



From the President's Desk . . . Martha Deaver

AANHR hosts two premier events each year. The first, our CNA Award Luncheon, held in June, recognizes and honors the valuable role that Certified Nurse Aides play in the hands on, minute to minute, care of our beloved, frail, elderly family members. Our second event, the annual Residents' Rights Rally, took place Monday, October 13, at the State Capitol in Little Rock.

Each year for the past five years, AANHR advocates, friends, and nursing home residents have gathered to acknowledge the rights of nursing home residents. Attendees know that when a person can no longer be responsible for their own care, many go to a long-term care setting. AANHR's goal as an organization is to "protect and improve the quality of care and life for nursing home residents in Arkansas." We acknowledge the importance of these rights -- rights guaranteed by the federal nursing home reform act of 1987 -- rights that must not be diminished! Please note, very closely, this statistic: in 2004, A congressional report was released, prepared at the request of Congressman Vic Snyder. The report stated that ninety-five percent of Arkansas nursing homes were cited for conditions that carried with them the potential to harm nursing home residents!

A report recently released by the Federal Government stated: "each year from 2005 to 2007, ninety-five percent of Arkansas nursing homes were cited for violations of federal health and safety standards." This average of two thousand violations of the law each year occurred during the care of our nursing home residents!

According to the Centers for "Medicare & Medicaid Services: from January 1st 2008 , to date, there have been over 2,300 violations written so far this year on Arkansas' nursing homes! These shocking statistics demand that ALL of us work together to protect and improve the quality care and life for residents in AR nursing homes. Please join AANHR today in this endeavor.

In the news:

SEARCY – Harding University's College of Nursing received the 2008 Award for Excellence in Gerontological Nursing Education for the category of Baccalaureate-Level Curricular Innovation on Oct. 19 at the Fairmont Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C. The college received a \$500 award and national recognition from the John A. Hartford Foundation Institute for Geriatric Nursing and American Association of Colleges of Nursing for its gerontology program. One graduate and one undergraduate institution receive the award each year. Receipt of the award was largely based on a change in curriculum involving student participation in the Ombudsmen program, which was founded in 1972 to meet the needs of nursing home residents. Each state is now required to have an Ombudsmen program, according to the federal Older Americans Act of 1992. Harding nursing students participate in the Certified Volunteer Ombudsman program under the supervision of the state ombudsman program.

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No AANHR Meeting or Newsletter in December

As usual, due to Christmas holiday activities, there will be no December meeting OR newsletter in December to allow AANHR members to spend valuable time with their families. Watch the mail for the first newsletter of 2009 in early January. Please join us at the January meeting as we begin another year of advocating for our nursing home residents.

Happy Holidays!