ELDER NEWS

SENIOR CORPS: WE ARE RESILIENT

Why are human connections important? During a time when so many older adults are being asked to socially distance and avoid unnecessary outings, missed opportunities to connect with others top the list of grievances often heard. These missed opportunities for social engagement can often lead to isolation and a loss of purpose in life.

Social isolation and loneliness are major risk-factors for both physical and mental health, especially in older adults. The prolonged isolation caused by the pandemic created some challenges for the Office on Aging's Senior Corps Programs which utilize volunteers age 55 and over to help address local community needs. Senior Corps volunteers provide in-home support to frail seniors, tutoring and mentoring to children in school settings, transportation for grocery shopping and medical appointment for seniors in need, and they engage in many service activities that help support capacity-building for more than twenty local non-profit organizations.

In early March, as many Senior Corps volunteers faced a pause in their service activities, they found creative ways to continue to make an impact and connect with others. Many participated in making Senior Care Calls, others wrote cards to isolated individuals, some started

making masks and growing food in community gardens to share with others, some helped deliver pet food while social distancing, and a few even found ways to safely help deliver groceries to the elderly in our community.

These grassroots efforts have led to over 325 older individuals being contacted weekly for wellness checks. As a result, lives are being changed. These wellness calls uncovered seniors who had fallen and needed emergency help, seniors who were scared or had forgotten to refill important medications, seniors who had run out of groceries but were too embarrassed to seek help, seniors who were victims of crime and neglect, and seniors who were lonely and

OFFICE ON AGING

VIEWS

needed someone to listen. Senior Corps volunteers helped address all of these needs in the midst of a pandemic!

Senior Corps volunteers are the movers and shakers of this community.

They help connect our communities through service. They are the silent force that gets things done. They are resilient.

If you would like to be a part of this service-lead movement or learn more about how you can help your neighbors, give us a call at 865-524-2786 or visit knoxseniors.org.



SENIOR CORPS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

"I'm driving and I have no idea where I'm going. I feel really confused," Mr. James said to Lisa, the Senior Corps Staff member. She was calling him for his weekly wellness check, and it turned out to be one of the most important calls of his life.

Lisa asked Mr. James a few questions. He didn't recognize his surroundings. He couldn't remember why or where he was going. She told him to pull his car over and turn his engine off. After a few more questions, Lisa was on her way to meet him in a nearby parking lot.

When she got there, Lisa found Mr. James disoriented, slightly slumped over, and unable to recall basic information. Paramedics were called and Mr. James was treated at the scene for dehydration and low blood sugar. Within minutes, he was able to communicate and began to feel better. A team of staff members helped him get home safely, and made sure he was settled after this traumatic event.

Senior Corps staff and volunteers have many stories like this; each one illustrates the direct impact of Senior Corps' mission in the lives of those they serve.

WATE-TV

A CHANGE FOR POWER OF THE PURSE 2020



The wildly popular Mobile Meals fundraiser, Power of the Purse, will not be held this September as planned. We are disappointed that we are unable to hold this event, but in the face of uncertainty, we know it is the right decision. We do not want to burden our sponsors, many of whom are small local businesses, or potentially put attendees in harm's way.

We are exploring options with Patricia Nash Designs to coordinate an online experience to showcase some special product, keep the Power of the Purse alive, have some fun,

and help feed seniors. Our friends at WATE-TV 6 On Your Side are committed to helping us promote our new format. Watch for announcements and news on what we will be doing. Updates will be shared on our website at knoxseniors.org and our Mobile Meals Facebook page at www.facebook.com/knoxcountymobilemeals/.

We look forward to bringing you Power of the Purse 2021 as a reimagined event that brings everyone together to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of CAC Mobile Meals, to shop, mingle, and support seniors in our community in a big way. We will continue to strive toward our purpose – providing food and hope to vulnerable seniors without a waiting list. We appreciate the outpouring of help and commitment that we have received from our community and look forward to future support and partnerships.

GRANDPARENTS AS PARENTS PROGRAM OFFERS VIRTUAL SUPPORT MEETINGS

Are you raising your grandchild? Or maybe you are an aunt, uncle, or other relative that is in the parental role? Grandparents as Parents (GAP) is committed to making a difference in the lives of relative caregivers and the youth they care for by providing education, encouragement, support, and connecting them to valuable resources. There are no age or income requirements to join GAP. For more information, call 865-524-2786, or visit knoxseniors.org.

GRANDFAMILIES TOGETHER CONFERENCE CALL

GAP is hosting a weekly Grandfamilies Together Conference Call. Please join us on Tuesdays in July and August from 10 am - 10:30 am. Each week, we will check-in with each other and have a special guest speaker. We will also have a door prize for one lucky participant. Door prizes will be mailed to the winner.

Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. -10:30 a.m.

Call in number: 844-855-4444 | Access Code: 1460466#

Give us a "Hello" to let us know you are on the line!

For more information, call 865-524-2786.

REGISTER TO VOTE BY JULY 7 FOR AUGUST 6 ELECTION

The Tennessee State Primary Election is coming up on Thursday, August 6. This election will feature the Federal and State primary election, as well as the County General Election.

Are you registered to vote? In order to vote in the August 6 election, Tennesseans must register to vote no later than July 7.

To see if you are registered to vote, visit the Tennessee Secretary of State's Voter Registration Look Up online at https://tnmap. tn.gov/voterlookup/.

For instructions and online voter registration, go to https://sos.tn.gov/products/elections/ register-vote.

ABSENTEE BY-MAIL BALLOT INFORMATION

Anyone who is registered to vote in Tennessee and is 60 years of age or older can request a ballot to vote absentee by-mail without ever leaving their home. Local county election commissions are now accepting absentee by-mail ballot requests for the August 6th State and Federal Primary and the County General Election. To find out if you are eligible to vote by absentee by-mail ballot, go online to https://sos.tn.gov/products/elections/ absentee-voting.

For more information or to find your local county election commission, visit GoVoteTN. com.

Don't wait. Make your request today. Absentee Ballots must be completed and received by the election commission by July 30, 2020.

The presidential election is Tuesday, November 3 and will have a separate mail-in ballot application period.



Thanks to our friends who have made masks for our staff, volunteers, and clients!

City of Knoxville Home Instead – Kris Brinkmeier Knox County Health Department Knox County Schools Knox Makes Masks Knoxville Veterinary Medical Association Kozy Chix (Facebook & Etsy) Laura Seheult, DVM Mac's Pharmacy Mobile Meals Volunteers Morning Pointe of Powell Rose Whalen Tamara Ownby

CELEBRATING CENTENARIANS

Each May, we celebrate Older Americans Month. Along with events and special programming designed to celebrate older Americans, we at the CAC Office on Aging especially recognize our seniors who have been with us for a century or more – our Centenarians. We honor them with a beautiful rose in a vase, donated by Food City, and delivered to them by a friendly volunteer. That is, we did until this year. The coronavirus pandemic prevented us from doing what we have always done. But, we have always been creative, so we altered our plans.

Now in our 14th year of this recognition, each Centenarian received a special celebration care package via mail. We know they have seen many waves of change in our country, and though our tradition had to change a bit this year, we wanted to ensure they know we still appreciate all they have done. In May, we sent these special packages to 27 Centenarians in Knox County.



It's not too late to honor other Centenarians! If you know a Knox County resident who is 100 years or older and want them to receive a package, please call Senior Information & Referral at (865) 546-6262.

Thank you once again to our friends at Food City for supporting this wonderful tradition.

MOBILE MEALS UPDATE

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Mobile Meals has returned to its normal routine of delivering meals Monday through Friday after six weeks of delivering a box of five frozen meals to clients once per week. On May 7, volunteers, both longstanding and new, were happy to hit the streets of Knox County again to deliver hot meals, kind words, and wellness checks to homebound seniors. Following the Knox County Health Department guidelines, by donning masks and using new non-recycled bags for handing off meals, over 100 volunteers delivered to over 1,100 food insecure seniors across 70 routes to every zip code in Knox County. All involved (staff, volunteers, clients) are happy to begin our "new normal" and regular deliveries and visits.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Mobile Meals is serving more meals than ever and



we expect this increase to be long term. We are grateful for all of the community support during this difficult time. If you would like to volunteer with us, email MobileMealsVols@knoxseniors.org or call 865-524-2786. To donate online, go to knoxseniors.org/mobile.

It's Not Selfish. Fill Your Own Cup First. Then Pour for Others.

Caring for an aging loved one can be lonely. You deserve support.

> Make a friend. Chat with a volunteer who cares.

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865-524-2786

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by Bob Paroski, Office on Aging's volunteer blogger

The impact the coronavirus has had on each of us has been amazing. It seems like overnight, our worlds were turned upside down.

At the very start, medical professionals identified older people as being more susceptible to this virus and at a higher risk to die from it. Everyone was told to stay at home and only to venture out when it was essential. Restaurants, stores and businesses were closed.

Almost overnight, the lives of older people, especially those retired, changed dramatically. We were told to stay at home. We could not see our family and friends nor do those normal activities we enjoyed.

Loneliness and Depression Quickly Set in

Just about all we could do from home was to call our family or friends. These calls were a poor substitute for the time we had spent hanging out or doing those fun things we regularly did.

We had to find a way to deal with this. Otherwise, the loneliness and depression would have been detrimental.

Creative People Came to the Rescue

Creative, outgoing people started to go stir crazy when forced to stay at home and not socialize with others. Very quickly, they came up with a way to beat the social isolation the virus caused and the loneliness and depression.

How?

They started making video calls and having video meetings with their families and friends. Most people have smart phones capable of making video calls. They also have cameras on their computers. So, the video calls and meetings were easy.

Why is a Video Call Better Than a Regular One?

Simply because you can see the person you're

NEED EXTRA HELP USING TECHNOLOGY?

Free Tech Support Hotline from Senior Planet: 920-666-1959

Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. EDT

You can find other great resources online at Senior Planet. Visit www.seniorplanet.org/ get-involved/online/.

talking to. It's almost like they're right there with you. You can also see the expressions on their face. When talking to them, you don't feel isolated.

While a video call with one other person is nice, it's tougher when there are more than 2 people on the call. Frequently, with 3 or more people on a call, one tends to monopolize the conversation and the others feel left out.

Personal and Fun Video Meetings

The other thing creative, outgoing people started was video meetings with groups of people. Video meetings have been used by businesses for years. Creative people saw how they could make video meetings personal and fun.

They started having these meetings with their families. One advantage they found was as many family members as wanted could take part in the meeting. They could be anywhere in the country.

They also could connect with their friends on meetings like this.

It's Amazing What You Can Do on One of These Meetings

- You can have a family reunion where everyone catches up on what is happening in everyone's lives.
- You can play games, tell stories, sing songs and do other fun things.
- You can read stories or play games with your nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

They have become the new way for groups of people to spend time together and not feel isolated.



Photo by Marcus Aurelius from Pexels

Is It Difficult to Make Video Calls and Set up Video Meetings?

Actually, video calls are easy. All you need is a smart phone and a specific application. You just call the other person using the application.

Video meetings are not as easy. Frequently, you have to download an application. Then follow specific instructions to schedule the meeting.

If you're not computer savvy, you may be intimidated by this. Don't be. Get one of your adult children familiar with computers to take care of scheduling and hosting the meeting and invite you to take part in it.

Your son or daughter can also take the time to show you how to set up a meeting on your own. Ask them to be with you the first several times you schedule meetings to show you how to resolve any problems that might come up.

Resources for Video Calls and Meetings

See page 5 for some resources you can use for video calls and meetings. This is not a complete list. It seems as time passes, more and more are being developed.

Beat Isolation and Loneliness Today

There is no reason for you to spend another day isolated and lonely. Make a video call with a family member or friend today. Better yet, set up a video meeting with your family members or with several friends and catch up on how they are doing. Maybe even sing songs or play a game!

If you have any comments on what you have read in this post, please email them to me. Also, if you have any ideas about subjects you would like to see discussed in future posts, please email me at bob@wordcrafterscopywriting.com and let me know your thoughts.

You can read Bob's Blog at knoxseniors.org. Watch for a new blog post every couple of weeks.

VIDEO CALLS

Facetime

This is an Apple application. People who have an iPhone or iPad can use it to



connect with one another. The application is built into every

iPhone and iPad. So, you don't have to download it. To make a video call,

- 1. Open the Facetime application
- 2. Type the name, email address or phone number of the person you want to call. If you want to call more than 1 person, type their name, email address or phone number next.
- 3. Touch video to start call.

You can have up to 32 people on a video call.

Google Duo

Google developed this application for people

with Android phones to make video calls. Before you make a call, you must download the application from Google Play onto your phone. You

can find Google Play by typing play.google. com into your browser. Then search for Google Duo.

Those with an iPhone and iPad can also download and use the application.

- To make a video call,
- 1. Open the Google Duo application.
- 2. Select the person from your contact list or type in their phone number. If you want to call more than 1 person, select each from your contact list or type in their phone number.
- 3. Duo will call them.

At the end of your video call, those who haven't downloaded the Duo application will be invited to do so.

You can have up to 12 people on a video call.

Facebook Messenger



If you and your family member or friend are friends on Facebook, it's easy to have a video call with them.

To make a video call,

- 1. Open Facebook and click on Messenger on the left-hand side.
- 2. Go down to the family member or friend you want to call and press enter.
- 3. On the upper right-hand side of the

screen you will see phone, video camera and information icons. Click on the video camera to start the call.

VIDEO MEETINGS

Zoom

This is the most popular application for



having video meetings in 2020. It was built for businesses. However, very quickly families and friends started using it during the Coronavirus crisis

to connect with one another.

Zoom has free and paid applications. With the free application, video meetings are limited to 40 minutes. If a meeting will be longer than 40 minutes, set up another meeting to start right after the first one ends.

To use Zoom, no software or application has to be downloaded. However, the person organizing the video meeting has to have a Zoom account. You can get one by registering for it at www.Zoom.us.

Then you log on and

- 1. Click on "Schedule A Meeting" on the top right-hand side of the screen
- 2. Enter the topic of your meeting, for example, "Smith Family Meeting."
- 3. Schedule the day and time of your meeting.
- 4. Set the time for 40 minutes.
- 5. Check the boxes to turn on the video for the host and guest.
- 6. Toward the top of the page, you will see "JoinURL" on the left-hand side. On the far right, it says "Copy the invitation." Copy and email it to everyone you're inviting to your video meeting.
- 7. On the day and time of the video call, click on that link and tell everyone else to click on it too. You will all be connected.

Just remember when joining a meeting, click on the links to allow video and audio when you are asked.

Cisco Webex

Webex has offered video conferencing to

businesses for years. Recently, they started offering it to individual people. They have a free plan which is very easy to use. Originally, there was a 40 minute time limit on video calls. Now it's unlimited. You can sign up on their website – www.webex.com. Once you register, you can download their meeting application to your computer. Scheduling a meeting is really easy.

To schedule a meeting,

- 1. Click on the Schedule button.
- 2. That will take you to a page where you name your meeting, enter the date and time of the meeting and enter the email addresses of the people you want to invite.
- 3. If you are going to have the same meeting more than once, you can click on Recurrence and enter how frequently it will be and on what day.

The system automatically sends an email to those you are inviting to the meeting. You don't have to. If for some reason you have to cancel the meeting, go in and cancel it. The system automatically notifies everyone on the list it was cancelled.

The audio and video quality of these meetings is very good.

Skype

Skype has been around for a long time. If you

used it in the past, you may recall everyone on a Skype call had to have a Skype account before you could add them to a video call. Times have changed and it is now easier.

The easiest way to set up a meeting on Skype, whether you used Skype in the past or this is the first time is:

- 1. Type this into your browser: https://www. skype.com/en/free-conference-call, and click on Create a free meeting on the right hand side of the screen.
- 2. Click on Share Invite. You can send the invitation out through your outlook or Gmail account. If you don't have one of those, click on copy link. That will copy it to your clipboard. Then go to your email account and type in all of the people you want to have at the meeting. Paste the invitation from your clipboard in the body of your email and press send.
- 3. At the time you want to have the call, click on the invitation and have everyone else do the same.

If you already have a Skype account, you can still set up a meeting as you did in the past. However, that way is more complex than the way suggested above.

APRIL & MAY 2020 DONATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS

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Adopt A Senior In Memory or Honor

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DO YOU NEED A SENIOR SERVICE DIRECTORY?

We want to remind you that the Office on Aging's Senior Service Directory is a powerful tool for getting the information you need when you need it. The books are always free and available at area hospitals, library branches, schools, churches, community centers and sponsors' places of business all across Knox County. You can also pick up copies at the Ross Building and O'Connor Senior Center. We can provide boxes of directories for anyone who requests them. You can also access the Senior Service Directory online anytime at knoxseniors.org.

We are now researching and preparing for the 2021-2023 edition of the directory. If you or anyone you know is interested in advertising in the directory, please call us at 865-524-2786. Sponsorship and ad sales fund the directory so we can offer it at no cost to anyone who wants it. Please consider

supporting the Office on Aging through sponsorship of this valuable resource.



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UnitedHealthcare is committed to helping **Tennesseans live** healthier lives.

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ELDER NEWS & VIEWS

OFFICE ON AGING DIRECTOR

Dottie Lyvers

EDITOR Rachel Kraft

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ELDER NEWS **VIEWS**

IS THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING

OFFICE ON AGING: (865) 524-2786 **O'CONNOR SENIOR CENTER: (865) 523-1135**

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ELDER NEWS **VIEWS**

WAYS TO HELP THE COUNCIL ON AGING

The Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging (COA) is an independent 501(c)(3) organization that serves as an advisory body to the CAC Office on Aging. Members of the COA help identify the needs of seniors in Knox County and the resources to meet those needs. Anyone who is interested can join the council. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month (except July and August) at the O'Connor Senior Center at 2:30 p.m. Please contact the Office on Aging at 524-2786 for membership information.

The following programs offer ways to donate to COA without any additional cost beyond your purchases. Please consider taking advantage of these opportunities to help vulnerable Knoxville and Knox County seniors.



Kroger Community Rewards[®]: Kroger Community Rewards[®]

allows you to designate the charity of your choice to receive a portion of its charitable giving funds every time you shop at Kroger with your Kroger Plus card. You can register your choice of charity online or by phone, at www.krogercommunityrewards.com or 1-800-576-4377 (choose Community Rewards). We ask that you consider choosing the Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging. All funds stay in the local community and provide direct services for seniors.

amazonsmile

Amazon. A Reason to Smile: Amazon will You shop. Amazon gives. donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible

purchases when you shop at AmazonSmile (smile. amazon.com). Please buy books, e-books and other merchandise on the AmazonSmile website.

designating Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging as your choice of recipient for the charitable giving program. You must remember to enter the site through the smile. amazon.com address each time that you make a purchase, rather than through amazon.com for COA to benefit.



iGive.com: iGive.com allows you to support your favorite cause with a percentage of your online shopping. Every time you shop at any of the 1,500+

online stores in the iGive network, a portion of the money you spend benefits Knoxville-Knox County Council on Aging. It's a free service, and you'll never pay more when you reach a store through iGive. To get started, just create your free iGive account. Start iGiving at www.iGive.com/Knoxville-KnoxCountyCouncilonAging.