



FOLKS AT HOME

141 University Avenue • Sewanee, TN 37375 • (931) 598-0303 • folksathome.org

AUTUMN 2023

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Wow! Folks at Home has had a busy spring and summer, and fall looks to be equally eventful. Wall shared with me a summary comparison of the services Folks at Home provided in 2023 vs. 2022, and it shows that in 2023, services in almost every category are 1.5–3+ times greater than the same time period in 2022. A great deal of time is committed to performing these services, and while each is organized and scheduled by Folks at Home staff (thanks to Wall and Mercedes), a large percentage is carried out by our generous, caring volunteers. (Thank you, volunteers! You are amazing.)

Folks at Home greatly expanded programming this year. Volunteers offered a variety of lectures on subjects including cyber-security, physical therapy and balance, dementia prevention, Medicare Advantage pros and cons, osteoporosis prevention, and immune system health. Regular sessions happen in the Ralston Listening Room for music (volunteer led and organized), sing-along sessions at Sewanee Angel Park (volunteer led), and we jointly hosted with Livewell a summer social at the Angel Park. Thanks to a partnership with Bodyworks Youniversity (Kim Butters) and Livewell, we have been able to offer members a six-week Pilates class for beginners, and a 12-week Chair Aerobics class to help improve core strength and balance. In addition, the Fowler Center is available for members to stretch and walk around the track (volunteer led) Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10:00 a.m. I have thoroughly enjoyed participating in many of these programs, interacting with other Folks at Home members, learning, and getting more exercise. Please join us at these wonderful activities! Watch for regular program announcements via email, or you can visit the website calendar <www.folksathome.org/calendar> for times and locations.

Services in almost every category are 1.5–3+ times greater than the same time period in 2022.

Did you know that membership fees (Sustaining and Service Members combined) cover less than 30% of our annual expenses, making Folks at Home operating costs greatly dependent on grants and the generosity of our donors? While Folks at Home is blessed with contingency funds that would allow us to continue to pay staff, if annual donations failed to meet expenses, we still need approximately \$50K to meet our 2023 budget. Our continued success depends upon your generosity. Please consider a gift to Folks at Home. Your contribution, whatever size, helps to maintain a multi-generational, vibrant Sewanee Community, and will help us empower our neighbors and friends to live and thrive at home with dignity in this community we all love.

May the rest of 2023 be filled with joy for you and your family.” —Karen Kuers, *Board President*



Chair exercise class made possible through our partnership with Bodyworks Youniversity and Livewell.





107
Medical
Transports



56
Home Task
Assistance



14
Pet
Walking



83
Non-Medical
Transports



22
Technology
Support



34
Glass
Recycling



47
Member
Errands



19
Caregiver
Coordination



48
Flu
Shots



42
Vendor
Referrals



264
Information



131
Meal
Delivery



66
Durable Medical
Equipment Checkouts



82
Home
Visits



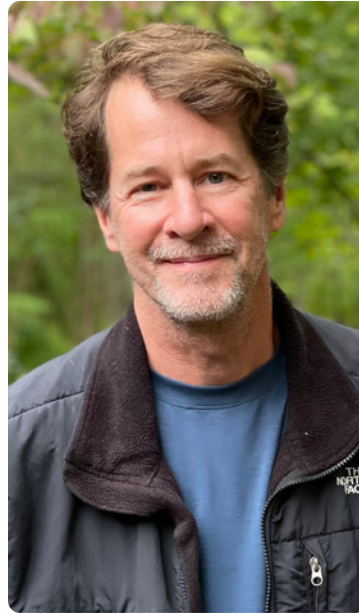
282
Pro bono
Calls



198
Phone
Check-Ins



1,213
Total
Services



gine that could". Well, it's a quiet little engine, but it runs on time, and for many people.

In my heart, I dream of the day that Folks at Home could run without membership fees. Everybody in our community is a member if they need us, and the administration time of fundraising and managing membership renewals goes toward the thing we love the most—delivering services and programs to more people. Someday.

Until that day comes, one way to support Folks at Home that we have neglected to emphasize is through "Sustaining Memberships." Legend has it that at Folks at Home's inception, the cost of membership was the subject of much discussion. Then a committee member proposed a membership fee, which caused someone else to exclaim, "At that price, I'd buy a membership just to make sure Folks at Home is still around if I *do* need them!" That's the way I heard it.

Folks at Home goes about its work rather quietly, providing its services and programs mostly in the background of life in Seawee. Monday through Friday, and sometimes on the weekends, we provide our services and programs without much fanfare beyond our newsletters and the occasional *Messenger* article. In a previous newsletter, I mentioned that a friend had once likened Folks at Home to the "little en-

Thus was born the idea of a yearly "Sustaining Membership," rooted in the concept of becom-

With generous support from the South Cumberland Community Fund and private donors, Folks at Home is renovating its bathroom to make it ADA Compliant—helping to make Seawee more age and disability friendly.



Y'all are a blessing to a lot of people. —Community Member

Thank you for your commitment to the community and all your good work through Folks at Home. Seawee is so lucky to have you. —Anonymous Donor

LETTER FROM THE SERVICES COORDINATOR

ing a Folks at Home member *before you need us*, so that we are still around if you (or a neighbor or friend) ever do need us. The cost can be tax exempt, since you are not receiving services. You get access to our many programs, with email announcements. There is no age limit. Perhaps best of all, you gain a voice in shaping the future of Folks at Home, which at its heart remains member-driven. We'd love to have your voice in that mix.

Our little town is unique in Tennessee in having its own "Village" program. The only other two Villages are in Nashville, with two more in development in Memphis. Currently, more than 300 grassroots Villages across the country are quietly providing an extra layer of security for the many aging people who want to remain in their homes. I know I do. And I remain, since I began working here in 2018, a proud Sustaining Member of Folks at Home.

For more information about Sustaining Membership, give us a call or visit our new website: folksathome.org.



"We will always strive to be available to you and to assist with any challenge you may face."

What a blessing it is to know that here in Sewanee we have a group that can help people like myself and that we can call on for help.

—Folks at Home Member

In March, we sent a survey to our members to give us insight about where we could improve our accessibility, performance, and services. A 31.25% participation rate—from approximately 80 members—was found. Following are the results and feedback that we received.

Our main strength in services continues to be transportation: medical and non-medical (45%). Interest also remains high for Folks at Home programs and events (30%); check-ins either in person or by phone (20%); and connection to vendors and other services (20%).

Going forward, programming will continue to focus on expert talks and lectures (90.9%), health and wellness (68.2%), and physical activities: indoors and outdoors (50%). Twenty percent of survey participants preferred an online calendar to access current events and

programming. In response, we added a weekly calendar to our new website folksathome.org/calendar. We hope this will be a useful resource for everyone.

Regarding familiarity with the services Folks at Home can provide, 50% of participants stated they are somewhat familiar. The nature of our services can change regarding each member's needs. Always feel welcome to give us a call, email, or come by the office with any inquiries or comments you may have.

According to the survey responses, we have excelled at our response time and ability to be accessible to our members. Ninety-six percent of participants answered that communication with Folks at Home was easy. We will always strive to be available to you and to assist with any challenge you may face. Thank you for all your support, kind notes, and feedback!

SAS Students showed up in force at this year's Spring Action Initiative.





SERVICES

- Medical & Non-Medical Transportation
- Doctor Visits, Errands, Shopping, Pharmacy Pickups, etc.
- Home Care Coordination
- Vendor Recommendations
- Yard Work and Home Repairs
- Durable Medical Equipment Checkout
- Technology Support
- Home Visits
By request
- Phone Check-ins
By request
- Monthly Glass Recycling Pickup
- General Assistance
Most Tasks or Challenges

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS

Join Folks at Home before you need us!

Sustaining Memberships are a way of joining Folks at Home before you need our services. Sustaining Memberships support Folks at Home while we support our Service Members. You receive access to any of our programs and it's a great way of making sure we are still around if and when you do need our services. Transitioning to becoming a service member is as easy as a phone call. For more information, contact us!

MISSION STATEMENT

To empower folks to remain in their homes with dignity in the community they love.

Folks at Home

141 University Avenue
Sewanee, TN 37375

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folksathome.org

LETTER FROM THE BOOKKEEPER



Four years ago, my wife and I downsized and moved from Nashville to Monteagle, a place very special to us, coming here virtually every summer my whole life and where we were married. About two years ago, I agreed to take on the bookkeeping for Folks at Home. I've had a very enjoyable time doing the work. Last year, I started volunteering to drive members to doctor appointments and have had the chance to meet several very interesting people.

Regarding the accounts, I am pleased to inform you that we are in good financial standing and continue to be impressed with the work that Wall, Mercedes, and the volunteers do to help people in Sewanee and the surrounding area, and how well your donations are managed in the process.

We cannot do it without the generosity of members and others who donate their money and

time. Memberships are great, but membership fees account for only about one third of the organization's operating costs.

There are multiple ways to contribute to Folks at Home, the most obvious of course being Sustaining Memberships and outright cash gifts, all of which

There are multiple ways to contribute to Folks at Home

we greatly appreciate. Other options include donations of appreciated value marketable securities, all or a portion of your IRA required minimum distributions (RMD) and planned charitable giving via your will.

Appreciated value marketable securities: The major benefit here is that you get a charitable deduction for the value at time of donation and do not have to pay tax on what would otherwise be a capital gain if you sold the securities and donated cash. *Big win here.*

IRA RMD: If you have an

IRA and are required to take a distribution each year, you can direct the IRA administrator to send all or any portion of the RMD directly to Folks at Home. The portion sent to us is excludable from your gross income. This option is very advantageous if you no longer itemize deductions due to the high standard deduction. You get the deduction, in effect, by not having to include it in your gross income.

Planned charitable giving: Planned giving can take several forms, from designated gifts of cash or marketable property in your will to creation of a charitable remainder trust. Please discuss with your financial advisor these, as well as the other giving methods to find what best suits your personal and family situation.

Did you know that Folks at Home has an endowment fund? This is a perfect destination for any planned giving you might decide to set up, helping to secure Folks at Home operating well into the future.

SPECIAL THANKS

Sally Hubbard for chairing our Caregiver Support Group.

Victoria Davis and Chris Asmussen for leading our Walking Group each week.

Matt Costello for managing our Facebook page.

St. Mark & St. Paul Parish for letting us use their space.

F@H Volunteer Drivers
Sewanee Community Center

Bonnors and Canales for pet-walking and glass recycling.

ADT Sorority and SAS Students for help with yard clean-up for F@H members.

Our Members and Donors who support our work year after year!

FOLKS AT HOME SPONSORS

Thanks to these organizations!




SEWANEE | The University of the South
Office of Civic Engagement

New and improved website:
folksathome.org
Check it out!