

From Childhood

**2023  
Annual  
Report**

To Adulthood

We  
Know  
Aging.



*AASCS*

Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens



## From the CEO Brian Beck



Since 1975, AASC has worked to improve the lives of older adults in our service area. Over the years, the agency has evolved and expanded to serve individuals of all ages, from childhood to adulthood. We know aging, and this past year, our team has worked to expand resources through both current programs and exploration

of new services.

As the organizational structure of our agency has shifted into three realms — aging services, transportation and PACE — staff in each area have grown to better serve our population.

Employee workspaces were enhanced by technological improvements and the completion of deferred maintenance in several facilities. Not only does this have a positive impact on our valued staff, but it also affects how they are better able to serve clients.

What's Next? Coping with COVID-19 explores the effects of the pandemic through counseling sessions, while a new telephonic care management program through a partnership with Bay Aging has allowed staff to have an impact on the entire state. As these programs and others evolve, I am excited to see how staff will bring them to life.

We continued to reemerge from the lingering effects of a pandemic that contributed to an already significant problem for older adults — social isolation — and services looked a bit different than in the past. Whereas in recent years, in-home care was a preference oftentimes over congregate settings, our adult day centers were a focal point of strategic plans this year. With an expansion into the Mount Rogers region at Marion, our four adult day centers have grown and activities have increased in such a way that participants are excited to once again share space with other individuals.

Transportation services increased this year as well, with the number of boardings growing by 14%. Public transit is available to all ages and is currently fare free. In addition, we look forward to piloting a new medical transportation program that will help to better serve the needs of area residents. This program will help with non-emergency medical transport for individuals age 60 and older.

On a celebratory note, AASC celebrated 15 years of operating the PACE program this year. As part of this, a pergola was constructed in memory of a former PACE member, Don

Durham, that has provided a perfect area for participants to socialize and enjoy the great outdoors. This program has served many individuals over the years, and the growth that was seen this year is wonderful. Both AASC PACE service areas saw an increase in census, with AllCARE for Seniors averaging 99 members a month and Mount Rogers PACE having 37 individuals join the program. After a full year of PACE operations at Mount Rogers, the future is looking bright for PACE.

Entering into this next fiscal year, I am confident in our staff and their ability to consistently change lives daily. We are on an exciting journey, and I am blessed to be a part of it.

AASC's child day center and senior living community, smaller programs that target specific populations, have experienced both successes and opportunities for growth this past year. The child day center participants were able to start field trips again and enjoyed several activities with the adult day center attendees as part of intergenerational programming.

The senior community is growing with the addition of multiple mobile homes and duplexes as well as an increased focus on providing senior-specific housing.

## Grants & Awards

**AARP - \$8,194** Fit for Life Park for all ages and all abilities at Lake Park, in partnership with the Town of Richlands.

**Every Ride Counts - \$10,000** Four-month pilot program through NADTC to develop marketing materials for Four County Transit.

**Share the Love - \$5,660.64** Virginia earned a total of \$50,945.72, with 9 participants.

**Funding for Tazewell Nutrition Site - \$4,000** Board of Supervisors approved to purchase two griddles.

**Meals on Wheels Pet Grant - \$11,500** Regional Cohort Grant with \$10,000 for pet care and \$1,500 for Pet Ambassador Program to assist organizations to develop a pet program.

**Home Modification Grant - \$304,156** One of three sub-recipients with DARS and funded by HUD to complete 45 home modification projects for older adults over 3 years.

**Sen. Warner HRSA Grant Reimbursement - \$25,000** Used to purchase medical equipment and physical therapy equipment for Falls Mills.

**Sen. Kaine HRSA Grant - \$1.204 million** Funding renovate Bristol PACE Center.

**Meals on Wheels Meeting Unmet Needs - \$25,000** Purchase a 4-wheel-drive vehicle for the nutrition department.

**Community Foundation of the Virginias - \$5,056** Purchase refrigerators, freezers and microwaves to assist low-income elderly clients in safely storing and preparing food.

**Total Funding \$1,602,566.64**

- **Aging Achievement Awards from US Aging** - Mount Rogers PACE Service Area Expansion

- **HQI Health Quality Innovator of the Year Award - 1<sup>st</sup> Place** Patient Engagement, Options Counseling



# Four County Transit

Four County Transit continues to see improvements in ridership as life gets a little closer back to

normal after the pandemic. As the public transportation provider for the four-county service area, Four County Transits offers mobility, freedom and quality of life for residents. With 121, 919 boardings, and showing an increase in ridership for the 2022 fiscal year of 14 percent, Four County Transit continues to show steady improvement in public service.



This year saw new services offered in partnership with the Cumberland Plateau Housing District with once-a-week route service to the Cleveland area. This pilot program established with a one-year agreement has shown great success with possibilities leading local officials to continue and maintain the service route on a more permanent basis.

Additionally, 5 new buses were purchased at a cost of \$710,993. These buses will keep the fleet operational with the latest, state-approved line of buses and, when necessary, replace buses that have reached useful life expectancy.

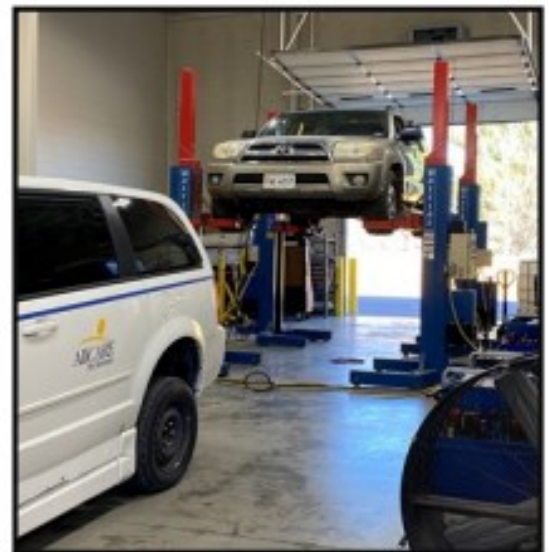
Four County Transit continues to be focused on the cleaning and sanitation of all buses to ensure the safety of the community. The continued health and safety of drivers and the public is of great concern.



Most people think of a mechanic as someone in a garage and dirty overalls. But a technician doesn't just replace a part. They diagnose the problem behind the failure. They anticipate safety concerns that affect the lives of staff and individuals in the community. There's an analytical aspect to the technicians' job that has changed. This includes vehicle service and inspection stickers, but less-known tasks such as preparing, organizing and maintaining work records; parts and supply inventory; as well as maintenance records required in fleet management. Four County Transit Fleet Manager Ron Neece and his team work tirelessly to ensure the successful operation of the entire agency's fleet of vehicles, the safety of every vehicle and keeping them in optimum operating condition.

(L-R) Ron Neece, FCT Fleet Manager; Jamie Dickens; Josh McClanahan; and, Ben Click.

Four County Transit mechanics maintain the facility and a fleet of 60 Four County Transit vehicles, 47 PACE vehicles, 58 agency vehicles, and manage emergencies and breakdowns in all four counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell counties. The 165 total vehicles range from cars, trucks, SUVs, minivans and 51 public transit buses. Therefore, a wide range of expertise is required of our mechanics. Four County Transit buses alone traveled 689,738 revenue miles, which represents only miles driven in actual transporting of passengers. This past year saw the purchase of a new service truck to aid in the process of keeping the entire agency on the road, at a cost of \$48,525. The organization of maintaining such a wide range of vehicles and the departments responsible requires the critical use of the electronic vehicle maintenance log. The hard work and precision organization this team accomplishes daily keeps the entire agency moving.





## Care Coordination

In 2023, Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens expanded its partnership with Bay Aging with the Community Outreach program that works with the insurance provider of the client.

This program can follow a client for 30, 60, and sometimes up to 90 days. Under the supervision of the Care Coordination Department, three staff members are working in this program.

Because of the program's success, AASC has plans to hire three additional team members.

AASC also participated in the Healthy Heart Ambassadors program, which is a collaboration between District Three Governmental Cooperative, the Virginia Pharmacists Association and Health Quality Innovators.

Trainers enable lay persons to better monitor their health, specifically blood pressure.

## Division of Aging

### Options counseling makes difference in client's life

I have a 63-year-old female client, suffering from COPD, respiratory failure, depression, and CHF. She was non-compliant with depression medications and a high fall risk. Her living conditions were less than ideal.

The goals with Options Counseling were to get to her appointments with reliable transportation, establish a medication schedule, and find a new place to live. I secured transportation one time through PACE. In the next few months, her daughter helped with a few other appointments.



She was enrolled in home-delivered meals, but her health grew worse. She wasn't able to stand and cook, so she was extremely malnourished. She weighed 120 lbs. but lost down to 90 lbs. in a matter of 3 months.

She was so weak she could barely move. She fell at home and had to crawl to the phone to get her grandson to come to help. That was a Sunday night. I went to see her the following Tuesday and her shoulder was so bruised it was black, and was covered in feces because she couldn't get off the couch. I called EMS to get her to the hospital.

She had a fractured clavicle, so she stayed for PT in the hospital a few days. She came home and was able to pass a screening to qualify for PACE. She was enrolled in PACE on February 1, 2023, and she moved into one of the duplex units in the senior living community on February 17, 2023.

She was so excited to have a clean and decent place to live. She still has breathing issues but her overall health improved within just a few days of being in a safe environment.

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**Guardianship** Public Guardianship staff enjoy working daily with our individuals to give them the "Best Life Possible" which ensures that essential requirements for physical and emotional health are met and financial resources are managed for all clients in the care of the Public Guardianship program.

Staff continues to visit with individuals who reside within facilities; however, due to ongoing COVID restrictions, video visits, window visits and a few face-to-face visits are still taking place.

During last year's holiday season, gifts were provided to 35 individuals for Christmas and also meals throughout the year were provided for residents and staff of the facilities.

Public Guardianship services are provided to individuals 24/7 365 days a year within the four counties- Buchanan, Tazewell, Russell, and Dickenson. The Public Guardianship services are designed for individuals who are incapacitated and have no suitable person to serve as their guardian. Referrals typically come through the Virginia Department of Social Services or other Community-based organizations, such as Cumberland Mountain Community Service Board.

Public Guardianship currently has 40 individuals who we provide services. We currently do have a waiting list for referrals within our program. Public Guardianship is funded by the Virginia Department of Aging.

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## aging Services

**Nutrition** AASC's Nutrition Department had several transitional changes this year — a change in leadership roles and the operation of the kitchen at Generations at Haysi was transferred to the Nutrition Department.

Also, three cook positions were added — two at Haysi and one at the Tazewell kitchen due to the increase of catered cooked meals.

After decades of frozen meals, the nutrition site in Dante is enjoying catered hot meals that are prepared at Haysi.

Post-COVID, nutrition sites are starting to see an increase in participants, especially at Swords Creek and Grundy. A total of 188 congregate nutrition site participants were served 9,573 meals. Nutrition counseling added eligible clients to help improve their nutrition.

The Farm Fresh Market Program was able to send out almost 800 coupons, which was double the amount from last year, to help individuals purchase fresh fruits and vegetables grown in Virginia.

Nutrition sites are making community connections and are working with various businesses. Lowes has made multiple donations and helped to provide items needed for the sites and the clients.

The nutrition drivers delivered 108,579 meals to 495 homebound clients, in addition to pet care items.



PACE Program Director Dana Collins, Dante site participant Corrine Hale and CFO Carolyn Counts were on hand to celebrate the first hot meals served at Dante.

**In-Home Care** In-Home Care is proud to continue to offer much-needed assistance to many who live within the AASC and Mt. Rogers PACE service areas. Our clients have a wide range of needs that vary from light housekeeping to physical assistance with hygiene and more. The In-Home Care staff directly impacts those we serve and is an integral part of maintaining a healthy home environment.

Aides are well qualified, CPR certified, and receive ongoing education and training to ensure they provide quality services. About 50 aides provide care to an average of 110 clients monthly.

AASC In-Home Care works closely with the PACE program, MCOs, Masonic Lodge, the Veteran's Administration and Care Coordination to identify and admit for services.

In-Home Care remains committed to building relationships and offering support to its team members who work in the field by hosting on- and off-site trainings including Team Talk — a weekly engagement session to connect the aides. Topics vary from seasonal questions to family memories.

In-Home remains committed to the elderly and disabled community and to making a difference in health and well-being.



In-Home aides participated in a pet care drive to benefit the pet program at AASC. During their fall meeting, aides donated toys, treats, puppy pads, kitty litter and food to be distributed to home-delivered meals clients with pets.

their



# PACE—Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly

AASC's Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly had a great year by being able to offer PACE services to more Southwest Virginians. Mount Rogers PACE serves Bland, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe counties and the city of Bristol, from its PACE Center in Marion. This is a welcomed addition to AllCARE for Seniors PACE Center located in Cedar Bluff, which serves Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, and Tazewell counties. Mount Rogers PACE won an Aging Achievement Award from US Aging for the Service Area Expansion Project.

AllCARE for Seniors celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> year of operation in May and Mount Rogers PACE celebrated its 1<sup>st</sup> year of operation in August. Celebrations were held at all locations with participants and staff. An outdoor gazebo space was constructed and dedicated, made possible by the family of a former long-time member who was one of the original eight participants to join PACE. Participants have enjoyed many outdoor activities under the gazebo this summer which provides more useable shaded patio space.



Thirty-four participants joined AllCARE for Seniors Health Plan over the past year sustaining an average membership of 99 members monthly. Mount Rogers PACE added 37 members and maintained an average membership of 29 monthly. Individuals who enroll must be 55 years of age or older, live in the service area, pass a screening for nursing facility level of care and be able to remain living safely in their home with PACE services.

AASC PACE members have enjoyed art projects, gardening projects, health and fitness activities, cooking groups, home



To celebrate the beginning of fall, Mount Rogers PACE participants and team members enjoyed a hayride, corn maze, and lots of fun outdoor games at Richdale Farm in Wytheville. Outings are not only one of the most fun aspects of the adult day centers, but are also a way to keep participants active, socializing and engaging with the community.

safety, bingo, music, birthday and holiday celebrations, and many other fun activities. The occupational therapy team's "Art at Your Own PACE" continues to produce amazing artwork projects. This program allows participants to perform functional tasks in fun creative ways, improving skills, emotional function and well-being. Staff continues to present the award-winning project at national conferences and webinars.

Intergenerational activities such as gardening and water park outings are enjoyed by all ages. Efforts continue with opportunities for healthier and more active lifestyles.





## Intergenerational Picnic in the Park

Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens transported participants from the adult day center and child daycare facility to the "Fit for Life Park" located in the Richlands neighborhood of Lake Park.

Appalachian Agency received a Community Challenge Grant from AARP to help upgrade the under-utilized park owned by the Town of Richlands. The agency purchased two wheelchair-accessible swings suitable for children and adults, two stationary air walkers and three benches for the park that was redesigned as a multi-generational park for all ages and abilities.

Rocky Hill of God's Rockstars rallied community volunteers

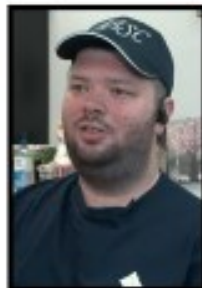
to assist in painting existing equipment and providing other enhancements to the park.

The group enjoyed the day by testing the equipment, enjoying a hotdog lunch and a foam party.



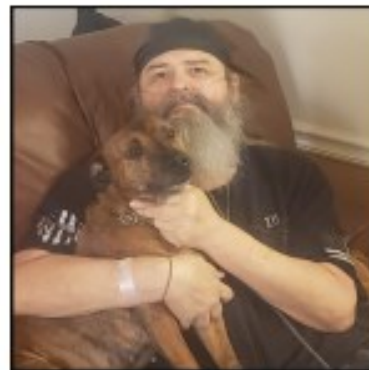
## PACE Success Stories

In July, when a PACE driver arrived at a participant's home, he noticed what he thought was smoke coming from the participant's roof. Upon further inspection, he realized it was a fire and his quick actions helped the participant, who had not noticed the fire, escape the home to the safety of the PACE van and call 911. The driver stayed with the participant and her daughter who arrived later, to offer support and keep them from entering the home, until the fire could be extinguished. The home was unfortunately uninsured and a total loss. The family was able to find a new home and PACE participants and staff gave a "housewarming shower" at the PACE Center for donations and gifts to help furnish their new home.



PACE driver  
Harley Rowe

One gentleman started attending the PACE Center 5 days per week and he has flourished and now has access to the community. He had never colored anything before attending and now he takes pride in coloring sheets to gift to staff members and other participants.



In making an initial visit to a potential enrollee, the PACE social worker learned that the gentleman and his dog were temporarily living in a mobile home due to having nowhere else to go. He explained how he had been living in his own home and a tree fell onto it while he was sleeping, making it a total loss and unlivable.

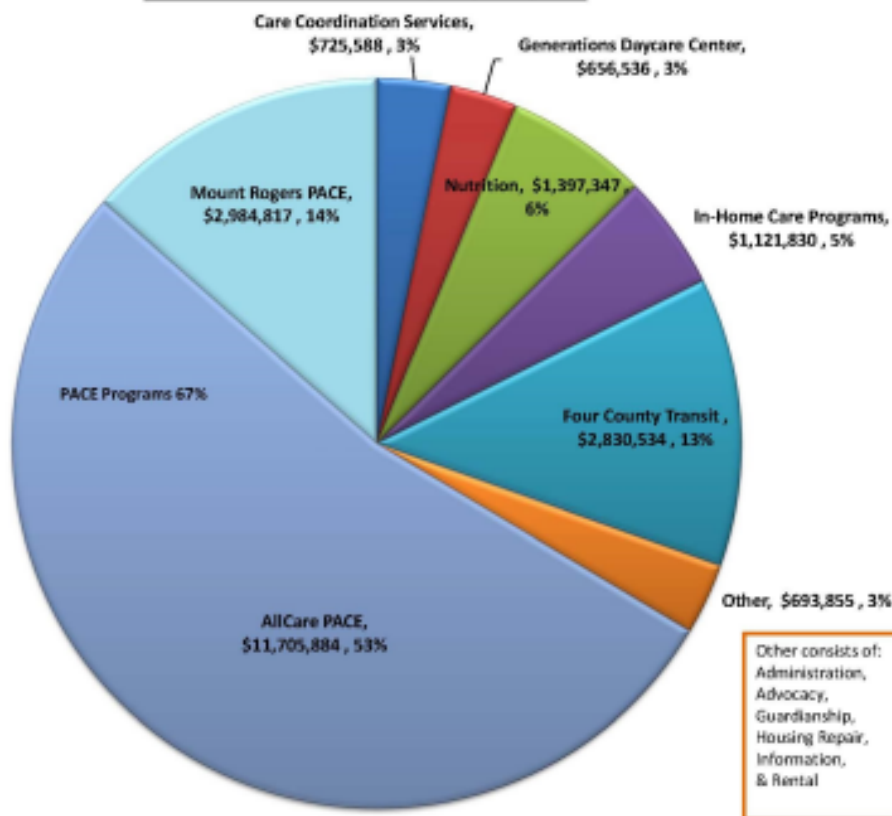
They had moved into the current home but were very unsatisfied and scared due to the neighborhood and other circumstances. Upon bringing this information back to the PACE Interdisciplinary Team, the team worked to find a more suitable housing option for the participant. There was a vacancy in the AASC Senior Living Community and within 2 weeks of the initial meeting, the gentleman and his dog were moved into their new home and he enrolled into PACE. Since moving, he has become very active in the PACE Center and is very content.

Another PACE member had been bedbound for 3 years prior to PACE. Now with the assistance of therapy, she has been able to get in her shower, around her house, and into the community. She has even been attending PACE outings.

Prior to PACE, one member was very reclusive after the loss of his wife. He is now attending the PACE center multiple days weekly, participating in therapy, and socializing with others.



## AASC FY 23 Revenue \$22,116,391



## Revenue Growth

AASC saw a **25% increase** in revenue growth to **\$22,116,391** in FY 2023.

## Human Resources

Total of **243** employees. **22** new jobs added.

**71%** of all employees are female. Average employee age

**51.4** years

Average retirement age **70.6**

## Aging Services

**1,721** calls for service with **208** requests for home repair, **147** for home-delivered meals and **145** in-home services.

**215** clients provided with emergency services.

## Transit

Riding is free of charge. Increase in passenger boardings of **14%** for fiscal year 2022 for a total of **121,919** boardings.

## AASC PACE

**34** participants joined AllCare for Seniors, and **37** joined Mount Rogers. **104** & **34** were total participants, respectively, at year-end.

## Nutrition

**108,579 meals delivered** and 409 sessions of nutrition education

**9,537 meals served**

at congregate sites with 22,185.75 hours of social and recreation activity.

## Board of Directors

Lovis Ball  
Ginger Branton  
Larry Burton  
Paul Crawford  
Pat Gray  
Janet Gunn  
Marshall Hughes

Alice Meade  
Irma Mitchell  
Ralph Mullins  
Mike Ratliff  
Delano Sykes  
Karen Vanderlinden