

# The Silver Panther Newsletter

WINTER

2020



**Statewide Coalition of  
Presidents of Resident Councils  
Executive Board Members**

*Gregory Brooks, Brad Parkhurst,  
Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez,  
Rita Wissink*

# VOICES UNITED 2019

The Ombudsman Program held its 23rd annual Voices Forum on October 10, 2019 at the Aqua Turf in Southington. This year the event was held in conjunction with our Coalition for Elder Justice in CT. Thus, attendees had the unique opportunity to conversate with one another on a variety of elder justice topics. A total of 273 people attended the Forum, including over 70 skilled nursing facilities from across the state.

Mairead Painter, the State Long Term Care Ombudsman, was excited about the turnout and ability to have the two groups, Presidents of Resident Councils and Elder Justice Coalition members, come together. "I am not sure if we will do it this way every year, but it offered an opportunity for a new level of collaboration and information sharing". Mairead wants state and local officials to remember that nursing home residents are part of the voting public and their issues and concerns are important.

The keynote speaker for the day was nationally recognized, revered, and leading elder justice expert, Bob Blancato. Mr. Blancato provided a synopsis of current elder justice funding needs, including increased funding for Ombudsman programs.

This year, the Brian Capshaw "Rock Star" Award was presented to Byron Peterson, a nationally recognized AARP volunteer who dedicates himself to community outreach, particularly AARP's Fraud Watch Network.

The Carol Rosenwald "Spirit of Advocacy" Award was presented to State Representative Michelle Cook for her unwavering advocacy for nursing home residents, specifically the need for increased staffing.

Executive Board (SCPRC) President, Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez provided a recap of the 2018 legislative session, including SB 375 (staffing levels) and the effort made by some legislators to increase the Personal Needs Allowance from \$60 to \$72. Jeanette noted that it requires active participation from nursing home residents to inform legislators of the issues that impact them on a day to day basis.



## 2019 RESIDENT ADVOCATE WRAP UP

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program held the annual Resident Advocate Wrap up training on December 4, 2019 at the New Britain Senior Center. A Resident Advocate is a trained Volunteer by The Long-Term Care Ombudsman staff. They are trained in residents' rights, problem solving, interviewing skills, negotiating, working with nursing home staff, and the health care system. The advocate protects the civil and human rights of persons in long term care facilities. They spend 4 hours per week in assigned homes assisting residents in resolving problems or concerns.

The training covered Recognizing and Preventing Abuse, Neglect, Financial Exploitation and how person-centered relationships make all the difference.

**Abuse**...includes, but is not limited to, the willful infliction of physical pain, injury or mental anguish, or the willful deprivation by a caretaker of services which are necessary to maintain physical or mental health.

**Neglect**...an elderly person who is either living alone and not able to provide for oneself or is not receiving the said necessary services from the responsible caretaker to maintain physical and mental health.

**Exploitation**... the act or process of taking advantage of an elderly person by another person or caretaker whether for monetary, personal, or other benefit, gain or profit.

In Connecticut you can report to:

- The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Toll Free 1-866-388-1888 or email [ltcop@ct.gov](mailto:ltcop@ct.gov).
- Elderly Protective Services, Toll Free 1-888-385-4225, info line, 211 or Department of Social Services (DSS), <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Social-Work-Services/Social-Work-Services/Related-Resources>
- The Department of Public Health, (860) 509-7400 or email [dph.fliscomplaint@ct.gov](mailto:dph.fliscomplaint@ct.gov).



You're Invited



## **RSVP for Traumatic Brain Injury Stakeholder Day on March 3, 2020**

Please join the Administration for Community Living (ACL) this March in observance of Brain Injury Awareness Month. ACL will host **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Stakeholder Day on March 3, 2020**, and a brown bag lunch during Brain Injury Awareness Day on Capitol Hill on March 4, 2020.

Brain Injury Awareness Day is hosted by the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, chaired by Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-N.J.). See note below for more information.

ACL's TBI Stakeholder Day is an opportunity for members of the TBI community to come to Washington, DC to discuss important issues around TBI services, supports, and systems and to learn from other stakeholders, brain injury survivors, family members, support networks, and state and federal representatives.

Please RSVP for TBI Stakeholder Day and the brown bag lunch by **February 21, 2020**, at [tbitarc@acl.org](mailto:tbitarc@acl.org). Please include any reasonable accommodation requests (such as ASL interpreter, large print materials, or reserved front row seating) along with your RSVP. We will provide additional meeting details as the date approaches. If you have any questions about this event, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### ***Tentative Agenda for ACL's TBI Stakeholder Day on March 3, 2020***

**Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20021**

8:30 am	Welcome and Opening Remarks with ACL Leadership
9:30 am	Federal Partner Roundtable
10:45 am	Break
11:00 am	Advisory Councils/State Plans Panel
12:30 pm	Lunch on your own
1:45 pm	TBI across the Lifespan Panel
3:00 pm	Break
3:30 pm	Leveraging Partnerships – States' Promising Practices
4:30 pm	Future Funding Structure Dialogue
5:30 pm	Adjournment

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**Note: Brain Injury Awareness Day is a separate event not organized by ACL. Please refer any queries to Becky Corby at 202-480-8902, [rcorby@ridcapolicysgroup.com](mailto:rcorby@ridcapolicysgroup.com) or Amy Colberg 703-761-0750 x637, [acolberg@biausa.org](mailto:acolberg@biausa.org).**

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## **E-Board Corner**

**by E-BOARD Member  
Gregory Brooks**

Hello everyone. My name is Gregory Brooks, and I'm a member of the EBOARD of the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils. I am the Resident Council President at Quinnipiac Valley Center in Wallingford, CT. I am writing this to hopefully get you involved in nursing home advocacy. Advocacy is an activity by a person or group, (in this case: Council Presidents and fellow residents) that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems.

Individuals and groups can influence policies and systems by understanding who makes decisions, when decisions are made, and what goals decision makers have. If you are a Council President or regularly attend council meetings at your facility, you are an advocate already! What residents need to do is become more active. Your Regional Ombudsmen can provide you with a list of the state and national representatives that are elected to represent your area or district, provide you with addresses and phone numbers, where you can write them or call them to leave messages. The EBOARD has chosen three key issues that affect all residents of nursing homes in Connecticut for the upcoming 2020 Legislative session. They are, in no order: Nursing home staffing, Increasing the PNA (personal needs allowance) to \$72, and finally, better access to transportation for nursing home residents.

We on the EBOARD have been targeting these 3 issues (and others) thru letter writing and petitions but we need your help to get the word out. Start your own letter writing campaign for instance. Individual letters make a big difference, but even a jointly signed letter can do the trick as well. Tell the legislators how these issues affect your daily lives and that of your fellow residents. I'm going to pass on a few tips I learned from an advocate from AARP that I had the pleasure to meet at the EBOARD retreat in July 2019.

She emphasized when you're advocating for an issue, try and tell your story in an organized way. When you're developing a message, use the 27-9-3 rule, which is:

- Share your story in 27 words or less
- If it's a message, communicate it in 9 seconds or less.
- Make sure your message has fewer than 3 points.

After you develop a clear concise message, you can build your story around it.

Remember, Aristotle's three elements of persuasion:

- Logos (logic)-the logic or reasoning behind an argument.
- Ethos (ethics)-the character and believability of the speaker.
- Pathos (emotion)- the emotional content that makes a connection to people and motivates them to take action.

I hope these few hints help you. They've helped me in my letter writing and in my "speeches" to various officials over the past year. Give it a shot, it's not as hard as it appears. Believe me, if I can do it, you can too! And the EBOARD welcomes your help as we try to resolve the common issues we all face as nursing home residents. Have a great New Year, and I look forward to a productive and less frustrating 2020!



## **E-Board Corner**

**by E-BOARD Member**

**Brad Parkhurst**

My name is Brad Parkhurst and I serve on the Statewide Executive Board of Presidents of Resident Councils. I served as the Resident Council President at Harbor Village South in New London, CT prior to its closing in 2017 and transitioned into the community with The Money Follows the Person Program. While a Resident Council President at Harbor Village South, I came up with the idea to help the council fund our bingo prizes, but it also helped the Recreation Dept as well. We incentivized residents to participate in Bingo by paying out a quarter, fifty cents, and a dollar for the last game to make it fun and something to look forward to each week.

To raise money for the prizes, the Resident Council would put out a box in the common areas like the staff break rooms, day rooms, and front lobby to collect and recycle empty soda cans, water bottles, etc. We would have a designated person from the recreation department take and cash in the bottles/cans and we would use that money as the Bingo prizes. The residents would either save their winnings or spend it in the facility vending machines. It doesn't sound like much, but for some residents who don't receive any money, that was a treat. It also helped with recycling because that's money being thrown out if you think about it.

I'm no longer a resident at the nursing home due to its closure but I continue to visit Harbor Village North and assist residents as needed. I recently assisted residents with the \$2 bill activity and sent about 30- \$2 bills to The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. I also continue to serve on the E-BOARD to help residents fight for quality care in nursing homes and their rights.



# How to Contact & Communicate with your Local Legislature

Would you like to get messages to the elected officials that have the power to effect change? Get your voices heard by reaching out to your local legislators, in both the House and the Senate, and introduce yourself. Here are some strategies when contacting your legislators:

1. Invite them to visit your home and meet with residents
2. Invite them to attend or be a guest speaker at an upcoming Resident Council Meeting
3. Share real stories with them about life in a skilled nursing home and how low staffing impacts the quality care you receive
4. Compile a list of 2-3 topics to discuss that would improve the quality of life for residents in your home.

To find your local legislators go to:

[www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov)

click on "Representation" on top left corner and click "Find Your Legislators" enter your Town and Address information, then press "Find"

You may also contact The Legislative Office Building directly at 300 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106 and/or 860-240-0100 and ask to speak to your local legislator.

The 2020 Regular Legislative session is right around the corner and will convene February 5<sup>th</sup> and adjourns May 6<sup>th</sup>. Now is the time to reach out and get your voices heard! If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your Regional Ombudsman.

Please share and submit summaries of any legislative visits at your home, and if possible, share photos to be featured in a future Silver Panther Edition. You may submit to the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Best Practices Committee, via email- [LTCOP@ct.gov](mailto:LTCOP@ct.gov) and/or via fax- 860-424-4808.





# **WE WANT YOU!**

Each year the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and Executive Board propose legislative items to our Legislature on a variety of issues that would improve the rights, welfare, and quality of life for CT nursing home residents.

Last year, we proposed that the Personal Needs Allowance for nursing home Medicaid recipients be raised from \$60.00 per month to \$72.00 per month. The bill did not pass, but there was a spirited debate on this topic among legislators.

**What:**

On the following page are sample \$2 bills. We are asking residents to inform our legislators on how \$2.00/day (\$60/month) does not provide you with enough money to provide for your needs.

**How:**

Have as many residents fill out the \$2 bills (please ask your Recreation Director to make copies) and send them back to us!

**When:**

The legislative session begins on February 5, 2020. Send your bills back to us by February 1, 2020.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program  
55 Farmington Avenue, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06105

**C**onnecticut  
**A**ffirms  
**R**esident  
**E**ssentials

Could you  
provide for your  
personal needs on  
\$2.00 a day?

**P. N. A.**  
Personal Needs Allowance

TWO DOLLARS

**C**onnecticut  
**A**ffirms  
**R**esident  
**E**ssentials

Could you  
provide for your  
personal needs on  
\$2.00 a day?

**P. N. A.**  
Personal Needs Allowance

TWO DOLLARS

**C**onnecticut  
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**E**ssentials

Could you  
provide for your  
personal needs on  
\$2.00 a day?

**P. N. A.**  
Personal Needs Allowance

TWO DOLLARS

*Please describe the needs and wants that you cannot meet on a monthly basis due to the cut in your **PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE**:*

*Signature:*

*This project was brought to you by the Presidents of Resident Councils in partnership with the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program*

*Please describe the needs and wants that you cannot meet on a monthly basis due to the cut in your **PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE**:*

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*Signature:*

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## Best Practice



On September 26, staff and residents from the ICare Health Network celebrated at 60 West in Rocky Hill for the annual fair. The fair happens each fall at different locations with different fun themes, often tied to autumn events such as football, Halloween and fall leaves.

The yearly celebration brings residents, staff and administrators from all the ICare facilities together. This year's event was about music. Staff and residents wore their favorite concert t-shirt, rocked out to a Shazzaam-Named That Tune contest and Hair Band hair to bring it all together. The Administrator's team played a Harvey's Hundreds style match game, attempting to match 16 music related photos into pairs.

## Best Practice

### Cheshire Regional Rehab promotes Story Sharing Toolkit in monthly Recreation calendar

Cheshire Regional Rehab Center's Recreation program continues to incorporate fun interactive socialized programming using the Person-Centered Care Story Sharing Toolkit from the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Annual Voices Forum in 2018.

The Residents participate in several cognitive and physical activities. One popular program is the "adaptive question inflated ball toss", where there are questions on the sides and residents answer according to where they catch it. Another game is the five senses which expansively covers hearing, touch, smell, taste, and sight where residents answer questions related to their basic needs. The inflated ball toss activity is tailored to their specific levels of dexterity and motor skills and incorporate many various mediums they enjoy. The program seeks to emphasize and include full intergenerational togetherness. Cheshire Regional Rehab will continue to incorporate the Story Sharing Toolkit into their monthly recreation calendar as an ongoing activity at the home.



## **Best Practice**

### **Equine Therapy for Silver Springs Residents Through Manes and Motions**



**In August 2019, three veterans who are current residents at Silver Springs Care Center in Meriden took part in an equine therapy program through Manes and Motions in Middletown, Connecticut. Manes and Motions is a Therapeutic Riding Center operated by Hospital for Special Care in New Britain. According to The Manes Website, “riding a horse gives you freedom and empowerment through movement. A horse can be a powerful motivator in reviewing or reinforcing many behavioral, physical, mental, and social and emotional goals.”**

**Service to veterans is one of the core services provided through their Equine Assisted Activities. Silver’s veterans thoroughly enjoyed their experience.**

# GOVERNMENT WORD SEARCH



S	E	N	A	T	O	R	P	P	A	D	E
U	P	A	V	O	T	E	O	O	P	D	A
B	R	A	E	T	B	P	L	L	Q	E	R
C	O	R	T	H	I	R	L	I	M	M	A
O	B	A	O	E	L	E	C	T	I	O	N
M	U	R	A	S	L	S	X	I	N	C	M
M	D	E	B	A	T	E	R	C	O	R	A
I	G	P	E	L	H	N	A	S	R	A	J
T	E	U	P	G	O	T	Y	A	I	T	O
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E	S	I	H	P	E	I	O	L	A	W	T
R	A	C	T	E	I	V	L	O	B	B	Y
S	T	A	G	O	V	E	R	N	O	R	U
P	A	N	E	P	L	A	T	F	O	R	M

VOTE, ELECTION, POLITICS, BILL, SUBCOMMITTEE, VETO, HOUSE,  
 SENATOR, GOVERNOR, REPRESENTATIVE, TESTIFY, REPUBLICAN,  
 DEMOCRAT, MAJORITY, MINORITY, LOBBY, DEBATE, PLATFORM, LAW,  
 BUDGET, POLL

~Created by Karen Hawley~



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(SCPRC)  
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**Rita Wissink  
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Care Center  
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Naugatuck, CT**

**MAIREAD PAINTER  
STATE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN**

**860- 424-5200**

**Desiree Pina - Administrative Assistant**

**860-424-5239**

**CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL OMBUDSMAN**

**TOLL FREE NUMBER**

**1-866-388-1888**

**WESTERN**

INTAKE NUMBER 203-597-4181

Deborah Robinson - Intake Coordinator

Regional Ombudsmen

Sylvia Crespo, Tasha Erskine-Jackson

**SOUTHERN**

INTAKE NUMBER 860-823-3366

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Regional Ombudsmen

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**NORTHERN**

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Regional Ombudsmen

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