



Ombudsman Connection

Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Inc.

Improving the quality of care for residents in long-term care facilities.

Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford

How well will we stand in the gap for long-term care residents?



By Sherry Culp
Kentucky State Long-Term Care
Ombudsman

Thomas, 52, slipped on ice in his driveway and broke his leg a few months ago. His recovery was complicated, but finally he was well enough to leave the hospital and go to an area nursing home for physical therapy and further rehabilitation.

Thomas was in a great deal of pain when he arrived. Fortunately, a long-term care ombudsman was in the building visiting residents that day. When she stopped in to meet Thomas and provide information about his rights as a resident, she could tell something was wrong.

Thomas needed insulin and pain medication, but

nursing home staff told him he would have to wait a couple of days while they ordered it from a pharmacy. He agreed to let the ombudsman advocate on his behalf. Within two hours, Thomas had his medicine and was able to participate in physical therapy the next day.

Sadly, this scenario is mild compared with most we encounter every day in Kentucky. Often, the victims are residents who have no visitors (60 percent of the nursing home population) or those with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia (50 percent)—people who are physically and intellectually incapable of defending themselves or of reporting someone who has hurt them.

Significant increases in the cost of employee benefits (retirement contributions and health insurance premiums) and possible reductions in funding, along with the growing number of elderly, disabled

continued on page 5

Mother's Day is May 13

Give the Gift of Time in Memory or Honor of Your Mom

I can still see the elderly gentleman slowly pushing a woman in a wheelchair down the sidewalk near a Lexington nursing home. The expression on the woman's face and the baby doll she clutched to her chest made the sight unforgettable.

The man's devotion to this woman—probably his wife—was touching. The woman's determination to hold her baby close was both sad and sweet. To her, the doll was as real as the babies she bore 50 years ago.

I knew that Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia had robbed her of all memory of the faces and names of the children she had had. Yet her maternal instinct remained intact.

With Mother's Day on the horizon, I'm asking you to make a special gift in honor or memory of your mom, grandmother, stepmother, or sister—the person who

nurtured and supported you as a child. Please include the name and contact information for the person who should be notified about your gift (amount remains confidential). The same guidelines apply should you prefer to honor your father, grandfather, brother, stepfather, or someone else who invested in you.



Susie Bullock

NHOA relies on the compassion and generosity of many individuals and organizations to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. Your tax-deductible gift will ensure that we have the financial resources to properly monitor the care and treatment of the 5,500 elderly, disabled seniors in our 17-county service area.

continued on page 2

Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass

3128 Custer Drive, Suite 110
Lexington, Kentucky 40517

859-277-9215

Office Hours: M-F 8am-4:30pm

www.ombuddy.org

NHOA Board of Directors 2017-2018

Peter Brown, **Chair**, Lexington
Heather Baber, Winchester
Audrey Carr, Georgetown
Mary Claire Cobetto, Harrodsburg
Paula DeBoor, Lexington
Brian Dufresne, **Vice Chair**, Lexington
H. "Gippy" Graham, Frankfort
Joe Graviss, Versailles
Judy Hillard, Frankfort
Stephanie Humes, Lexington
Stacia Kaufmann, Lexington
Don Pasley, Winchester
Barbara Yeary Patrick, Lawrenceburg
Kathy Thompson, **Secretary**, Paris
Karen Williams, M.D., Lexington
Ruth H. Webb, **Treasurer**, Salvisa
Sherry Culp, **President and Kentucky
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman**,
Lexington

NHOA Staff

Sherry Culp, President and Kentucky State
Long-Term Care Ombudsman
sherryculp@ombuddy.org

Susie Hillard Bullock, Director of
Philanthropy and Administration
susiebullock@ombuddy.org

Denise Wells, Bluegrass District
Ombudsman
denise@ombuddy.org

Mark Burress, Western District Ombudsman
mark.ombuddy@gmail.com

Jodi Holsclaw, Eastern District Ombudsman
jodilynn.ombuddy@gmail.com

Priyanka Patel, Administrative Assistant
priyanka@ombuddy.org

Shannon Drake, Date Entry Specialist
shannon@ombuddy.org

Rep. Rick Nelson-D of Harlan Introduces HB 573 to Address Insufficient Staffing in Long-Term Care Facilities

A bill that would require more staff in Kentucky long-term care facilities was introduced during the regular session of the 2018 General Assembly in Frankfort.

Rep. Rick Nelson-D of Harlan presented HB 573, said Sherry Culp. "Inadequate staffing in nursing homes can harm residents and prevent them from getting even the most basic care they need. Understaffing has been linked to pressure ulcers (bedsores), malnutrition, dehydration, preventable hospitalizations, and even death. Residents may also experience loneliness and isolation as a result of understaffing. Even the best nurses and nurse aides cannot provide quality care if there are not enough of them."

Current Kentucky law requires a nursing home to have "sufficient" staff to meet the needs of residents. The term "sufficient" is vague and impossible to measure. A widely respected 2001 study by U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid that was reaffirmed in 2004 and again in 2011 determined that nursing home residents must have at least 4.1 hours of care every day to prevent common quality of care problems and the loss of the ability to do things independently, such as eating.

"We agree with the study's conclusions," Culp added. "Although the resident-to-staff ratios in HB 573 do not spell out that residents receive 4.1 hours of care per day, the ratios are a start."

Many residents are not getting the care they need because there aren't enough aides and nurses, according to Culp. "They may wait for a long time to get help. Sometimes, help never arrives," she said. "Our seniors deserve better."

Nursing home residents are not the only ones who suffer. Insufficient number of staff cause on-the-job injuries for overworked employees, distress and anxiety for residents' families, and unnecessary costs for taxpayers when residents end up in the hospital and Medicare must pay the bill, Culp added.

To read the full text of HB 573, go to <https://legiscan.com/KY/bill/HB573/2018>.

Give the Gift of Time

continued from page 1

Please help keep our team of ombudsmen at residents' bedsides. Visit www.ombuddy.org to use a credit card to make a secure tax-deductible gift, or use the attached pre-addressed envelope to mail a check.

Please include a photo and brief story about your mom for our website. NHOA will post the names of those making contributions and those being honored or remembered at www.ombuddy.org and in the next newsletter.

Three supporters who make gifts by Friday, April 27, will be randomly chosen to receive a handcrafted piece of jewelry created by Stamping Ground artist and former NHOA board member Nancy Leonard.

NHOA selected as Don Jacobs Automotive “Charity-of-the-Month”

Lori DeJesus joined NHOA staff members Mark Burress and Susie Hillard Bullock for fun and games with residents at Pine Meadows Health Care in Lexington recently.

DeJesus, who works at Don Jacobs Automotive, participated as part of the dealerships’ monthly focus on 12 Lexington-area charities.

“I truly enjoyed my time volunteering at Pine Meadows. The ladies in my area touched my heart. I can’t wait to go back,” DeJesus said. “As I’ve learned more about how many Kentuckians are in nursing homes and the service NHOA provides, I’ve come to realize how important it is to have independent ombudsmen looking out for the best interests and welfare of long-term care residents. It’s a blessing to everyone they work with.”

“We are deeply grateful for our friends at Don Jacobs, and to Mr. Jacobs himself, for their support and for all they do to give back to the community,” said NHOA President Sherry Culp. “In addition to making a generous charitable contribution, they also promoted our organization and the work we do to their customers and employees.”

**“We are deeply grateful
for our friends at Don Jacobs...”**

~ Sherry Culp, NHOA President

Don Jacobs’ charity-of-the-month program offers employees the opportunity to sign up for casual Fridays in exchange for a \$25 donation to the month’s charity, according to marketing director Charity Bradley. “Service customers also have the opportunity to donate up to \$25 during their service visit,” she explained. “Don Jacobs Automotive matches employee and customer donations during the designated month for the featured charity.”

For more information, go to donjacobs.com.

Lori DeJesus of Don Jacobs Automotive and NHOA staff member Mark Burress assist residents of Pine Meadow Healthcare in a game of “JINGO”. One of the residents’ favorite activities. JINGO games are played like bingo, except players cover pictures that answer trivia questions instead of called-out numbers. Winners receive prizes such as boxes of tissue, snacks, candy and dollar bills they can use to buy toiletries and other necessities. In addition to raising money for a different non-profit organization every month, Don Jacobs’ “Charity-of-the-Month” Program allows employees to volunteer at a Lexington-area charity on company time.



Kentucky Families Lost \$6 Million to Scams Last Year

Six steps can help Kentuckians avoid fraud, identity theft

In a new report from the Federal Trade Commission, Kentuckians made more than 22,000 fraud reports and 3,000 reports of identity theft last year. The categories with the most reports were debt collection, impostor scams and identity theft.

Check your credit.

Check your credit report at annualcreditreport.com to get a free annual credit report from the major credit reporting agencies. If you notice suspicious activity, follow the steps in the Office of the Attorney General's Identity Theft Tool Kit.

Update and strengthen online passwords.

Make your online accounts less vulnerable to fraudsters by regularly changing your passwords and pin numbers. Avoid using the same password across multiple accounts. Use long and complex sequences of numbers, symbols and letters to strengthen passwords and when possible set up a two-step verification for sign-ons that occur on a new device.

Hold back on providing personal information.

Never send your Social Security number to an unverified, unsecure person, email or website. Even for trusted sources, stop and ask if you really need to provide your Social Security number and offer to provide a piece of information that is less desired by identity thieves.

Clean out and shred old documents.

Don't just pitch your sensitive documents – shred them to help prevent identity theft. Bills, receipts and documents that contain sensitive personal, financial information should be securely destroyed by shredding at home or at free community shred-it events.

Stop use of untraceable methods of payment.

If you are asked to make a payment using wire transfer, gift cards or cash it is most likely a scam.

Sign up for Scam Alerts.

By texting the words KYOAG Scam to GOV311 (468311) or visiting ag.ky.gov Kentuckians may enroll in Beshear's Scam Alerts program. Those enrolled receive text messages or email alerts when new and trending scams are reported in Kentucky and tips on how to avoid falling victim to the latest scam.

Memorial Gifts July 1, 2017 - March 30, 2018

In memory of NHOA Ombudsman Ken Evans

- Cindy Costigan
- Ronald and Sandra Coulter
- Michael and Paula DeBoor
- Geraldine Dietrich
- Bill and Sandra Dobozi
- Phyllis Evans
- Joe and Debbie Graviss
- Allen and Linda Knight
- Sue Landis
- Madge Lynn
- Caroline Sampson
- Edna Quire
- Dan and Kathy Thompson
- Shirley Thornberry

In Memory of Frank Pieratt

- Nancy Moser

In memory of Frances Vandermolen Bryan

- Elizabeth Alexander

Silver Bells: Generous Supporters Set Records for In-Kind and Cash Gifts

Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency offices looked like Santa's workshop in the days leading up to Silver Bells last December.

"The response was terrific," said Denise Wells, Bluegrass District Ombudsman and coordinator of the ninth annual holiday gift drive for residents of long-term care facilities in Central Kentucky. "Hundreds of people opened their hearts to help the most needy residents. Meeting the people dropping off gifts and hearing their reasons for participating in Silver Bells was a humbling experience. We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to the effort."

Individuals, schools, churches, and businesses brought \$10,000 in clothes, toiletries, snacks, books, and blankets and an additional \$4,180 in cash to fill in the gaps, Wells said. "Our ombudsmen ended up delivering about 800 large gift bags a few days before Christmas," she reported. "They gave them to the residents who have no visitors and no money to buy much for themselves—the ones who might not have received a single gift if not for Silver Bells."



▲ Maria Turner and Rory Wysong of Gray Construction in Lexington helped deliver a mountain of gifts collected by their co-workers.



◀ Jim and Donna Short of Nicholasville were among many individuals and organizations who provided gifts for long-term care residents as part of NHOA's ninth annual Silver Bells holiday gift drive.



▲ Ombudsman Michelle Barnett and her daughter Ally Barnett pick up gifts to take to long-term care residents in Harrison County. At right is Denise Wells, Bluegrass District Ombudsman and coordinator of Silver Bells holiday gift drive.



▲ Students from Providence Montessori delivered dozens of gifts for long-term care residents in NHOA's 17-county service area.

How well...continued from page 1

individuals living in long-term care facilities, pose a serious threat to the quality and quantity of services we can provide, even the viability of the ombudsman program itself.

Proposed budget cuts and higher costs for employee benefits come at a time when demand for our services is on the rise. For example, much-needed federal regulations regarding improper discharges have resulted in a 25 percent increase in the number of cases ombudsmen must review and handle. Aside from the fact that practically all residents are physically or intellectually incapable of finding themselves another long-term care facility, improper discharges often lead to costly hospitalizations, psychological harm, and in some cases, death.

How well we care for our seniors—the last of the "Greatest Generation" and others to come—speaks volumes about a civilized society. We must begin by honoring our seniors who gave so much while they were able. With your year-round support, we will have the financial resources to stand in the gap for this most vulnerable segment of our population, the men and women who built this nation.



Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency
of the Bluegrass

3138 Custer Drive, Suite 110
Lexington, KY 40517
Phone (859) 277-9215
Toll Free: 1-877-787-0077

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Lexington, KY
Permit # 850

NHOA is a local, independent nonprofit agency that relies on funding through individual donations, local United Way agencies, and grants to serve the Bluegrass area.



NHOA's Services are free. **Donate at www.ombuddy.org**

This information is made possible by state and/or federal funding provided by the Department for Aging and Independent Living.



Ombudsmen Act to get Replacment Chair for Resident

Even though Nursing Home A had been Richard's home for some time, he wanted to move to a facility near Lexington to be closer to family. Among the belongings he brought to make his half of the bedroom more comfortable was a lift chair that enabled Richard to transfer out of the recliner, thus retaining a measure of independence.

When the nursing home underwent a facelift, Richard's lift chair disappeared. The facility, which had thrown it away by mistake, offered to replace it; Richard agreed.

At roughly the same time, news came that a bed had opened up in Lexington. Richard moved there before trying the new chair. When he did, he was disappointed to learn that the new chair was not a lift chair.

Richard called staff at Nursing Home A, who insisted the new chair was a lift chair. Frustrated, Richard called Sue, his new ombudsman at Nursing Home B. She called Wini, her counterpart at Nursing Home A, and together, the women advocated for a new lift chair for Richard. Yet again, the facility insisted the chair was a lift chair.

At an impasse, the ombudsmen notified the state Office of Inspector General (OIG). Representatives investigated and confirmed the chair was not a lift chair and directed Nursing Home A to get a new lift chair. Sadly, veteran ombudsmen Sue and Wini still had to push to get Nursing Home A to replace the chair ~ and give Richard the independence he cherished.

**NHOA Searching for
New Board Members**

Please contact Susie Bullock for a job description and details about how you can have long-term impact on vulnerable men and women living in long-term care facilities.
859-277-9215 • susiebullock@ombuddy.org