- Mrs. S., Oliver Springs, Over 60, retired nurse. Her home will be fitted with new plumbing and a new HVAC system.
- Mrs. C., over 60, Clinton, guardian of her great granddaughter. Her 1930's home will get a new bathroom and roof.

Look for more information on these repairs in the Spring 2023 edition of ADFACts!



ANNUAL MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 26

ADFAC's Annual Meeting was held Monday, September 26 in room 102 of First Presbyterian Church. Nearly two dozen of ADFAC's board, staff, volunteers, and friends attended and enjoyed refreshments, conversation, and highlights of the agency's work in 2021 and 2022.

ADFAC gladly welcomed two new board members: Tommy Meredith of Clinton Utilities Board and BreAnna Robinson of the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce. Sadly, Wendie Aurin and Cande Seay completed their board terms. They will be missed on the board, but we hope they will continue to serve in other ways.

Also during the Annual Meeting, ADFAC staff honored an exceptional couple, Michael & Nancy Vudragovich, for their dedicated work with the School Supplies program. Development Director, Jamie LaRose, was also recognized for 20 years of being on staff.

With ADFAC's 35th year nearly over, the team is ready for a new year of serving the less fortunate.

ADFAC's 2022-23 Board of Directors:

Jim Dodson, President
Sasha Benjamin, Vice-President
George Paynter, Past President
Dave Mullins, Treasurer
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Lissie Meza Beehan	Randy McFarland
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New faces in ADFAC's offices

In late summer - early fall, ADFAC was thrilled to welcome two new part-time staff members: Deborah Walter and Shannon Skeens. Deborah (pictured below on the left) is the Administrative Assistant in the Household Assistance Program, and Shannon (on the right) is the Administrative Assistant in Appalachian Housing Partners. We have been needing these positions filled for a while, and these two ladies definitely fit the bill!

Please join us in welcoming Deborah and Shannon to the ADFAC family, and if you're ever in the office, stop by and say hi!

DEBORAH WALTER

First let me say how much I am enjoying being at ADFAC. We have a great group of people, and it is very gratifying to be here. I have lived in Oak Ridge for over thirty years, although not a native. I have been married to Mark for 36 years, and our two kids both went through OR schools. I have two grandsons who I love to spend my time and money on. Unfortunately, they do not live close by.

I retired in 2019 from the Department of Human Services as an Office Supervisor, so busy offices are not a new thing for me. I quickly realized that retirement was not that much fun. So here I am.

I am also a huge dog lover and love hearing about everyone's pets. I am also a very amateur photographer, hiker, and kayaker.

SHANNON SKEENS

Shannon comes to us from California along with her husband (a retired Navy Submariner) and her 2 youngest children. Their family relocated to Oak Ridge in June and are excited to continue to get to know their new community.

Shannon holds a Bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development with a minor in Psychology from San Diego State University and was most recently the director of a non-profit Cooperative Preschool. Working with children and families has always been a passion of hers having worked as a Teacher, Family Ministries Director, and volunteering in her kids schools/activities (she has 4 ranging in ages from 21-6!) as well as serving as a Court Appointed Special Advocate(CASA) and with Sierra Service Project volunteer.

Serving others is where Shannon's heart is and she feels grateful to be here at ADFAC serving our community.



Welcome to ADFAC, BreAnna Robinson and Tommy Meredith!



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This holiday season, give the "Gift of Hope"

Just in time for the holidays, ADFAC offers a way to honor your loved ones and help the poorest families in our community.

Simply make a donation of any amount to ADFAC and let us know who your donation

honors. Your recipient will receive a custom card announcing a gift has been made in their honor. You will also receive a letter of acknowledgment for your donation. "Gift of Hope" contributions are tax-deductible and will be used 100% locally to help families struggling to obtain life's basic necessities.

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