



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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THE NEWSLETTER OF AID TO DISTRESSED FAMILIES OF APPALACHIAN COUNTIES

HOLIDAY EDITION • DECEMBER 2024

Holiday Greetings ADFAC Friends,



As we all begin to enter the busy activities of the season, I'd like to take a moment to express my gratitude to the thousands of people who help ADFAC help our neighbors. Whether you are a donor, a volunteer, someone who helps raise funds for United Way, or you support and or volunteer for one of our partner organizations – all those gifts enable our community to be just that – a community – helping others who need it most. 'Neighbors Helping Neighbors' successes thus far in 2024:

- 5,201 Pre-K through 12th grade students in four counties received new, quality, grade specific school supplies – a record for this program.
- \$355,000+ has been reinvested helping 1,100+ individuals and households with emergency assistance such as utility or rent to prevent eviction, cut off or other devastating events and coaching
- Two new homes completed and a third home under construction for new homeowners, creating first time opportunities for those families to establish long term stability
- Fourteen home repair projects in our community have helped local homeowners live more safely & comfortably in their own homes

Every activity at ADFAC is designed to help our clients on their own path to a stable future, which is unique to each person or family. We are committed to treating every client with dignity and kindness.

In recent weeks, ADFAC Board & Staff embarked on the journey to evaluate and update our Vision & Mission Statements. It has been inspiring to hear new ideas and interpretations on what ADFAC is accomplishing and what we'd really like to see in the future. With this newsletter, we are excited to roll out the new statements:

VISION:

A community where individuals and families feel empowered to work toward stability.

MISSION:

ADFAC exists to provide effective and essential support through programs designed to guide our clients on the path to a secure future.

In ADFAC's vision, we see the word 'community' as a much larger entity encompassing not only the areas we are currently serving but possibly new adventures in our programs and areas of service in the future. My biggest takeaway from these conversations & new statements: ADFAC is still a cornerstone in our community providing a much-needed scope of services and we want to help as many neighbors as possible through thoughtful and well-managed programs into the future.

We are ready for 2025 and with your help, we'll keep leading the way helping our neighbors just as ADFAC was established to do in 1987.

I'm grateful for a roof over my head, heat on a cold night, and food on the table for my family. The stability is a blessing. Not all of our neighbors have such comforts and necessities. Your contribution helps ADFAC help those in need. Thank you for your generous support to and trust in ADFAC.

Wishing you happiness and joy this holiday season and health and happiness in 2025,

Connie



"Christmas in September" from new friends over the mountain

We never know how far the ADFAC message will go.

In September, Steve Mott, a member of the Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C. felt called to help Appalachian children with school supplies. An Internet search discovered the ADFAC website, and soon the church used our school supply list to create a "Christmas in September" display. A paper Christmas tree provided a space for parishioners to choose items to donate. Very quickly several plastic containers were filled with items from crayons to sticky notes.

On October 14, Steve and his brother Randy Mott along with Beth and Dan Southern drove several hours to reach the ADFAC School Supply room. We are so grateful for their thoughtfulness and willingness to personally deliver the supplies. So many children will benefit from their generosity!



Passport to Purpose: Michels honored at 12th Bow Tie event



On Saturday, November 16, supporters, volunteers, friends, and family gathered to honor Jim & Sheila Michel, recipients of the 12th Bill Wilcox Bow Tie Award.

Passport to Purpose: a night of celebration in honor of Jim and Sheila Michel, who live lives of purpose and share a love of world travel.

The night started with appetizers and drinks and continued with the always talented Elaine Graham beginning the program with a special song written just for Jim and Sheila. Shortly after that, the charming and memorable “Grandchildren Parade” began. The Michel’s seven grandchildren paraded around the room, each representing a continent.

When the time came to present the Bill Wilcox Bow Tie Award, previous awardees

joined Jim and Sheila onstage to welcome them as the newest members of the group. The award was followed by further musings from Elaine, as well as friends and family sharing heartwarming and humorous stories about the Michels.

Event attendees not only celebrated Jim and Sheila but also raised thousands of dollars to support ADFAC. Event sponsorships, ticket purchases, honor donations, and bids on auction items were crucial to the fundraising success of the event.

To all who attended, donated, volunteered, or supported the event - thank you!



ADFAC Treasurer Dave Mullins receives 2024 Starfish Award

Just a few days after Bow Tie, our own Dave Mullins received an award of his own - the 2024 Starfish Award! The award and event, presented by the United Way of Anderson, Campbell, Morgan, & Scott Counties, takes place during an annual luncheon that honors partner agencies, volunteers, and our local community.

Dave has been ADFAC’s Treasurer for a number of years, and has been involved with our agency since the late 1980’s. His other community endeavors include assisting with the Raider Pantry at Roane State Community College, serving in numerous ways at First Presbyterian Church, and volunteering for Living Waters for the World.

Congratulations, Dave!

Shown at left: Ada Hernandez, UWAC Executive Director, ADFAC Board President Jim Dodson, and Dave Mullins.



Charlotte, a single mom who shares custody of two children, has a remarkable story about extreme hardship, perseverance, and hope.

A few years back, Charlotte was trapped in an abusive relationship. Her living conditions were dangerous - even to the point of being hospitalized with multiple broken bones. The turmoil affected every part of her life, including her business; during this time, she lost clients and a steady income, which made it even more difficult for her to leave her abusive boyfriend.

Thankfully, Charlotte found the courage to leave the abusive situation, and though she finally felt safe, she no longer had anywhere

to live. She experienced homelessness for about a year as she did her best to pick up the pieces. Her kids were able to stay with their father during this time, and she was able to keep in regular touch with them during those difficult months.

Still, Charlotte persevered. With a determined spirit and the financial help of friends and family, Charlotte was able to secure a rental property, get re-established, and provide a home for her children. Her new landlord has been very understanding and has even mentioned to Charlotte she might be able to reduce rent to make it more affordable. Charlotte also found two new clients for her business, and while that was only \$400 of

income each month, it was a great start. She also applied for SNAP benefits and actively looked for additional employment.

When Charlotte came to ADFAC’s Household Assistance Program, she was a first-time client and was referred by the YWCA. She needed help with her utility bill, which we were happy to provide using funds from Project ASSIST. Our social worker also provided two food cards and KARM cards to assist her positive growth.

Charlotte was very grateful for the assistance and expressed that after years of struggle, she felt hopeful and excited about the future for herself and her children.



If you would like to help local families with utility assistance, Projects ASSIST and SAFE, partnerships with local utility providers, are an easy way to make a difference. For more information, please visit:

www.clintonub.com/project-assist/

www.pcud.org/customer-forms/project-assist-program/

www.orud.org/about-orud/adfacproject-safe/

www.oakridgetn.gov/164/Utility-Business-Office

THE YEAR IN REVIEW: APPALACHIAN HOUSING PARTNERS

It’s been a productive and busy year for ADFAC’s Appalachian Housing Partners Program!

Over 130 individuals have directly benefited from the program this year. Projects completed include:

- 6 home improvement projects
- 3 rehab projects
- 1 volunteer project
- 2 new homes

Additionally, one home will be completed in January 2025, and a site is being prepped for yet another home!

Other plans for 2025 include ten rehabilitation projects, another new home, multiple volunteer projects, and much more.

Volunteers will be needed - more updates coming soon!



Meet Madison, Household Assistance Program Intern

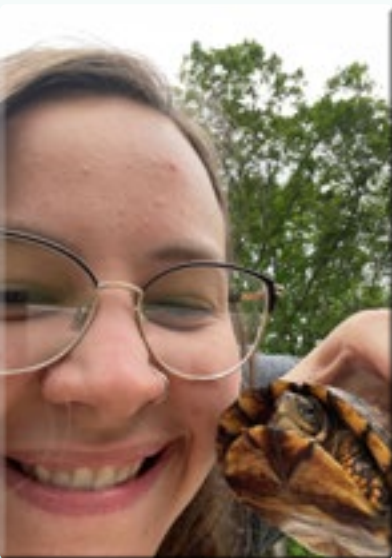
Hello!

My name is Madison Beaty and I am currently in the MSSW program at the University of Tennessee. I have been an intern with ADFAC since August and will be back next semester as well!

I’m originally from Byrdstown, TN but I have been all over the place the last few years. I graduated with my BSW from ETSU in Johnson City in 2023 (GO BUCS!!). I took a gap year after graduating from my undergraduate to join Appalachia Service Project’s fellowship program and completed a year of service in Jonesville, VA. Then I got accepted into the

MSSW program at UT (GO VOLS!) and moved to Knoxville in May of this year!

I enjoy hiking, disc golf, and spending time on the lake during the summer. I also enjoy cooking and baking, quilting, and spending time with my cat Ollie.



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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.

If you would like to honor someone special with the gift of hope, please fill out the form at right and send it to ADFAC (feel free to duplicate the form as needed). Send your completed form and donation to:

ADFAC HONOR CARD
PO BOX 5953
OAK RIDGE, TN 37831-5953

You may also order cards through PayPal. Simply scan the QR card at right and proceed. Please make sure you list recipient’s name & address during the checkout process, or by sending the information to jamie@adfacs.org.



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Permit 123

*Yes! I would like to honor my loved one by
making a donation to ADFAC in their name.
Please send my recipient a “Gift of Hope” card.*

Your name (as you would like it to appear on the card)

Your address

Your address

Recipient’s name (as you would like it to appear on the card)

Recipient’s address

Recipient’s address

Amount of donation

Please send your donation and completed form to:
ADFAC Honor Card, PO Box 5953, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5953