



# Charting Our Region's Future



**2010 Annual Report**



# Executive Director



## Charting Our Region's Future

In early 2009, our nation embarked on a new journey to save jobs, jumpstart the economy, and build the foundation for long-term economic growth. Following the adoption of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, our organization leaped into action to help our local governments identify and compete for funding to strengthen the economy of Western North Carolina.

In the past eighteen months, Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) has helped acquire more than \$11,000,000 in stimulus funding for projects in our region. These funds helped complete vital transportation projects, put forest producers back to work, and made our public buildings more energy efficient. Working together, our local government leaders helped navigate our region through turbulent waters.

LOSRC is a regional government entity that works with Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties and their municipalities. We offer a forum for local government officials and community leaders to come together to address challenges we face in Western North Carolina. For the past forty-four years, our organization has helped chart a course and remain true to our mission – to foster desirable social, economic, cultural, and ecological conditions in our region.

The 2010 LOSRC Annual Report highlights a few of our programs that have impacted the lives of many citizens in Western North Carolina. We trust it will give better insight into our organization and the spirit of cooperation that exists between our local governments.

We offer this report to our community as an opportunity to review this year's accomplishments and celebrate our successes.

Joe McKinney, Executive Director

# Council

## Executive Committee

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Letta Jean Taylor

### First Vice-Chair

Chuck McGrady

### Second Vice-Chair

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### Secretary

Jason Chappell

### Treasurer

Holly Jones

### At-Large Member

Eddie Fox

### At-Large Member

Bob Davy

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Denise Braine

### Henderson County

Chuck McGrady

Bill Moyer\*

### Madison County

Eddie Fox

Vernon Ponder

### Transylvania County

Jason Chappell

Kelvin Phillips

### City of Asheville

Terry Bellamy

Robin Cape\*

Cecil Bothwell

### Town of Biltmore Forest

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Johnny Norton

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Dona Menella

James Ball

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Darhyl Boone

John Chandler

### Town of Marshall

Luther Nix

Lawrence Ponder

### Town of Montreat

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Jack McCaskill

### Town of Rosman

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### City of Weaverville

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Don Hallingse\*

### Town of Woodfin

Jerry VeHaun

Jason Young

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Jack Roberts\*

### Volunteer Services Representative

Richard Shuttleworth

Carmella Watkins\*

## Economic Development Representatives

### Buncombe County

George Morosani

### Henderson County

Larry Blair

### Madison County

Jerry Plemmons

### Transylvania County

Mark Burrows

## Minority Representatives

### Buncombe County

Janet Bowman

### Madison County

Simone Bouyer

### Transylvania County

Rodney Locks

\*Served part of the Fiscal Year

# WNC Benefits from Economic Recovery Efforts



On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The goal of ARRA was to create and save jobs, jumpstart our economy, and build the foundation for long-term economic growth. The funds were allocated to the following categories:

- State Fiscal Stabilization
- Targeted, Formula Programs
- Direct Allocations to Local Governments
- Grant Allocations to State Agencies

With the assistance of Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC), our region was successful in acquiring more than \$11,000,000 in ARRA funding. The funding has made a significant impact on local and regional projects in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties. Examples of regional and local projects funded by ARRA include the following:

- French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization received more than \$6,000,000 for transportation projects (Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Program Direct Apportionment ARRA Funding)
- LOSRC received more than \$1,800,000 for Carolina Blue Skies and Green Jobs Initiative (US Department of Energy)
- LOSRC received \$660,000 for Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Supplemental (RLF) Grant (US Environmental Protection Agency)
- LOSRC received \$1,900,000 for Forest Producer-related work through the Southern Research Station ARRA Award (US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service)
- City of Asheville received a nationally competitive Local Energy Assurance Planning grant for \$209,000 (US Department of Energy)
- City of Hendersonville received a competitive Main Street Communities award for \$52,200 (NC State Energy Office)
- Madison County, Mars Hill and Marshall received a competitive Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant for \$144,718 (NC State Energy Office)

(For a complete list of LOSRC ARRA-related funding, visit: [www.landofsky.org](http://www.landofsky.org))

LOSRC also participated in the University of North Carolina's *Carolina Economic Recovery Corps* (CERC) during the summer of 2009. CERC sent eight graduate students to work full time with Councils of Government (COGs) across the state concentrating on economic recovery efforts. The CERC provided a strategy to reinforce local governments' capacity to handle ARRA funding applications and compliance through North Carolina's COGs with graduate students trained as ARRA consultants.

The CERC internship program selected Julie Lawhorn, a recent City and Regional Planning graduate, to work with LOSRC on issues related to stimulus funding. Ms. Lawhorn provided outreach, research, and grant-writing assistance to Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties. She also researched eligibility, compliance, and reporting concerns for staff and member governments.

Many of our local governments were challenged to keep up with the fast-moving stream of state and federal ARRA funding opportunities and the overwhelming amount of information from many decentralized sources. Ms. Lawhorn provided the staff capacity to distill and synthesize information on current opportunities and prepare local governments for future opportunities. Local leaders received regular communication about ARRA through weekly bulletins, workshops, individualized grant assistance, and one-on-one meetings. In January 2010, Ms. Lawhorn was hired as a staff member at LOSRC, allowing her to be a long-term resource to our member governments as they navigate through stimulus funding requirements.

ARRA funding has thus provided multiple new projects and employment opportunities for our local communities. These projects will continue to help stabilize the region's economy for years to come.

## Nutrition Programs

ARRA-funded nutrition programs helped the providers of congregate meals services and home delivered meal services provide for older adults in our region. The match required by the federal government was 15%. The state graciously provided 5% of the match and the providers of the services were asked to provide the remaining 10%. The funding was used to provide nutritious meals to older adults and/or supplement employment costs for providers.

Funds received in our region include:

Buncombe County	\$78,000
Henderson County	\$42,000
Madison County	\$10,000
Transylvania County	\$14,000

## SCSEP

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Title V received stimulus funds during 2009-10 for additional participants in our program. These funds were used to place participants in Community Service slots with host agencies in areas where they would be able to meet some of the green job criteria laid out by the Labor Department. These included teaching, landscaping work, providing service to ease some of the load on the American Red Cross, etc.

Funds received in our region include:

Buncombe County	\$33,447.50
Henderson County	\$ 6,689.50
Madison County	\$ 6,689.50
Transylvania County	\$ 6,689.50

Number of participants in the program: 9 (8 of them have moved into the 2010-11 grant year, one voluntarily left early in the program.)







Above: George Tregay surveying Asheville High School



Below: Student volunteers dig lines for septic systems



# Partnership Enables Student Volunteers to Assist Homeowners in Need

Since 2006, Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) has coordinated a partnership that brings student volunteers to our region to help repair and replace failing septic systems and eliminate straight pipe discharge in Madison, Buncombe and Henderson Counties. This partnership has enabled repairs of 6-8 houses each summer at a fraction of the typical costs. Over the years, the volunteers have installed more than 25 systems with a savings of approximately \$65,000.

Volunteers, the most important link of the partnership, are typically junior high and high school age students who live as far away as Iowa and Oregon. These young adults give up a portion of their summer vacation to provide the labor for the septic repairs and often make other needed repairs at the client's houses.

Interagency cooperation provides the necessary resources for the implementation of this project. ReCreation Experiences and Emmanuel Lutheran Church provide room and board for the volunteers. The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina supplements the income of a registered Environmental Health Specialist from the North Carolina Rural Communities Assistance Project (NRCRAP) who oversees the project. LOSRC supplies the materials for the repairs through a program funded by the North Carolina Department of Environmental and Natural Resources' (NCDENR) Wastewater Discharge Elimination (WaDE) Program.

# Local Government Services

The Local Government Services Department provides an array of planning, development, grant writing, facilitation and project management services to our member local governments. They also coordinate and manage regional economic, community development, and environmental projects.

### Specialities:

**Growth Management** - land use, water quality/quantity, working lands, cultural and historic sites, conservation, waste/recycling.

**Transportation** - urban and rural, transit, bike and pedestrian, greenways, roads, rail, air quality.

**Housing** - rehabilitation, affordable, green built.

**Brownfields** - assessment, cleanup, redevelopment.

### Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

**Waste Reduction Partners** - industrial, institutional and commercial waste reduction, energy efficiency.

# Land-of-Sky Regional Council Takes the Helm in Two States

In March of 2010, 550 people attended *Recycling Means Business*, the Carolina Recycling Association's (CRA) 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, held at Asheville's Grove Park Inn. Staff at Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) were instrumental in planning the event. As President of CRA, LOSRC Regional Planner Holly Bullman served as the primary conference coordinator, while Director of Local Government Services Ron Townley coordinated a special track to showcase this green industry to key decision makers in the region.

CRA welcomed public and private sector recycling industry representatives from across the country to discuss the positive impact recycling makes on our economy, our communities and the environment. Despite the financial downturn, the conference boasted the highest number of attendees and revenue in the organization's history.

*Recycling Means Business* was a success largely due to its focus on the economic impact of recycling. The conference demonstrated how North and South Carolina can explore collective efforts to create jobs and accelerate growth in the recycling industry.

With LOSRC's assistance, the CRA conference was instrumental in helping our region's leadership understand the role recycling plays in job creation and economic prosperity.

## A Penny for Recycling, An Award for Madison County

In Madison County, pennies add up for the local school system. Thanks to the “Penny a Pound” program created by the county’s solid waste department, local schools now benefit from the community’s recycling efforts. Through the creation of this innovative program, Madison County was awarded the 2009 “Outstanding Local Government Program” by the Carolina Recycling Association.

Madison County currently utilizes a private contractor to dispose of its waste in an out-of-state landfill. However, the county can save up to \$75 per ton of its disposal costs by recycling, thus creating a strong economic incentive to recycle. Realizing that community outreach alone was not enough, Madison County Solid Waste Department developed the “Penny a Pound” program, which donates one penny to the local school system for every pound of mixed paper and cardboard recycled within the county.

Since its creation in 2008, the “Penny a Pound” program has donated approximately \$24,000 to the county’s six schools. The funds are being used to offset the costs of extracurricular activities such as field trips and other supplemental educational experiences.

The “Penny a Pound” program is clearly an award-winning program. Not only do Madison County’s students benefit, but waste disposal costs are lower, recycling rates are higher, and the environment is cleaner.

Pictured top left: Madison County’s Solid Waste Department, County Manager and Superintendent receive the Carolina Recycling Association’s “Outstanding Local Government Program” Award from CRA’s President Holly Bullman, Regional Planner of Land-of-Sky Regional Council

## National Design Competition Offers Students Real World Experience

In the fall of 2009, Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) conducted a student design competition to create ideas for an environmentally-sound, mixed-use space in Asheville’s River Arts District. Funded by a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), college students submitted redevelopment plans to revitalize an abandoned, industrial site into a space where people can work, play and live. As part of the process, students were invited to tour the 13-acre site and meet with experts to discuss environmental challenges on the site.

The competition, titled “Recycle This Site,” attracted 70 submissions by more than 200 students from N.C. State University, UNC Charlotte, Clemson University, Virginia Tech, West Virginia University, and the Universities of Virginia and Arizona. A panel of community leaders selected “Succession, Recycling and Community Expression” by Kyle Stauffer of West Virginia University as the winning entry.

Through this project, LOSRC facilitated regional collaboration among several partners including EPA, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), the City of Asheville, the property owner and developer, and environmental consulting firms. As a result, this project received a 2010 National Innovative Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

The concept of a collegiate design competition can be replicated to bring fresh, exciting perspectives to development projects. Students gain practical, hands-on project experience while developers benefit from their input and cutting edge ideas.

A documentary of the competition is available online at [www.recyclethissite.org](http://www.recyclethissite.org). In addition, a companion PowerPoint presentation offers multiple design slides for use by planners and local officials.

L-R: Kate O’Hara and Tracy Wahl by the Recycle This Site display at the 2010 NADO Conference



## A New Resource for Building in the WNC Mountains

In 2009, Land-of-Sky Regional Council staff and the Mountain Ridge and Steep Slope Protection Advisory Committee members helped create a new Web site to use as a resource for land developers. This new site ([www.buildinginwnc.com](http://www.buildinginwnc.com)) contains information pertinent to land use in the Western North Carolina mountains, especially on ridges and steep slopes, which present topographical challenges.

The Web site was developed in response to recommendations identified in the Mountain Ridge and Steep Slope Protection Strategies (MRSSPS) final report. This site provides links to resources such as planning and permitting offices and information, and GIS data on landslides, parcels, topography and floodplains. Specific issues addressed on the Web site include:

- Public safety – including landslides and emergency response/access;
- Public health – including water supply and wastewater treatment;
- Water quality and quantity – impacts from increased soil erosion and storm water runoff and the resulting impacts on fish and other aquatic organisms;
- Best management practices and improvements to the development review process;
- The loss of natural areas – including forestland and wildlife habitat – and the role of land conservation; and
- Economic impacts – positive and negative impacts of both development and protection programs.

The site also provides information for various certifications through other area organizations. Funding for the project was provided by both the Pigeon River Fund and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

## Local Officials Race on the French Broad River

For more than 25 years, Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) has organized and hosted the Mayors' Cup Raft Race. The race is held annually in Buncombe County and highlights the importance of the French Broad River to the LOSRC region.

The French Broad River begins near the Town of Rosman and flows through Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties. In addition to being a natural and cultural resource, the river adds recreational and economic value to our region. Over the past few decades, many projects have led to improved water quality and better public access. While encouraging good natured competition, the Mayors' Cup Raft Race also showcases these improvements to community leaders.

Raft race teams are made up of elected officials and municipal and county personnel. Crews assemble near Carrier Park on the banks of the river and race to the finish line at French Broad River Park. The winning team receives a trophy and enjoys bragging rights for a year.

Over the years, the race has been emceed by various radio and television personalities from around the region who have enjoyed presenting the coveted first-place trophy. In recent years, Pepsi® has sponsored the event. LOSRC welcomes the public to attend the event, and encourages all to come and cheer their team to victory.

## Mountain Resources Commission Supports Quality Growth

During the 2009 legislative session, the General Assembly established the Mountain Resources Commission (MRC) to “encourage quality growth and development while preserving the natural resources, open spaces, and farmland of the mountain region of Western North Carolina.” Introduced by state Senator Joe Sam Queen, this legislation will provide recommendations for local, state and federal entities regarding protection of WNC’s natural and cultural resources. Governor Beverly Perdue signed the bill into law on August 26, 2009.

The MRC is comprised of residents of the mountain counties representing a broad range of interests including local government, Councils of Government, the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, the North Carolina National Parks, the Parkways and Forests Development Council, the tourism industry, and the land trust community. Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) is represented on the MRC by its First Vice-Chairman Chuck McGrady, Board member Rodney Locks, and former Executive Director Bob Shepherd. Buncombe County Chairman David Gantt, a former LOSRC Board member, also serves as MRC Chairman.

The Commission’s intent is to give WNC a unified voice at both the state and national levels and seek state and federal funds to support the region’s most needed priorities. The MRC will coordinate multiple, ongoing local efforts to conserve water quality, wildlife habitat, native forests, scenic beauty and other natural resources.





# WRP Performs Energy-Efficiency Assessments of Asheville City Schools

In 2010, Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) program completed an extensive energy survey of the Asheville City School system. Working with school maintenance personnel, four WRP volunteer consultants performed energy assessments at nine school campuses, as well as the Central Office. More than one million square feet of building space was included. This effort was funded through a partnership between Asheville City Schools and Progress Energy Carolina's Business Energy Program.

Key performance indicators for energy use revealed Asheville Schools compared favorably with other school systems in the Environmental Protection Agency's Region 4, which includes eight states in the Southeast. However, there was also opportunity to achieve significant additional energy savings.

The assessment team identified energy and water conservation practices with potential savings of \$259,000. Key energy-saving initiatives include turning off specific equipment after hours, as well as updating lighting, HVAC systems, and plumbing fixtures. WRP also assisted in writing a Strategic Energy Plan (SEP) that was adopted by the school system. The SEP provides guidance for energy management and project implementation throughout the school system.

WRP staff also assisted the Asheville City School System in preparing a successful proposal for funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The \$200,000 grant, along with Progress Energy's Business incentives, will fund many of the school projects recommended by WRP.

# Transportation Staff Facilitates New Project Selection Process

For the past 18 months, staff at Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) has worked closely with partners to shift transportation decision-making to more data-driven methods. Due to limited funds and growing maintenance needs, planning partners at the local, state, and federal levels must collaborate to better prioritize transportation improvement projects.

Shortly after taking office, Governor Beverly Perdue issued Executive Order 2 requiring transportation decision-making to be more data-driven. As a result, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) and the Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) member governments, in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), have been participating in a process to evaluate and rank proposed projects in our region.

Last fall, LOSRC transportation staff facilitated the development of revised local prioritized project lists and gathered data for all identified projects in the region for submission to NCDOT for evaluation. Once the data was analyzed, meetings were held throughout the state to release the results and invite feedback. The results of the prioritization process will be used to develop the new draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The goal is to create a STIP that is more realistic so that the public can be better informed about which projects will be completed and when.

In the future, the FBRMPO and LOSRPO will continue to rely upon data as an important tool in transportation decision-making. Interagency cooperation is critical for effective analysis and utilization of data, sound planning and responsible use of limited transportation funds.



Above: The Town of Montreat arrives first at the finish line during the 2009 Mayor's Cup Raft Race

Right: [www.buildinginwnc.com](http://www.buildinginwnc.com) home page

Below: A variety of transportation projects, including bike lanes, were evaluated by the MPO and RPO during project prioritization.



## Land-of-Sky RPO Is Recognized for Outstanding Performance

In 2009, the Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) was recognized by the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for exhibiting exemplary performance. LOSRPO assists Buncombe, Haywood, Madison, and Transylvania counties with rural transportation needs.

Recently the state's 20 Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) were evaluated by the Transportation Planning Branch of the NCDOT. Multiple agencies and local elected officials participated in surveys to provide feedback regarding RPO performance. LOSRPO was one of six RPOs to receive the state's highest ranking.

Evaluation benchmarks included an examination of efficiency, ability to interact with the public effectively and successfully identifying local transportation needs. As part of the report, several of LOSRPO's best practices were shared with other RPOs in the state to help improve their performance.

Survey results were also used by NCDOT staff to look for ways to improve the RPO program. This new method of evaluating RPOs included a comprehensive approach and utilizing feedback from all governments and agencies involved in the rural transportation process in the State of North Carolina. The RPO Association used the survey to develop future rural transportation planning goals, while the LOSRPO used the feedback to identify areas for improvement in current services offered, as well as new transportation projects and programs to pursue in the coming years.

The state's RPO Association, comprised of rural transportation representatives from across the state, is co-chaired by Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Senior Transportation Planner Carrie Runser-Turner. The Association will use the survey results to organize teams to work with under-performing RPOs.

## A Tribute to Tom McCullough

On April 16, 2010, a tragic automobile accident claimed the life of one of Land-of-Sky Regional Council's (LOSRC) key volunteers, Thomas "Tom" McCullough. The accident occurred only a few miles from his Hendersonville home. Tom served as Waste Reduction Partner's (WRP) Solid Waste Manager for 13 years, coordinating all solid waste disposal and recycling efforts, as well as managing his team of assessors. Although Tom was only a part-time volunteer, he was so devoted to the cause that he invariably worked nearly 40 hours per week. Tom was a native of Henderson County and deeply believed in assisting and giving back to our mountain communities.

An avid sports fan, Tom loved basketball and golf. Tom was a star basketball player at Hendersonville High School and Clemson Agricultural College. Tom led the Hendersonville High team to two state titles – in 1948 (their first) and in 1949. At Clemson, Tom received the Blue Key Award, honoring him as the most outstanding basketball player. He also held the rebounding record at Clemson – a record that stood for 33 years. He later continued his love for basketball by playing in the South Carolina Basketball Textile League.

Tom graduated from Clemson with a Bachelor of Science degree in Textile Engineering. Over the course of his textile career, he was employed by Milliken Industries, Burlington Industries, and Texfi Industries. Tom also enjoyed a 10-year military career, serving in the United States Army as a first lieutenant. During his retirement years, as WRP Solid Waste Manager, Tom and his team assisted hundreds of businesses and organizations in diverting more than 192,000 tons of waste from landfills.

The WRP staff and volunteers, along with the entire LOSRC staff, were privileged to have known and worked with Tom – **a gentleman and good friend.**





- LOSRC assisted the Natural Capital Investment Fund (NCIF), a Community Development Financial Institution, in their application for **\$5 million** for a revolving loan fund for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the 29 ARC counties of WNC.
- Region B service providers received **\$104,500** from the Family Caregiver Support Program. These funds were used to provide respite and case assistance for 165 families.
- FBRMPO staff updated a regional 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The time horizon for the updated plan is 2010-2035. The plan includes an updated Congestion Management Process. The scope of the plan included numerous transportation modes and provided policy recommendations on issues such as safety and the effects of climate change on the regional transportation system.
- LOSRC staff submitted and received an EPA Climate Showcase Communities grant for **\$499,500** to work with public schools in Buncombe County on energy efficiency projects. Funding will primarily pay for facilities upgrades/retrofits and for student projects that demonstrate greenhouse gas reductions. Staff began working on this project in April and it will run through December 2011.
- Family Caregiver Support Program provided **\$24,000** to Project C.A.R.E. (Caregivers Alternatives to Running on Empty) and **\$10,000** to the Senior Companion Program to provide case assistance and respite for caregivers in all Region B counties with priority given to caregivers with the greatest need regardless of county of residence. 20 caregivers were served.
- Family Caregiver Resource Specialist assisted 149 people who requested information, assistance, and problem solving.
- Educating students and teachers about recycling and solid waste management issues, the Mobile Environmental Learning Center visited 11 schools, trained 80 teachers and educated 2140 students and members of the public throughout our region.
- AAA staff facilitated Community Resource Connections (CRC) Partnership Trainings in the four counties with 40 – 60 attending each. CRC is a system where consumers can access long-term care services and support through a “uniform portal of entry.” The target date for launching the CRC in the region is January 2011.
- LOSRC wrote two grants for the Town of Mars Hill and the Madison County School System for the State Energy Office’s Renewable Energy Project grant. The project was for photovoltaic panels and solar hot water systems on a renovated library. The combined requested amount was **\$178,000**.

The French Broad River begins near the Town of Rosman and flows north through Transylvania, Henderson, Buncombe and Madison Counties, which is also known as Region B.



- LOSRC’s AAA, RSVP, the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services and the NC Attorney General’s Office hosted the Victims Assistance Program (VAP) Volunteer Training. The VAP utilizes the skills and availability of trained senior volunteers to assist the special detectives in the State Attorney General’s Office to provide follow-up with community seniors who have been victims of financial crime. 18 volunteers participated in the training.
- LOSRC assisted the City of Asheville in receiving **\$209,000** in funding from the U.S. Department of Energy for a Local Energy Assurance Planning grant. This funding will help the region in coordinating strategies to off-set fuel shortages.
- LOSRC continued the two-year planning and business development project entitled, Planning and Entrepreneurship for a Clean Energy Future: Strategic Regional Planning and Business Development Project for Region B, NC (2008-2010) by providing direct assistance to an array of clean energy businesses, including permit assistance for project installation; referrals to grantors and lenders; operational energy efficiency audits; training; grant writing for customer financing; helping companies bid upon ARRA-funded clean energy and alternative fuels projects; energy marketplace consultations; public education; and showcasing their products and services.
- The Living Healthy program served more than 100 people in the region, supporting those with chronic conditions. LOSRC staff conducted eight workshops and trained ten new leaders.
- Land-of-Sky staff provided assistance to five school systems’ recycling programs throughout the region, which are estimated to divert over 725 tons of recyclable material a school year.

- The AAA, Buncombe County Sheriff's Office and Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium hosted a Financial Fraud, Scam and Exploitation Summit. The program was designed to raise awareness for banking and other business and community professionals about issues relating to financial exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities. Over 60 community professionals attended the summit.
- LOSRC and WRP provided technical assistance, energy audits, and grant writing assistance to the Downtown Hendersonville Inc. and the Heart of Brevard for a funding request of over **\$400,000** to the State Energy Office's Main Street Energy Grant for energy efficiency upgrades to downtown buildings. The Hendersonville project was funded for lighting upgrades and other energy efficiency retrofits in the amount of **\$52,200** in January 2010.
- AAA hosted the Governor's Policy Roundtable on "Building a Livable and Senior Friendly North Carolina" for Regions A, B and C. More than 100 community leaders participated in the roundtable topic: Access and Choice in Services and Supports.
- Six separate roundtables were held across the State and issues identified will be presented at the Governor's Conference on Aging in October 2010.
- Local Government Services staff administered the NCDENR Wastewater Discharge Elimination Septic Repair Program. The program spent **\$38,708** in repairing eleven failing septic systems in Buncombe County, Madison County and Transylvania County.
- AAA sponsored Dr. Bill Thomas, an international authority on geriatric medicine and eldercare, as one of the key speakers for the 2010 Mountain Green: Sustainable Communities Conference held at Warren Wilson College.
- Active Aging Week in 2009 successfully offered over 80 FREE wellness programs to older adults across the region to over 200 participants. Land-of-Sky Regional Council coordinated this week-long event with 25 private and public organizations including hospitals, health departments, Councils on Aging, gyms, senior centers and more.
- FBRMPO staff created a Citizen Advisory Committee that seeks to generate increased public involvement through the long-range transportation planning process. Membership is comprised of citizens representing Buncombe, Haywood and Henderson counties.
- LOSRC was awarded a **\$1.974 million** ARRA grant from the USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station to implement the Western North Carolina Forest Products Cooperative Marketing Project. The project is funding 15 local businesses or nonprofits that are anticipated to hire 140 people to work across the region.
- LOSRC received funding for projects that fulfill the Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Tier 1 Strategic Initiative entitled "Clean Energy Planning and Entrepreneurship." In accordance with the overarching theme of "Regional Coordination" for the 2007-2012 CEDS, LOSRC assembled a partnership with AdvantageWest and the five western NC Councils of Government (Regions A, C, D, E & I) to design and implement the 31-county project entitled, Building the Clean Energy Economy in Western North Carolina.
- The ten-week UNC-CH Carolina Economic Recovery Corps (CERC) program placed one full-time intern at LOSRC to assist local governments access opportunities offered by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The LOSRC intern provided services to local governments by summarizing, researching and interpreting guidance for ARRA grant applications, and consulting with local governments on the feasibility of applications, in addition to writing grant proposals.
- WRP and LOSRC staff held a workshop on short and long-term energy planning with a focus on "next steps" for ARRA funding.
- LOSRC staff provided technical assistance to greenways planners and committees in Buncombe County, McDowell County, Transylvania County and Asheville.
- The Clean Energy Business Survey for Western NC (2010) concluded on June 15, 2010 and returned valuable data from over 80 respondents. The survey provided insight on the size, location, and challenges faced by clean energy businesses in our region. Respondents to this survey self-identified their business by business focus (i.e., renewable energy) and business type (i.e., manufacturing).

Buncombe County Courthouse



Henderson County Courthouse





- In March 2010, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced a **\$499,500** grant award to the Land-of-Sky Regional Council to help Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools and the county's three charter schools invest in energy savings projects and establish school green teams. The award is an EPA Climate Showcase Communities Grant which is one of 25 projects funded across the nation to demonstrate innovative community-based projects that can achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions.

- In December 2009, WRP was awarded a grant from the State Energy Office in order to be considered one of the 37 approved contractors for technical assistance to local governments.

- LGS managed the Council's regional planning project for conservation and development, Linking Lands and Communities in the Land-of-Sky Region. Funders include The Community Foundation of WNC, the Blue Ridge National Heritage area, the Federal Highway Administration, RENCI, Lyndhurst Foundation, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Accomplishments include:

- Completed resource assessments for wildlife habitat and biodiversity, agriculture and water quality.
- Gave project presentations to over 700 people and held open houses across the region to share project information, assessments and gather feedback.
- Developed a green infrastructure network for the region – led by project partners with input from developers, planners, scientists and others.
- Completed final maps, datasets and documentation.

- LOSRC staff helped organize the annual Strive Not to Drive event. The region had a successful "Mayor's Leadership Ride" with about 30 community leaders and elected officials on a 2-mile ride in central Asheville. Other events included 25 cent Transit Day, bike valet parking for the Downtown After Five events and an award ceremony.

- Area Agency on Aging secured **\$5,795** in funding from Duke Energy and Progress Energy which provided 112 fans and 30 air conditioners to older adults in need through the Fan/Heat Relief Program. These fans were distributed by the Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Inc., Henderson County Council on Aging, Madison County Department of Community Services, and Western Carolina Community Action - Brevard.

- LOSRC transportation staff facilitated the allocation of over **\$99,000** in Job Access Reverse Commute funding provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through a competitive RFP process. Funds were used to support a City of Asheville transit-oriented pedestrian signal project.



Madison County Courthouse



Transylvania County Courthouse

- The Living Healthy program served more than 100 people in the region, supporting those with chronic conditions. LOSRC staff conducted eight workshops and trained ten new leaders.
- LOSRC staff organized and hosted quarterly meetings for planners to foster information-sharing and professional development.

## What is a Regional Council?

A Regional Council is a multi-county planning and development agency serving different areas of the state. Membership in these councils is voluntary. In North Carolina, 17 councils serve regions that share similar economic, physical and social characteristics. Regional councils have been operating in the state since 1972 although many were organized long before the official designation. Their function is to aid, assist and improve the capabilities of local governments in administration, planning, fiscal management and development.

Regional councils in North Carolina are the result of the 1969 legislation that charged the Department of Administration with developing "...a system of multi-county regional planning districts to cover the entire state" (GS 143-341). The year before, Congress passed the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act calling for closer cooperation between federal programs and state and local governments.

Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) began in 1966 and serves Region B, which includes the counties of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. LOSRC's is made up of chief elected officials - mayors and county commission chairpersons and alternates - from member governments, one private representative of economic development interests in each county and two at-large members.

# Buncombe County



- The Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Inc received **\$25,000** to provide case assistance and respite for caregivers in Buncombe County. 53 caregivers received case assistance and 33 received respite.
- Buncombe County Life filmed a 30-minute segment on recycling in Buncombe County. This program featured Land-of-Sky staff demonstrating proper recycling methods.
- RSVP saved the County more than **\$414,122** with 199 volunteers giving over 19,862 hours to local government and non-profit agencies.
- Senior Companion Program saved Buncombe County more than **\$988,540**. 43 Senior Companion volunteers served over 47,406 hours to assist older adults with one-on-one care in their homes, to assist in Adult Day Care Centers and to provide respite to family caregivers.
- Foster Grandparent Program saved the County more than **\$1,441,652**. 80 Foster Grandparent volunteers served over 69,144 hours to assist special needs or at-risk children achieve their short and long-term goals.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program provided job search training and part-time employment worth **\$136,238** to 31 older adults placed in 14 organizations. Five participants were placed into unsubsidized employment.
- Regional Brownfields Initiative (RBI) assisted nine potential site owners with Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments.
- Waste Reduction Partners engineers provided on-site waste and energy reduction assessments of 55 schools, businesses, and non-profits in Buncombe County. WRP engineers identified **\$577,000** in annual utility costs savings opportunities through improved management of energy and water usage and solid waste reduction strategies.
- Regional Ombudsmen provided 810 hours in response to 134 complaints or concerns regarding long-term care, responded to 444 technical assistance calls and provided 47 education/training sessions. 36 Community Advisory Committee volunteers contributed 974 hours and made 144 visits to long-term care facilities. These volunteers provided a financial value of **\$19,724** in services to the county.
- Home and Community Care Block Grant and County funds provided **\$1,984,806** in funding for 15 different services that helped support over 1,900 older adults living independently in their homes. Through this funding, 474 older adults were given nutritional meals, 42 participated in Adult Day programs, 342 received in-home health care and home repair services, and 1,071 received transportation services. (Includes ARRA funding)

# Henderson County



- Senior Community Service Employment Program provided job search training and part-time employment worth **\$31,414** to six older adults placed in three organizations.
- Home and Community Care Block Grant provided **\$728,112** in funding for 14 different services that helped support over 800 older adults living independently in their homes. Through this funding, 558 older adults were given nutritional meals, 30 participated in Adult Day programs, 136 received in-home health care and home repair services and 138 received transportation services.
- Foster Grandparent Program saved the County more than \$110,000. Five Foster Grandparent volunteers served 5318 hours to assist special needs or at-risk children achieve their short-term and long-term goals.
- Regional Ombudsmen provided 229 hours in response to 58 complaints or concerns regarding long-term care, responded to 331 technical assistance calls and provided nine education / training sessions. 22 Community Advisory Committee volunteers contributed 1,113 hours and made 109 visits to long-term care facilities. These volunteers provided a financial value of **\$22,538** in services to the county.
- Waste Reduction Partners worked with 22 businesses, industries and non-profits in Henderson County to identify **\$17,200** in annual energy utility cost savings and solid waste reduction opportunities of over 860,000 pounds. Energy savings effects would reduce greenhouse gas emission equivalent to 56 vehicles.
- RSVP saved the County more **\$368,750** with 201 volunteers giving 17,686 hours to local government and non-profit agencies.
- The Family Caregiver Support Program provided **\$21,000** for case assistance and respite in Henderson County. Contracts for these services were awarded to the Henderson County Council on Aging, Mountain Home Care and Pardee Pavilion. 12 caregivers received case assistance and 11 received respite.
- The Senior Companion Program saved Henderson County more than \$145,428. Thirteen Senior Companion volunteers served 6975 hours to assist older adults with one-on-one care in their homes, to assist in Adult Day Care Centers, and to provide respite to family caregivers.





# Madison County

- Senior Companion Program saved Madison County more than **\$288,063**. Thirteen Senior Companion volunteers served 13,816 hours to assist older adults with one-on-one care in their homes, gave respite to family caregivers, and assist at congregate meal sites.
- Home and Community Care Block Grant provided **\$241,240** in funding for nine different services that helped support over 600 older adults living independently in their homes. Through this funding, 365 older adults were given nutritional meals, 45 received in-home health care and home repair services and 249 received transportation services.
- Foster Grandparent Program saved the County more than **\$4,170**. One Foster Grandparent volunteer served over 200 hours to assist special needs or at-risk children achieve their short and long-term goals.
- LOSRC staff worked with Madison County Solid Waste Department to revise the County's Solid Waste Management Plan. Federal grant resources were leveraged to save the county an estimated **\$3,500** to provide this service that may have otherwise been spent using a private contractor.
- Land-of-Sky staff and Waste Reduction Partners assisted Mars Hill and Marshall in securing **\$144,718** for energy-efficiency projects.
- The Madison County Department of Community Services received **\$8,500** for caregiver respite. Ten caregivers received respite.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program provided job search training and part-time employment worth **\$18,950** to four older adults placed in three organizations. One participant was placed into unsubsidized employment.
- Regional Ombudsmen provided 46 hours in response to 14 complaints or concerns regarding long-term care, and responded to 62 technical assistance calls. Ten Community Advisory Committee volunteers contributed 74 hours and made 14 visits to long-term care facilities. These volunteers provided a financial value of **\$1,499** in services to the county.
- RSVP saved the County more than **\$22,000** with 17 volunteers giving over 1,050 hours to local government and non-profit agencies.
- Waste Reduction Partners conducted energy efficiency assessments at six local government facilities in Madison County recommending **\$17,300** in annual utility savings. LOSRC staff helped Madison County apply and acquire an energy project implementation grant for **\$102,774** for projects with the Town of Mars Hill, Town of Marshall, and Madison County.



# Transylvania County

- Transylvania Regional Hospital Home Care received **\$16,000** to be used for both in-home respite and adult day respite at KOALA. 13 caregivers were served.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program provided job search training and part-time employment worth **\$19,255** to three older adults placed in three organizations.
- Home and Community Care Block Grant provided **\$291,101** in funding for 12 different services that helped support over 300 older adults living independently in their homes. Through this funding, 194 older adults were given nutritional meals, 25 participated in Adult Day programs, 115 received in-home health care and home repair services and 65 received transportation services.
- Regional Ombudsmen provided 44 hours in response to ten complaints or concerns regarding long-term care, responded to 28 technical assistance calls and provided five education / training sessions. Eight Community Advisory Committee volunteers contributed 33 hours and made three visits to long-term care facilities. These volunteers provided a financial value of **\$668** in services to the county.
- Waste Reduction Partner worked with nine businesses, non-profits and government facilities to conduct energy efficiency and solid waste reduction assessments. **\$24,600** in annual utility saving were identified, which would result in the reduction of solid waste generation by 584,000 pounds and save over 781 MMBTUs of energy (equivalent to the greenhouse gases of 50 vehicles)
- RSVP saved the County more than **\$134,000** with 94 volunteers giving over 6,438 hours to local government and non-profit agencies.
- Foster Grandparent Program saved the County more than **\$29,000**. Two Foster Grandparent volunteers served over 1410 hours to assist special needs or at-risk children achieve their short-term and long-term goals.
- The Senior Companion Program saved Transylvania County more than **\$167,000**. Eight Senior Companion volunteers served over 8000 hours to assist older adults with one-on-one care in their homes, to provide assistance at KOALA Adult Day Care, and respite to family caregivers.



Pat Hilgendorf talks with the Guided Autobiography participants

## LOSRC's Assistance Ensures Smooth Project C.A.R.E. Transition

In 2009, Land-of-Sky Regional Council assisted the N.C. Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) by accepting program administration for Project C.A.R.E. during its transition to a new host organization. Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) is a statewide program offering critical respite care, family consultation and linkage to community resources to family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

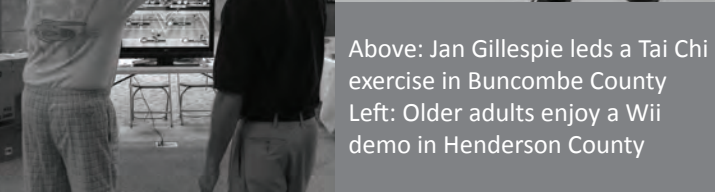
After eight years of working through the Alzheimer's Association - Western Carolina Chapter, DAAS transitioned the program to a new organizational structure to help facilitate its continued development. During this transition, Pisgah Valley Retirement Community generously provided temporary office space for the program's employees. Effective July 2010, Park Ridge Health was selected as the permanent home of Project C.A.R.E.

"We undertook this transition to create a firm foundation on which to facilitate a move from local and regional success toward statewide expansion of Project C.A.R.E.," said Dennis Streets, Director of DAAS. "We are grateful to the Western Carolina Chapter for playing an integral role in the inception of the program and for serving as a host agency for the past 8-1/2 years."

The nationally-acclaimed program began in July 2001 in Western and Piedmont North Carolina through a federal Alzheimer's demonstration grant received from the U.S. Administration on Aging. In July 2008, the General Assembly added state funding to sustain and help grow the program. Project C.A.R.E. is now being offered in 21 counties across the state with a goal of eventually serving families statewide. The program especially strives to reach low-income rural and minority families.

The growth in Project C.A.R.E. can also be attributed to the efforts of Charles Dickens who organized forums across the state in support of expanding Project C.A.R.E. Charles was the Speaker for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature and is the Buncombe County Delegate.

Streets added, "We want to especially thank the Land-of-Sky Regional Council and Dr. Dickens for their efforts to support the continued success of Project C.A.R.E."



Above: Jan Gillespie leads a Tai Chi exercise in Buncombe County  
Left: Older adults enjoy a Wii demo in Henderson County

## Area Agency on Aging

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) helps to determine the needs of older adults and works with counties to plan services to meet those needs. The goal of providing these services is to enable older adults to live independently in their own homes.

### Programs and Services:

**Health Promotion and Disease Prevention** - Develops and supports evidence-based health promotion programs.

**Family Caregiver Support Program** - Provides information and support for family caregivers.

**Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** - Protects residents' rights and advocates to improve the quality of care for people in nursing and adult care homes.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program** - Job-training and employment program for older adults.

**Technical Assistance** - Provides support to agencies and persons responding to the needs of older adults.

**Senior Tar Heel Legislature** - Trains and coordinates representatives from the region.



Project C.A.R.E. Staff L-R: Len Erker, Heidi Kimsey, Kether Abeles and Tricia Adell



## Active Aging Week Promotes Healthy Lifestyles for Older Adults

In September of each year, Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) provides local flavor to the international initiative of Active Aging Week by coordinating with regional physical activity providers to offer free programs to seniors. During this week, older adults have the opportunity to sample new physical and educational activities such as Yoga, exercise classes, and health and wellness programs.

In 2009, the AAA coordinated two events as part of Active Aging Week - Fall Prevention Awareness and YMCA America on the Move. Fall Prevention Awareness addresses the risk of falls and fall-related injuries among older adults while YMCA America On the Move is a nationwide event to inspire individuals and families to incorporate healthy activities into their daily routines. The collaboration of the three events generated participation from over 50 regional organizations and over 300 participants.

Physical activity helps us stay strong and healthy longer; it improves our mental attitude and physical experience. Active Aging Week is one of the many ways that Land-of-Sky Regional Council cultivates a healthy community.

## Task Force Tackles Mixed Populations in Adult Care Homes

Did you know that North Carolina's licensed adult care homes can admit anyone 18 or older who is unable to live independently? The Land-of-Sky region has one of the largest number of adult care homes in North Carolina with facility sizes ranging from five to 99 beds. Under current state regulations, homes can admit the elderly (55 or over), younger disabled adults, or individuals with mental illness. Unfortunately, staff at many of these homes are not trained to address the needs of individuals when the population is mixed. Imagine what happens when younger adults with mental illness and behavioral issues co-exist with frail elderly adults with Alzheimer's.

Similar real-life situations are coming to the attention of our local and state elected officials thanks in large part to the advocacy of the Long Term Care Ombudsmen. As a result, the General Assembly requested the N.C. Institute of Medicine convene a task force to study "short- and long-term strategies to address [these] issues...". A report with recommendations and suggested legislation is due to the 2011 General Assembly upon convening.

Land-of-Sky Regional Council's (LOSRC) Lead Long Term Care Ombudsman Barbara Hinshaw and Buncombe County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee's (CAC) Vice-Chair Bob Tomasulo have been appointed to this task force. This group has met numerous times and reviewed topics such as adult care home regulations, population statistics, previous studies, admission screening, and staff training. Prior to the 2011 session of the General Assembly, the task force will reconvene to review additional areas of concern and prepare its final recommendations.

This issue was presented to the Buncombe County Commissioners in February 2010, along with the CAC Annual Reports and a new booklet called "The Essential Guide for Long Term Care Community Advisory Committees". LOSRC's presentation helped to increase awareness of safety issues among mixed populations living in adult care homes.

## Programs for People with Early Memory Loss and their Caregivers

In the fall of 2009, Land-of-Sky Regional Council's (LOSRC) Family Caregiver Support Program held a six-week workshop for people experiencing early memory loss using Guided Autobiography. Eleven people, including caregivers, completed this program facilitated by Family Caregiver Specialist Carol McLimans, Aging Program Specialist Rebecca Chaplin, and Alzheimer's Demonstration Grant Assistant Pat Hilgendorf.

This activity provides structure for people experiencing early memory loss and their caregivers who are interested in recalling, sharing and recording their life stories. Participants explored different life themes that have been influential through personal writing and small group sharing.

Guided Autobiography is a method that was developed by Dr. James Birren to help people find structure and meaning in the multitude of seemingly random events that compose a life. "In five decades of studying adult development and aging," Birren says, "I have found that writing about our life experiences and sharing them with others is one of the best ways we have of giving new meaning to our present lives by understanding the past more fully."

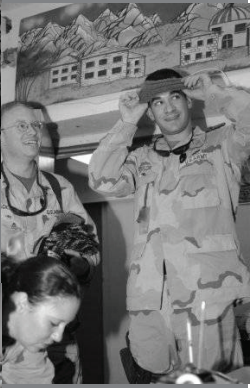
Participants enjoyed recalling and recording the stories of their lives. This is especially useful at the time when people notice their memory changing, as life review supports the natural developmental process of aging. In addition, research suggests that reminiscence is a good mental exercise. The benefits of this time-honored activity are likened to calisthenics for the brain.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging for the purpose of developing innovative practices to help people with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias. LOSRC's Area Agency on Aging is committed to developing and providing more programs for people with early memory loss and their caregivers.





Troops receive items from Toasty Toes



Volunteers enjoying the *jViva La Volunteers!* Celebration

Richard Shuttleworth collecting money at the Vanderbilt Tailgate Market



Operation Toasty Toes volunteers

# Volunteer Services

The Volunteer Services Department connects today's over 55s with the people and organizations that need them most. We help them become mentors, coaches, or companions to people in need, or contribute their job skills and expertise to community projects and organizations. Their contributions of knowledge and experience make a real difference to individuals, nonprofits, and faith-based and other community organizations throughout our region.

**Programs:**

**Retired Senior & Volunteer Program (RSVP)** - Recruitment and placement of senior volunteers.

**Senior Companion Program** - Low-income older adults helping other older adults live independently.

**Foster Grandparent Program** - Low-income older adults assisting children with special needs.

## jViva La Volunteers!

The Volunteer Services Department of Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) hosted a brunch honoring the organization's volunteers at the N.C. Arboretum on May 5, 2010. Titled *jViva La Volunteers!* more than 150 people attended the celebration as part of National Volunteer Week.

LOSRC volunteers include Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, Retired and Senior Volunteers, Waste Reduction Partners, and various advisory committee members. Their contributions to our communities help improve the quality of life in our region.

The highlight of the event is the annual presentation of the Kathleen Godwin Cole Award for Volunteerism. This prestigious award for volunteerism was established in 1990 in memory of Kathleen Godwin Cole who served on the LOSRC Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council and as Chair of its Contractor Relations Committee. The award is given to one volunteer, aged 55 or better, who has made a major contribution to our region.

This year's recipient was Senior Tar Heel Legislature Delegate Charles Dickens, a devoted advocate for seniors' issues. Dickens was commended not only for his work in Raleigh on behalf of seniors, but also for his local efforts with the LOSRC Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council and the Senior Health Insurance and Information Program. The award was presented by LOSRC Board Member Janet Bowman and Buncombe County Department of Social Services Program Administrator Angela Pittman.

Honorable Mention Award recipients Kathe Harris, Betty Hamilton and Ernestine Owens were also recognized for their contributions. Collectively, these three volunteers dedicated more than 2,000 hours of service to the region this past year.

## Shuttleworth Spearheads Tailgate Market at Vanderbilt Apartments

Richard Shuttleworth, Volunteer Services Department's Senior Advisory Council Chair, is working to bring healthier options to seniors in our region. Richard, also a board member of Land-of-Sky Regional Council, has spearheaded efforts to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to residents of Vanderbilt Apartments in downtown Asheville.

The tailgate market is located in the community room at the apartment complex and offers residents the opportunity to purchase smaller quantities of produce leading to a healthier diet and lifestyle. For residents who are homebound or lack the resources necessary to shop at retail stores, the tailgate market may be their only opportunity to purchase fresh food. Residents say the market helps them control their food budget by purchasing smaller quantities, while also reducing the amount of food that spoils before it can be eaten.

Shuttleworth estimates that 30 to 50 residents attend the tailgate market each week, purchasing everything from fruit and vegetables to nuts, jams and fresh flowers. Working with Mountain Food Products, the residents have turned the weekly tailgate market into a social event that also allows them to build community.



## Operation Toasty Toes Comforts U.S. Troops Overseas

The Volunteer Services Department of Land-of-Sky Regional Council is bringing the community together in support of our troops through Operation Toasty Toes (OTT). Groups of volunteers meet each month in both Henderson and Transylvania counties to knit and crochet much-needed items for our military personnel serving overseas.

OTT was founded in 1997 when a group of ladies knitted pairs of slippers for those serving on the U.S.S. Carney stationed in the Persian Gulf. The original request was for 100 pairs, but word of this project reached other military units. The ladies enlisted the help of friends and family, and in less than six weeks, 1000 pairs of slippers were on their way to Bosnia.

OTT is a national program with 21 chapters. Since January 2010, our local chapter has knitted several items and dedicated more than 200 hours of service to this project. Items include slippers, dickeys, headbands and fingerless mittens. As items are completed, the volunteer has the option of writing a note of encouragement to the recipient, and many volunteers receive a personal thank you note in exchange.

### Recent Letter of Thanks To Operation Toasty Toes

I would like to thank you all for thinking about us and spending your time making all the hats, gloves and other items for us. Something like that has a very personal touch that means much more than candy or the other items that people send. They will be very useful for us even after returning to the US.

I grew up in the Asheville/Hendersonville/Brevard area and graduated from A.C. Reynolds HS. Again, thank you for all the thoughts. Your generosity has really been a godsend and brought warm thoughts of home.

Sincerely,  
Staff Sergeant Matthew MacRoberts  
Afghanistan

## LOSRC Departments Collaborate to Provide Respite for Caregivers

In 2009, the Family Caregiver Support Program at Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) received \$75,937 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) to deliver services under a U.S. Administration on Aging grant. *“Strengthening the Linkages between Primary Care Physicians and Aging Service Programs in the Support of Persons with Alzheimer’s Disease”* is a project to develop, field test, and evaluate a program for primary care providers and local aging services network providers. UNC-CH provided training for primary care physicians encouraging them to refer families for respite and other supportive services.

The Family Caregiver Program worked with the Senior Companion Program at LOSRC to provide volunteers to families who have a member with Alzheimer’s disease or a related disorder to provide respite to the family caregiver. In order to receive services from a Senior Companion, a person must have a primary care physician’s written diagnosis of Alzheimer’s Disease Related Dementia (ADRD) in the early stages.

The goal of the grant is to keep the caregiver from becoming overwhelmed, while allowing the care recipient to stay at home for as long as possible. The grant also provides resources and educational materials for ADRD. In 2009, LOSRC used this grant funding to provide Senior Companion services for two families in Madison County and one family in Buncombe County.

## LOSRC Stands Up for Fall Prevention

Falls are the leading cause of injury resulting in death among older adults and are also the most common cause of traumatic nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions. In North Carolina alone, the hospitalization rate due to accidental falls in persons age 65 and over increased by 15% between 2000 and 2006.

In response to this growing concern, Land-of-Sky Regional Council’s Aging Program Specialist Rebecca Chaplin organized a coalition of 23 regional health and physical activity organizations to reduce the number of falls and fall-related injuries in Western North Carolina. The initiative, “WNC Fall Prevention Coalition: Taking a Stand,” includes representatives from our region’s hospitals, universities, community colleges, health departments, and public and private organizations.

Chaplin identified funding for the Coalition and received support for its initiatives from the Mission Foundation and the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness. The partners are continuing to offer programs and develop initiatives for community fall prevention screenings, multi-factorial interventions, risk assessment, provider education and community education and awareness. The Coalition’s vision is to lead the nation in reducing the number of falls and fall-related injuries through focused, coordinated effort.



## Local Government Services



### Pictured Left

**Back L-R:** Julie Lawhorn - Regional Planner, ARRA / Energy  
 Aaron Nousaine - LGS Intern  
 Holly Bullman - Regional Planner, Brownfields and Solid Waste  
 Ron Townley - Director of Local Government Services  
 Karen Kiehna - Senior Planner, Housing  
 Kyle Toman - LGS Project Assistant  
 Kate O'Hara - Senior Planner, Brownfields Project Manager  
**Seated L-R:** Jon Beck - GIS Planner  
 Bill Eaker - Environmental Services Manager  
 Tracy Wahl - Brownfields Project Manager (NC DENR)

### Pictured Right

**Back L-R:** Erica Anderson - Regional Planner, Working Lands  
 Linda Giltz - Regional Planner, Land Use / Growth Management  
 Denese Ballew - Regional Planner, Energy  
 Annie Sarac - LGS Project Assistant  
 Heather Strassberger - Regional Planner, Transportation  
 Natalie Murdock - Regional Planner, Transportation  
**Seated L-R:** John Connell - Housing Specialist  
 Russ Jordon - Energy Program Manager, WRP  
 Terry Albrecht - Director of Waste Reduction Partners (NC DENR)

**Not Pictured:** Dee Hanak - WRP Office Manager  
 Carrie Runser-Turner - Senior Planner, Transportation  
 Tom Elmore - Working Lands Planning Coordinator / Consultant  
 Kristin Peppel - Conservation Planning Consultant

## Administrative Services Department



**Back L-R:** Brett Satz - Information Systems Specialist  
 Bonnie Smith - Administrative Services Assistant  
 Brenda Delacruz - Administrative Services Assistant  
 Joe McKinney - Executive Director  
 Danna Harrell-Stansbury - Director of Marketing & Administration  
**Seated L-R:** Christina Giles - Communication Specialist  
 Michelle Barber - Clerk to Council, Administrative & Marketing Coordinator

## Volunteer Services Department



**Back L-R:**  
 LeeAnne Tucker - Director of Volunteer Services  
 Stacy Friesland - Foster Grandparent Manager  
 Vicky Jennings - RSVP Coordinator  
**Seated L-R:** Patti Cameron - RSVP Lead Coordinator  
 Tracy Ash - Senior Companion Manager

## Finance



**Back L-R:**  
 Sherry Christenson - Accounting Specialist  
 Wanda Clark - Accounting Assistant  
 Rose Sabo - Accounting Specialist  
 Seated: Peggy Barnes - Finance Officer

## Area Agency on Aging

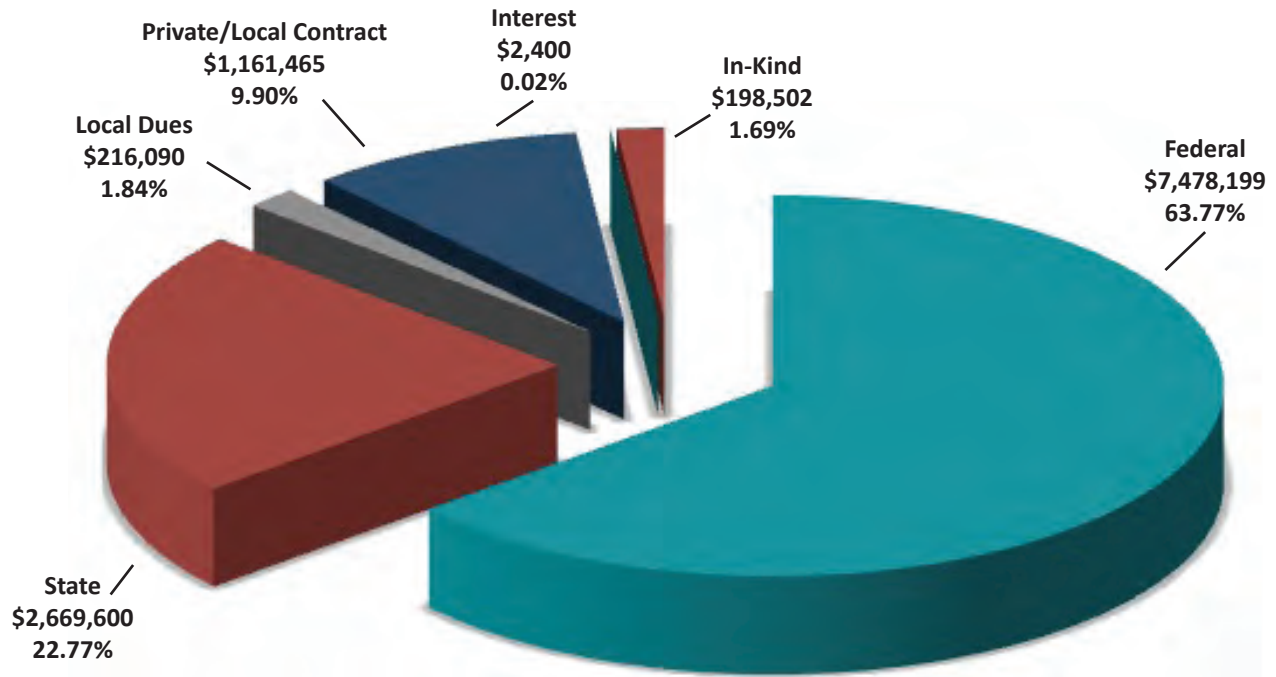


**Back L-R:** Christina Giles - Area Agency on Aging Project Assistant  
 Rebecca Chaplin - Aging Program Specialist  
 Carol McLimans - Family Caregiver Resource Specialist  
 Terry Collins - Regional Ombudsman  
 Jennifer Atkinson - SCSEP Coordinator  
 Brenda Delacruz - SCSEP Job Developer  
 Lee Ann Smith - Regional Ombudsman  
 Linda Kendall Fields - Community Resource Connections Coordinator  
**Seated L-R:** Barbara Hinshaw - Lead Regional Ombudsman  
 Joe Connelly - Area Agency on Aging Director  
 Margaret Stanley - Aging Program Specialist

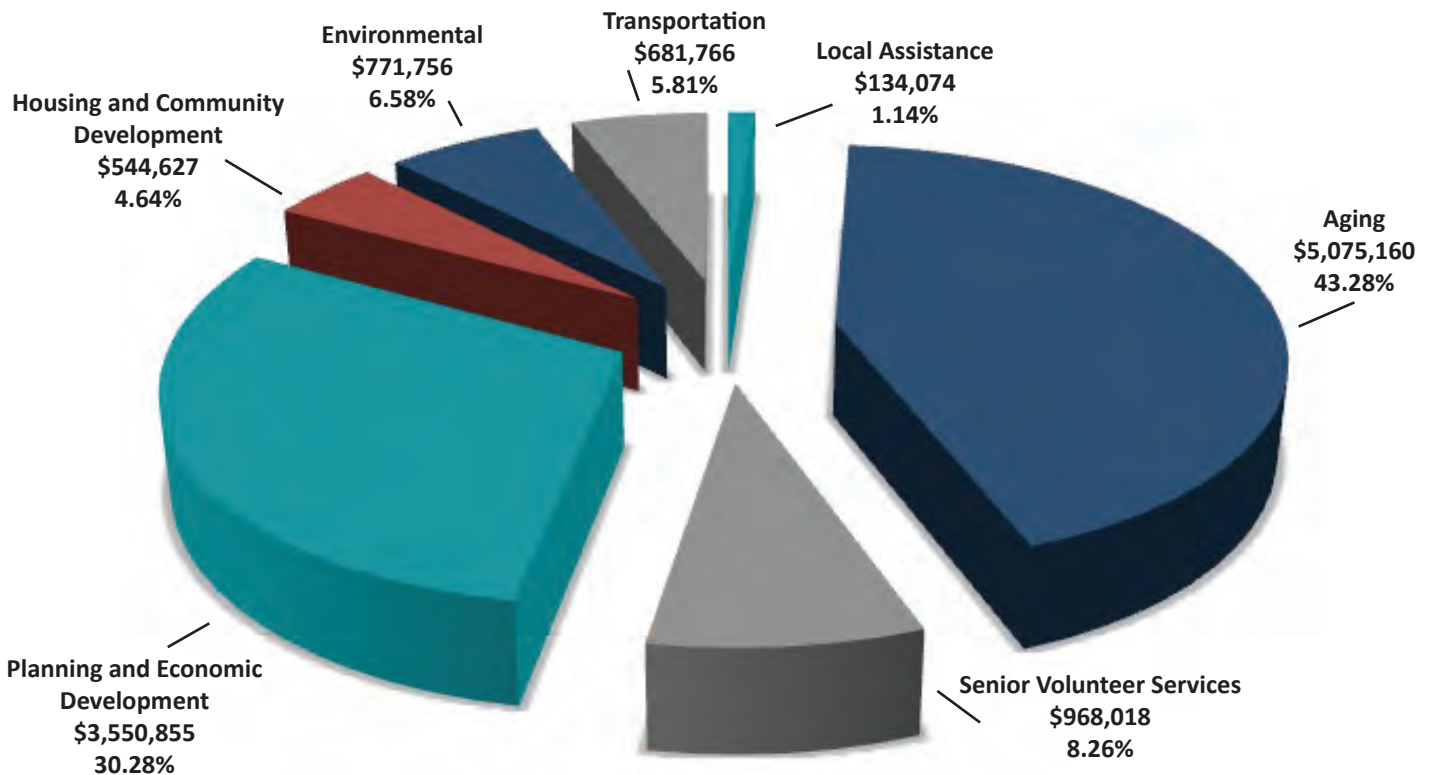
**Not Pictured:** Pat Hilgendorf - Alzheimer's Grant Assistant



## FY 2010 Revenues by Source \$11,726,256



## FY 2010 Expenditures by Function \$11,726,256





# Land-of-Sky Regional Council

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Asheville, NC 28806  
Phone: 828-251-6622  
Fax: 828-251-6353  
www.landofsky.org



**Lending  
Our  
Support  
to the  
Region's  
Communities**



## Mission Statement

Work with local governments, the Region's leadership, state and federal agencies, service providers, and volunteers to foster desirable social, economic, cultural and ecological conditions in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties.