



Friends, Inc.



# Friends, Inc.

*providing friends for those in need*

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





**Jan Brewer**  
Executive Director

Friends, Inc. is a non-profit agency serving Huntsville and Madison County. Through caring volunteers, we provide support and assistance to the seriously ill and disabled in our community. Friends, Inc. was founded in 1998 by a small group of volunteers who recognized that many patients and families dealing with these issues have inadequate support and lack resources.



**Debbie Davis**  
Program Coordinator

Over the years, we have grown to more than 80 volunteers and three part-time staff members. We continue to find many who need the loving care of another person to help meet their needs. Our compassionate volunteers offer emotional, physical, and spiritual support to help patients and their families.



**Kim Houser**  
Patient Navigator

**OUR MISSION:**  
to provide support to patients with serious illnesses or disabilities, enabling them to maintain their independence through caring volunteers.

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*As a Friends, Inc. volunteer, I have the privilege of meeting many interesting people. In our short rides to their respective appointments, we talk about a lot of things...how they are doing, their families, and even the weather (too hot or too cold).*

*One day, I was asked to take a patient to a very different destination: the funeral home! This man, Mr. Maury Bahan, who was 100 years old, had actually outlived his caregiver and wanted to pay his last respects. It was an honor to drive Mr. Bahan that day. I asked him to tell me about himself, and he never stopped talking. He was an Air Force pilot, flying the B-17 in 13 missions over Europe during WWII. After leaving the military, he worked as a salesman, taught school, coached basketball, and then became an engineer.*

*That was truly a day to enjoy that I will never forget. Had it not been for Friends, Inc., I might have never met this remarkable man!*

**Dudley Brewer**  
*Friends, Inc. volunteer*  
*(pictured on cover)*



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or on Facebook  
 @MadisonFriendsInc

Proud member of the  
  
**HUNTSVILLE  
MADISON COUNTY  
CHAMBER**

# OUR LEADERSHIP

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Advocate & Community Volunteer

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**Judy Wilson**  
Advocate & Community Volunteer

**Elaine Wales**  
Electical Engineer

The term of office for the Board of Directors is a three-year term. Officers may serve consecutive terms as agreed upon by the Board and nominated officers. The Friends, Inc. Board of Directors is scheduled to meet bi-monthly. They met on the following dates: 2/8/2023, 4/12/2023, 7/2/2023, 9/6/2023, 11/1/2023, 12/6/2023.



**Jan Brewer**  
Executive Director

“Giving back has always been part of Friends, Inc.’s DNA. It is a commitment that shapes our relationships with our patients and could not be done without the support of our community. I am humbled to be part of an organization that ministers to the needs of this often forgotten group of people. I am immensely grateful for the generosity of community groups, faith-based and civic organizations, volunteers, donors, and other non-profit agencies that join hands with us daily. Friends, Inc. has the opportunity to meet the needs of two groups of people: those who want to volunteer to give back to our community and those who need our services. Thank you for your continued support.

May you always have love to share, health to spare, and Friends that care.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Over 3,000 support services were made possible in 2023 by



**83 dedicated, trained, and caring volunteers**

who donated

**20,163 miles**



and



**1,675 hours**

of their time to provide

- Transportation to medical appointments and cancer treatment centers
- Emotional and spiritual support
- Errand assistance
- Respite care for caregivers
- A wheelchair-accessible van
- Resource referrals
- “HappyMail”
- Porch visits
- Phone-a-Friend outreach
- Yard work
- A durable medical equipment lending closet and food pantry

## 2023 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

JAMES E. STARKS, SR

There are several reasons I volunteer. My grandfather taught me to always try and help others when I could. I enjoy meeting people and find joy in knowing that I am providing a service to someone. Our clients have ministered to me through their wisdom and selfless attitudes as they deal with whatever they might be going through. Our patients are thankful for the time that you give them. They keep me from being selfish because when I think I have something to complain about, I think about those who never complain!

I believe that The Lord gave me a servant’s spirit, and I truly enjoy helping others.



# VOLUNTEER SERVICES THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

## Volunteer In-Service

“One in a Melon: Volunteering with Empathy” presented by Brandi Ivey, M. Ed.

Friends, old and new, enjoyed Friends, Inc.’s 25th Anniversary celebration brunch!

## Volunteer Appreciation

## Community Donations

We received Lenten donations from the parishioners at Good Shepherd Catholic Church.

Murphy Homes modeled servant hearts by filling our pantry with non-medical supplies.

## Community Donations

## Volunteer In-Service

“LoveUary” was presented by Brandi Ivey, M.Ed., and gift bags were delivered to more than 100 patients.

## OTHER SERVICE PROJECTS

**Whitesburg Christian Academy** played a crucial role by purchasing items and assembling 110 goody bags for our patients.

**Handsfree Workcamp** demonstrated their dedication by performing yardwork and pressure washing for several patients.

**Eagle Scouts Troop 201** showcased their skills by widening a patient’s doorway for his wheelchair.



## 101 Birthday Celebration

This year, we celebrated Mrs. Ida Mae Shipman’s 101st birthday. Her volunteer, Mrs. Mildred Lancaster, is always by her side as they lift each other’s spirits at their weekly friendly visits.

## Bags of Blessings

Betty and Phil Bentley were among the volunteers who made deliveries to more than 75 patients in November.



## Be a Santa to a Senior

More than 70 patients received gifts from this community project.



## 2023 BIG NEWS: FRIENDS, INC. ACQUIRED A NEW VAN ENABLING OUR VOLUNTEERS TO DO EVEN MORE

Our vans hold immeasurable value to the families they serve. They have become vessels of hope, enabling precious moments and granting access to vital medical care.

In 2023, Friends, Inc. acquired a new 2022 Chrysler Voyager equipped with an FR conversion kit. This van features a lowered floor for easier access, increased headroom, and secure tie-downs for two wheelchairs. It will allow our volunteers to transport two patients at a time, opening doors to new experiences and fostering a greater sense of community.



## AUTUMN EVENING CURBSIDE KEY ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT



Funds raised:  
\$53,657.95

Funds raised:  
\$15,875.04

Funds raised: \$1,343  
TidalWave



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Bentley Automotive Group

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7TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT **NO SHOW GALA**

## SUSTAINER \$10,000 AND ABOVE

James Cecil and Margaret G. Ashburn Foundation Grant

Friend of Friends, Inc.

Tinker Murdock Family Fund

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Griffith

## BENEFACTOR \$2,000 - \$9,999

Mr. and Mrs. Phil Bentley

Bentley Family Fund

Bentley Automotive

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity

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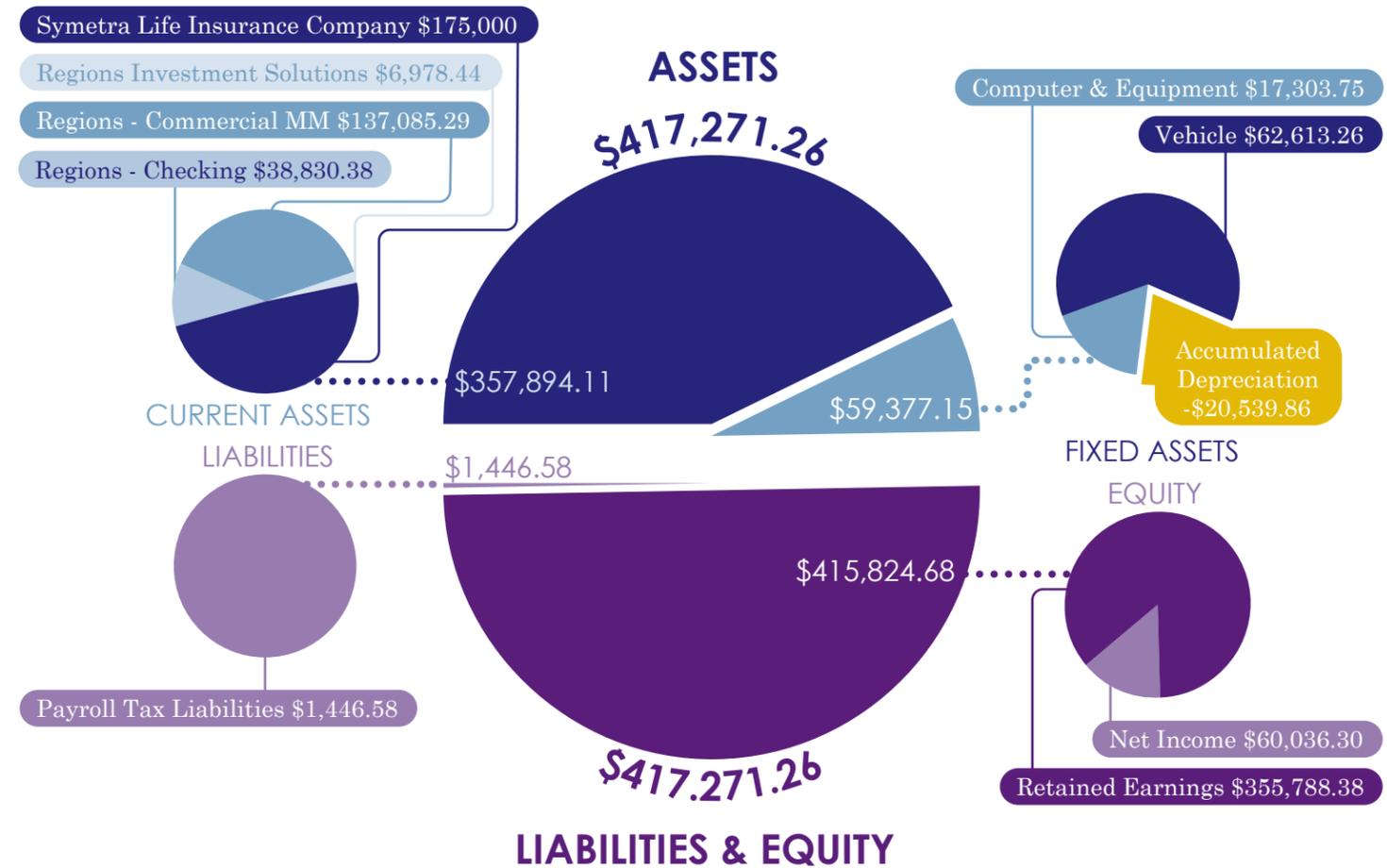
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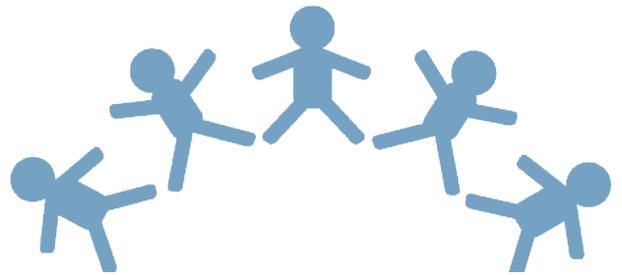


**Friends, Inc.**



*Serving Madison County*

Providing Friends for those in need **Since 1998**



**Friends, Inc.**

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