

PROTECTING NURSING
HOME RESIDENTS

April
2006

Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents



Next Meeting April 10

MEETING PLACE:

First Assembly of God
Church
4501 Burrow Road
North Little Rock
Directions to church on
back of Newsletter

10 a.m.

Meeting for Members,
Family and Friends of Resi-
dents (Closed to persons
representing the nursing
home
industry).

10:30 a.m.

Public Meeting:
(see gray box on page
one)

12 noon

Bring a sack lunch, & stay
for the Board Meeting

Visit us on the Web

www.aanhr.org

Conway (501) 450-9619 • Fairfield Bay (501) 884-6728
Little Rock (501) 224-8431

AANHR's Mission Statement:

**"To protect and improve the quality of care and life
for residents in Arkansas nursing homes"**

Program and Speaker for the April 10th Meeting

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE BY REDUCING RESTRAINTS

Carol Compas, RN, BSN, CPHQ, has 18 years of clinical nursing experience includ-
ing geriatrics nursing and a strong background in education, quality assurance/
improvement and risk management.

She brings us information on Arkansas' participation in the Federal Nursing Home
Quality Initiative that rolled out in November 2002. The mission of NHQI is to
make nursing homes a better place to work and a better place to live. Ms. Com-
pas will provide specific information on the correct usage of restraints, nursing
home restraint management and how to reduce restraints through Person Di-
rected Care principles. She will share with us the successes she has had working
with some of the homes here in Arkansas. We are asking her to start her program
at 10:30 so there will be time for questions.

Annual C.N.A. Appreciation Luncheon Scheduled

On Monday June 12, 2006, Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents will host their
annual Appreciation Luncheon recognizing the very important roles that Certified Nursing Assis-
tants play in the care of Arkansas nursing home residents.

The special awards ceremony and luncheon will be held at First Assembly of God church
at 12:30 PM. The church is located at 4501 Burrow Drive in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

AANHR members may make reservations by mailing a check to AANHR, PO Box 22421, Lit-
tle Rock, AR 72221-2421. The cost of the luncheon is \$10.00 per person. Should you have any
questions, please Call Martha Deaver at 501-450-9619.



From the President's Desk

Nancy Allison

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

We at AANHR speak often of NCCNHR and refer to Elma Holder. The thought came to me that many readers of this newsletter might not know the significance and importance of these names.

Elma Holder, while working with Ralph Nader and the National Gray Panthers in Washington D.C. in 1975, organized a group of citizen group advocates from across the country. All had witnessed and endured poor nursing home conditions. They attended a nursing home industry conference in Washington D.C and spoke to the industry about the serious need for reform in nursing home conditions. This public concern for substandard care in nursing homes with the untiring encouragement of Elma Holder, brought about the formation of the National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform and in 1987, President Ronald Reagan signed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act into law. OBRA 87, commonly known as Residents' Rights, states that residents come first and must be given the potential to live each day as though they were in a true home. This law was enacted at a time when the nursing home lobby was trying to deregulate the nursing home industry. We thank Elma and the power of a few determined and dedicated people!

In November 2000, the 25th birthday of NCCNHR, a columnist named Bard Lindemann wrote a beautiful tribute to Elma Holder. In it he states "No one, in or out of government, has done more for nursing home residents than Elma Holder".

Elma was not alone. She led and the advocates fell in behind her and followed. AANHR is asking those who read this newsletter to do the same. There is work to be done in Arkansas. It takes many voices to reach the people who can effect change. AANHR needs to have your voice heard at our meetings. If you are unable to get to the meeting in Little Rock, gather a group together and we will come to you to answer questions and tell you what needs to be done.

Again from Bard Lindemann's column: "*tonight many residents will go to bed fed and hydrated and have benefited from some nursing care thanks to Elma Holder and her work. However, too many will have not been fed and hydrated and not been cared for when they called for help.*"

It is for those that have not been fed and cared for that we must continue the work. It is for those who never get a drink of water that AANHR asks you to attend our meetings and lend your voice to ours as we continue working on issues of staffing, working conditions, support for Family Councils, Medicaid fraud and other abuses. It is you, the family members of nursing home residents, who can help make the transition to Personal Directed Care happen.

Avoiding Thrills from Your Pills

By Nancy Johnson

Dr. K. Richard Knoll, Pharm.D., gave an information packed presentation to a small number of AANHR attendees at the March 13 monthly meeting. Dr. Knoll is a consultant pharmacist to long-term care facilities. By law, a consultant pharmacist must review the administration of medications and the appropriateness of individual resident medication regimes at least once a month in long-term care facilities in Arkansas. In addition, they educate staff regarding medications and medication problems and identify, resolve, and try to prevent medication-related problems.

Dr. Knoll stated that the potential for untoward side effects and interactions rises greatly with each additional drug taken. He also said that the average person between the ages of 65 and 69 years old takes 14 different medications in one year. One can readily see the possibility of problems associated with medications. Because the possibility is so great, he further stated that any symptom in an elderly patient should be considered a drug side effect until proven otherwise.

There are several reasons for this. Physiological changes which occur as we grow older, such as changes in digestion which affects absorption of medications, and loss of kidney and liver function which affects how medications are used by the body and then excreted or retained, affect how medications affect an individual. Older persons tend to have more multiple chronic conditions, which mean they consume more medications. He urged us not to forget that over-the-counter medications are also drugs and are as likely to interact with other drugs as prescriptions.

Medication related problems are one of the top five causes of death in persons 65 and older. They are also a major cause of mental confusion, depression, falls, disability, and loss of independence. 36 per cent of all reported adverse drug reactions occur in the 65 plus age range. Furthermore, 28 per cent of hospitalizations among seniors are due to adverse drug reactions. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand why a medication is being prescribed, the correct way to take it, and be aware of any potential side effects.

The website of www.seniormedsafety.com was recommended as a good resource for information about medications. This website is sponsored by the National Council on Aging and the Quigley Corporation and gives information about medication interactions, safety tips, and has a section on "Ask a Pharmacist." It presents a chart of common drug interactions and specifically lifts up the problems associated with over-the-counter cold and cough remedies because these frequently interfere with other medications.

STARTING A FAMILY COUNCIL.

By Gary Melton, Searcy, Arkansas

During the past six years, I have had family members in two nursing homes. Sometimes I have found the care to be adequate however, a few times the care is less than adequate and that is unacceptable!

Having recently retired from the military and wanting to improve the quality of care of residents, I thought of starting a Family Council. First, I got the administration to announce a meeting and help spread the word by posting announcements on doors, talking to acquaintances and posting a notice in the nursing home newsletter.

The first Family Council meeting we discussed the election of officers, our goals, organization of the meetings and plans for the next meeting. Fortunately, the six people in attendance were persons with a can-do attitude. The vice-president elect is a schoolteacher who has received major awards in her career field, the secretary is a CPA, and the treasurer/staff advisor is a social worker on the staff of the facility.

By the second meeting, I was hearing the questions: What is a Family Council? What does a Family Council do? And, I don't need you to help take care of my love one!

Fortunately, in talking with my Regional Ombudsman she had a movie entitled, "**Strength in Number, The Importance of Nursing Home Family Councils.**" The movie was our next program.

By working hard and spreading word of the movie, we had 20 present. At this second meeting, we passed a budget of \$1000 for the year. We arrived at this amount by deciding on our projects: (1) donate \$25.00 to the employee of the month, (2) furnish snacks to the mid-night shift, once a quarter and (3) a complimentary meal for each dietary staff member and spouse at a local restaurant. We discovered having our meetings in the dining room was disrupting the feeding/bingo schedule, so we moved to the big, front lobby. Our meetings are from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM and everyone walking in or out of the facility during this high visitation period is exposed to us.

Much work by the leaders is required between meetings. For example, our secretary is working on establishing us as a non-profit organization under U.S. Tax Code 501 (C) (3). Our aim is this will allow us to collect tax-deductible donations for our budget. One local bank has agreed to donate a \$50.00 savings bond in its name and the Family Council name to the employee of the month for a year. Another member is working with a local artist to have a painting donated for a raffle.

By the third meeting, we are starting to get comfortable with each other. A member always volunteers to furnish the next months refreshments. We all wear nametags and start our meetings by introducing ourselves and stating our relationship with the facility. Near the end of a meeting, facility staff is asked to step outside so we can discuss care issues without any hesitancy. Areas of concern are agreed on and are submitted in writing to the administration.

The most favorable comments I have had concern starting on time and ending on time. Most people work during the day and are ready to go home but can give their full attention for 1 hour to a worthwhile endeavor.

If you want to start or already have a council, I recommend the aforementioned movie available from your Regional Ombudsman or the AAHNR. In addition, I recommend the publication, "**The Family Council Guide**" located at www.medicaid.state.ar.us. This publication is a guide to organizing and maintaining an effective family council.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents are here to help with any problems you might face in dealing with nursing home care. As consumers, you need to know, there has not been a congressional report written in the past twenty years documenting that nursing home residents are being cared for and protected the way the federal laws require.

In order that you are better informed, we urge you to order GAO congressional reports illustrating the serious problems government investigators have found in nursing homes.

To receive the government studies free of charge either:

- Telephone AANHR at (501) 450-9619
- Go to our web site at <http://www.aanhr.org> and click on "Contact Us."

Helpful/Important Numbers

The Office of Long Term Care (OLTC)

Has a toll-free number for information, assistance and complaints for residents and family members:

1-800-LTC-4887 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays.

You may also write to: Office of Long Term Care (OLTC) P.O. Box 8059,
Slot 400 Little Rock, AR 72203-8059

OLTC Website:

<http://www.medicaid.state.ar.us>

You should also report complaints to the Attorney General

TOLL FREE: 1-866-810-0016

LITTLE ROCK LOCAL: 682-7760

For additional assistance or a listening ear, call AANHR at

(501) 450-9619 in Conway;

(501) 884-6728 in Fairfield Bay;

(501) 224-8431 in Little Rock.

Visit our website at www.aanhr.org or e-mail us at Info@aanhr.org

Your local Ombudsman's number should be posted in the nursing home. You may also call your local Area Agency on Aging to secure **the name and phone number** of the Ombudsman

Eden Alternative Seminar

AARP is sponsoring Dr. William Thomas for a presentation on Wednesday, April 26, 2006, at 4:30 p.m. at UAMS, the Institute on Aging, Jo Ellen Ford Auditorium (G204). Dr. Thomas is president of a caregiver development called Green Houses or the Eden Alternative. Arkansas has been chosen as a pilot program in the project. The purpose of Thomas' project is to improve aging, to aid caregivers, etc.

Dr. William H. Thomas is an international authority on geriatric medicine and eldercare. He currently serves as president of The Center for Growing and Becoming, Inc., a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting and developing constructive, holistic approaches to aging and the care of our elders. He is also president of The Eden Alternative, a research, consulting, and advocacy group committed to improving the care received by people who live in institutions everywhere.

AANHR Officers and Board Members

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Members of the Board: Marce Best, Maumelle; James Brooks, North Little Rock; Lela Burns, Sherwood; Martha Deaver, Conway; Gleason McGuire, Bryant; Horace McGuire, Alexander; Larry Wakefield, Fairfield Bay.

Honorary Board Members: Jim and Faye Sandstrum, Pine Bluff.

VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMAN NEEDED

Volunteer Ombudsman training takes only one day and can make an incredible difference in the life of a nursing home resident. A volunteer ombudsman is authorized to help the resident with any concerns. Protecting the resident's rights of the resident is a priority. The volunteer ombudsman is authorized to take complaints and report things they see that are questionable to their regional ombudsman, who can take steps to remedy the situation. A volunteer ombudsman can make a big difference in brightening the life of a nursing home resident. Please contact Martha Deaver at 501-450-9619 or 501-450-7405, she will put you in contact with you regional ombudsman.

AANHR Special Thanks

We extend heartfelt thanks to the following people and groups who make our outreach possible:

1. **Darren O'Quinn** of The Law Offices of Darren O'Quinn for assistance in the publication of this newsletter, meeting rooms, lunches and donations.
2. **Todd Griffin** of The Law Offices of Todd Griffin, P.L.L.C. for advising AANHR's Board of Directors.
3. **Bob Davidson** of The Law Offices of Bob Davidson, P.L.L.C. for advising AANHR's Board of Directors.
4. **Eric Wewers** of The Law Offices of Eric Wewers, P.L.L.C. for advising AANHR's Board of Directors.
5. **Jana Barnett** of The Law Offices of Darren O'Quinn for editing the newsletter.
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7. **David Couch** of Grayson and Grayson, PA, for employing Brent Birch of One6media, LLC, to do AANHR's new website design.
8. **Brian Reddick** and **Bob Edwards** of Wilkes and McHugh for its generous donation toward the publication costs of this newsletter.
9. **Jack Wagoner** and **Gene Ludwig** for keeping AANHR supplied with copies of the book, DANGER ZONE.
10. **First Assembly of God** in North Little Rock for Providing a meeting room free of charge.

AANHR is proud to announce that our nominee, David Couch was elected to the National Citizens' Collation for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) Board of Directors.

Nursing home fire averted

MT. Lebanon, PA firefighters are crediting an efficient sprinkler system and quick action by the nursing home staff with avoiding a disaster at MT. Lebanon Manor yesterday morning.

Rodger Ricciuti, platoon chief with the Mt. Lebanon Fire Department, said one police officer and six nursing home staff members were treated for smoke inhalation at local hospitals.

Chief Ricciuti said all 116 occupants of the home, at 300 Old Gilkeson RD, were evacuated to other parts of the two-story building while a fire in patient room G19 on the ground floor was brought under control. The fire, reported at 5:58 a.m., was under control by 7 a.m. Fire companies from several surrounding communities also responded.

The patient, who was not identified, was taken to a local hospital for examination but was not hurt and the cause of the fire is under investigation, Chief Ricciuti said.

Strength in Numbers, AANHR Needs You!!

AANHR is a nonprofit organization run by non-paid volunteers dedicated to protecting and improving the quality of care and life for Arkansas residents in long-term care facilities.

Please lend us your support by becoming a member of our organization. Membership dues help to pay for our activities that support our mission statement. Memberships are available on a calendar year basis.

We are so appreciative of people like you who support our cause, because together we can make a difference.

- () \$15 per individual membership enclosed.
- () \$20 per family or corporate membership.
- () \$4 per student or CNA membership.
- () Waive dues because of financial hardship.

Please make checks payable to: AANHR and mail to PO Box 22421, Little Rock, AR 72221-2421



Arkansas Advocates *For* Nursing Home Residents

P. O. Box 22421 Little Rock, AR 72221-2421
www.aanhr.org

AANHR'S MISSION STATEMENT:

"To protect and improve the quality of care and life for residents in Arkansas nursing homes."

Driving Directions to First Assembly of God Church, 4501 Burrow Road, North Little Rock, Arkansas

Coming from the North:

When driving South on Highway 67/167, take exit #1 onto Warden Road. As soon as you safely can, move into the right hand lane, as you will be turning right at the Golden Coral Restaurant onto Commercial Street.

Coming from East, West or South:

If you are on either I-30 or I-40, take Highway 67-167 North. Take exit #2 onto Landers Road. Stay in the left hand lane, as you will be turning left and going under Highway 67/167 and enter Warden Road going southbound. As soon as you safely can, move into the right hand lane, as you will be turning right at the Golden Coral Restaurant onto Commercial Street.

Commercial Street terminates at the church. Proceed straight across Burrow Road into the church's parking lot and turn right at the far side of the building into the narrow alley-like drive.

The entry door is located about half way down this side of the church and the meeting room (#113) is immediately inside the entrance door.

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