

# FTAAAD QUARTERLY NEWS



July–September 2023 Volume 11 Issue 3

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

July 1 is the start of the new fiscal year for many state and federal agencies, and this new year will usher in several important changes. First, the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability (TCAD) has increased the maximum statewide unit cost rate for certain Home– and Community-Based Services to establish parity between OAA- and TennCare-funded programs.

Personal Care and Homemaker will see a \$1.88/hour increase (to \$25.32); In-Home Respite will increase by \$4.00/hour (to \$22.00); and Adult Day Care will increase by \$1.16/hour (to \$14.44).

Another change is the proposed update to the Older Americans Act regulations. These have not been changed substantially since 1988. Updates are needed to align regulations to the current statute

and reflect the needs of today’s older adults. The proposed rule addresses issues that have emerged since the last update and clarifies a number of requirements. It aims to better support the national aging network that delivers OAA services and improve program implementation.

The Administration for Community Living is seeking public comments to the proposed OAA rule. To participate, visit <https://acl.gov/OAArule>.

Congratulations to FTAAAD staff members Lorrie Jarnagin for 20 years of service, Karrie Erick for 15 years of service and Julie Webster for 10 years of service. We couldn’t do what we do without you!



**Angie Gwaltney,  
Director**

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## Save The Date!

### FTAAAD ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON AGING

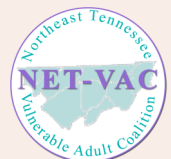
May 7, 2024  
Kingsport, TN

## KEY DATES

**NET-VAC Meeting**  
No July Meeting

**NET-VAC Meeting**  
August 2, 9:30 am  
Trinity Assembly of God,  
617 University Pkwy., Johnson City

**NET-VAC Meeting**  
September 6, 9:30 am  
Trinity Assembly of God,  
617 University Pkwy., Johnson City





## PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP VOLUNTEERS

The Public Guardianship Program was created in 1986 by the Tennessee General Assembly to serve people age 60 and older who are no longer able to make rational decisions regarding their healthcare and finances and who have no one to assist them with these affairs.

Our volunteers serve an important role in our program. They are there to show a friendly, familiar face each month to our clients. They are there to listen to their stories, encourage them through obstacles, and to simply be a friend to them. They are asked to assess the clients’ surroundings and physical appearance and report to us any concerns they may have. This helps to ensure that our clients are getting continuous quality of care and that their surroundings are safe and clean.

One of our dedicated volunteers, Elizabeth Rowena Bailey, once said, “After you stay in this program the length of time that I’ve been here, you start to realize that they have a first name, and they want to be called by that first name. And they have

birthdays. And they want to be remembered on Valentines Day. And they want to be remembered at Christmas. And so, I see my responsibility as being that person who reminds them that you are important. Just because you don’t have a family, there’s someone who cares for you.”

It takes compassionate individuals with strong hearts to be able to serve our most vulnerable adults and we are grateful for the selfless acts our volunteers provide to each of our clients every month. If you would like to help by volunteering, please contact us.

—*Courtesy of Maggie Holmes, FTAAAD*



## 2023 MEDICARE ADS

Starting Sept. 30, if Joe Namath, William Shatner or Jimmy Walker wants to sell you on Medicare Advantage, they are going to have to disclose what insurance plan they are advertising. And these television pitches can’t misuse the Medicare logo or card to lead consumers to believe the celebrity endorsers represent the federal government.

It’s all part of a regulation the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized in April that is designed to crack down on what Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra has called “misleading marketing schemes by health insurance companies that offer Medicare Advantage plans.”

“We’ve heard from many seniors and people with disabilities about misleading and confusing advertising for Medicare Advantage and Part D plans,” said Becerra. “This regulation includes changes to protect people exploring Medicare Advantage and Part D coverage from confusing and potentially misleading marketing practices.”

For example, the regulation makes it clear that an advertisement for Medicare Advantage must specify the name of the plan it is selling. Another step is limiting the use of the name Medicare and prohibiting images of the Medicare card in any marketing materials or advertisements. These ads may look very official and lead people to believe that the toll-free number they call goes to the federal government, when in fact, it’s a private broker or insurance company.

—*Courtesy of AARP*



## SEPTEMBER IS SENIOR CENTER MONTH

Celebrated every year in September, National Senior Center Month is a time to shine a light on senior centers, showing how vital they are to the health and wellbeing of communities. Senior centers provide countless hours of support and encouragement to older adults, and have also become integral to healthcare delivery in our communities by providing COVID-19 guidance, vaccine education, and vaccinations to their participants. And they've played a role in addressing an issue that we all knew was important even before the pandemic:

social isolation.

The 10,000 senior centers in communities and neighborhoods across the country provide access to information, opportunities, and support to improve the lives of people in their communities as they age.

This September, join senior centers across the nation and celebrate how you **Strengthen Community Connections.**

—*Courtesy of NCOA*





## JOHNSON COUNTY SENIOR CENTER RECEIVES ACCREDITATION

Johnson County Senior Center Director Kathy Motsinger announced that the center has received national accreditation after a rigorous two-year application process that includes a peer review and a process through the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) emphasizing Nine Standards of Excellence.

The Johnson County Senior Center joins only 109 other senior centers across the country who have become accredited, including seven in Tennessee. Of these, five centers are found in Northeast Tennessee: Johnson County, Jonesborough Senior Center,

Kingsport Senior Center (2) and Johnson City Senior Center (the first center in the state to receive this accreditation back in 2000).

Motsinger traveled to the National Council on Aging (NCOA) conference in Arlington, Virginia to receive the award. She hopes that this accreditation will enable the center to bring in more resources and funding, as well as recognition for their hard work and dedication to excellence.

—*Courtesy of FTAAAD*



## SNAP ONLINE FOOD PURCHASING AVAILABLE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced this month that, in partnership with states, territories and retailers across the country, online grocery shopping using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits is now available in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This expansion represents a major milestone in the history of SNAP and continues to provide greater convenience and access to healthy food options for tens of millions of Americans.

USDA has been expanding the SNAP online purchasing pilot by approving and adding additional retailers. Since March 2020, 208 additional retailer chains have joined the program, representing thousands of actual stores.

“As we celebrate this important milestone, we recognize the hard work of our state partners, implementing agencies, and diverse retailers to make online grocery shopping a convenient, safe and secure way for SNAP

participants to shop for food,” said Stacy Dean, deputy under secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services. “Expanding the diversity and reach of SNAP online shopping helps advance our goal of modernizing SNAP and providing better access to healthy, safe, affordable foods.”

In April 2023, nearly 3.7 million SNAP households shopped online, which is a substantial increase from March 2020, when about 35,000 SNAP households shopped online.

In Tennessee, online retailers include ALDI, Amazon, Earth Fare, Food City, Food Lion, Kroger, Publix, Sam’s Club Scan and Go, Target, Walmart and Whole Foods.

—*Courtesy of USDA and FTAAAD*



## 2023 SENIOR OLYMPICS

This year’s First District Senior Olympics will run from September 6–October 7 at locations in Johnson City, Kingsport, and Jonesborough.

- 9/6: Golf
- 9/12: Bowling/Singles
- 9/13: Bowling/Doubles
- 9/15: Bowling/Mixed Doubles
- 9/18: Shuffleboard
- 9/19: Pickleball
- 9/20: Table Tennis
- 9/21: Cornhole
- 9/22: Horseshoes
- 9/26: Swimming
- 9/28: Swimming
- 10/7: Track & Field

Registration closes on August 19. For more information about participating in this year’s events, please contact the Johnson City Senior Center at 423-434-6237.



## OPTIONS 2.0 FUNDS HELPING FTAAAD CONSUMERS IN NEW WAYS

Options 2.0 funds are additional state funds that can be used for consumers enrolled in the Options program who need additional help around their home that would not usually be covered through the program, like accessibility modifications, lawn care, and purchase of assistive devices and medical equipment.

Our Options Counselor staff referred M.T., a consumer from Sullivan County. She is a double amputee and confined to a wheelchair and was in desperate need of a new handicap ramp. She previously had a very narrow front entrance to her home with a non-ADA-compliant ramp—just barely wide enough for her

wheelchair. M.T. stated that she had actually flipped over the edge of it once before landing in the yard. It was a very dangerous situation.

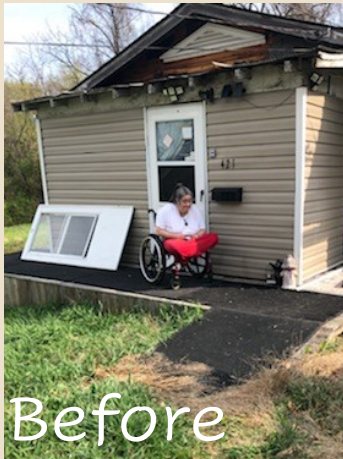
On April 19, 2023, in contract with Associated Builders of Bristol, FTAAAD completed a new ramp/porch for M.T. There was also a need for her to have her property cleared of debris and mowed. The grass was literally six feet tall in places. We contracted Brandon Arrowood of Brandon Arrowood Pressure Washing and More to clean this property. It took his crew over nine hours, as you can see from the before and after photos. This made a huge change in her property, and

more importantly, in her mindset.

She gave us a huge thumbs up and a very grateful thank you to all involved. She told me that what we have done for her is just unheard of in today's world and she can't believe that someone actually did what they said they were going to do and that someone cared enough to do it.

M.T. is a perfect example of why we do what we do, and that if we ever forget why we do it, just look at her picture with the thumbs up and huge smile. We made a difference in her life.

—Courtesy of Lee Gay, FTAAAD



Before



After



Before



After



Before



## UPCOMING EVENTS





First District  
**Tennessee**  
Senior Olympics

September 6 –  
October 7, 2023

Entry Deadline:  
*August 19*



*Taking Aging to Higher Elevations*



2023 TFA  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

November  
27-29,  
2023

The Park  
Vista,  
Gatlinburg

**SAVE THE DATE!**



## FTAAAD

### First Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability

3211 N. Roan St.  
Johnson City, TN 37601

1-866-836-6678 (Toll-Free)  
1-877-801-0044 (SHIP)  
423-926-8291 (Local)

[www.ftaad.org](http://www.ftaad.org)

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

This project is funded under a grant contract with the State of Tennessee.

Contributions are encouraged to support all programs but no one is refused service for inability to pay.

The FTAAAD is part of the First Tennessee Development District.



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Scan our QR code to go directly to the FTAAAD website



**SHIP**  
State Health Insurance Assistance Program

This project was supported, in part by grant number 90SAPG0069-02-00, 2001TNMISH-00, 2001TNMIAA-00, and 2001TNMIDR-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.



## PHOTO GALLERY



*FTAAAD staff at the 33rd Annual Conference on Aging in April*



*A newly-installed wheelchair ramp built through FTAAAD's Options 2.0 program.*



*The Senior Chorus performing at the May Aging Well conference at the Johnson City Senior Center.*