

Serving residents of long-term care homes in Vanderburgh County



VOICES VIEWPOINT

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WHAT IS VOICES?

VOICES, Inc. provides free and confidential Ombudsman services. We are a not-for-profit organization founded in 1980 to address concerns and problems in Evansville nursing homes and licensed assisted living homes. VOICES, Inc. is the only agency in Vanderburgh County dedicated solely to advocate for residents in these homes. Services include investigation of complaints, resolution of problems, and protection of residents' rights. Additional services include information/training for staff, residents, and the general public on long-term care issues—these issues are quality of life, residents' rights, selection of a home, and sources of payment for care.

CELEBRATE RESIDENTS' RIGHTS WEEK

October 5th – 11th

The National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) selected the week of October 5th as Residents' Rights Week. This week is a time to reflect on the importance of the Nursing Home Reform Law of 1987. This Law protects rights and quality of life for each resident. Also, during this week, NCCNHR gives special thanks to the work of thousands of individuals. Daily, these individuals make sure that dignity, privacy, and other basic human rights are given to all long-term care residents.

Take this opportunity to celebrate your rights. Congratulate yourself for standing up for them and for the rights of those you live with. Be sure to say "thanks" to citizen advocates, facility staff, family members, and others who work to promote and support residents' rights during Residents' Rights Week.

Start the celebration early! Join us at the area-wide resident council meeting on October 3rd. See page 3 for more information.

For more information on Residents' Rights Week visit www.NCCNHR.org.

HOW DO YOU CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN?

When anyone—a resident, family member, friend, nursing home employee or other interested party has a complaint, problem or concern regarding the health, safety, welfare and/or rights of a resident, they can turn to the Ombudsman, **Michelle Motta**, for assistance by calling **(812)423-2927**.



ARE YOU STILL ELIGIBLE FOR EXTRA MONEY?

WHAT?

The Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 allows money to be paid to over 130 million American households.

WHO?

You are eligible for a payment, if you have at least \$3,000 in qualifying income. Qualifying income is:

- earned income
- Social Security benefits (including Social Security Disability payments)
- certain Railroad Retirement benefits

To receive this payment you must file a 2007 tax return - even if you are not required to.

WHY?

If you have qualifying income, you will receive a payment of \$300. In addition, you will receive \$300 for each qualifying child.

HOW?

File a simplified Form 1040A to receive your economic stimulus payment. (Package 1040A-3 provides instructions on how to file a tax return.) You may also file electronically, for free, at www.irs.gov. Click on the "free file" icon to begin.

WHEN?

You must file with the IRS by **October 15, 2008**.

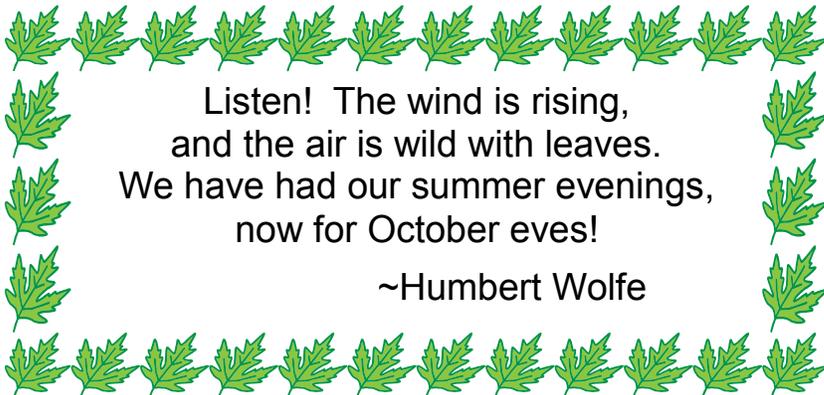
DO YOU NEED HELP?

You can receive assistance by:

- going to www.irs.gov
- calling the IRS at 1-866-234-2942

Once you have filed a 2007 tax return, you do not have to do anything more to receive your economic stimulus payment. The IRS will determine eligibility, figure the amount, and send you the payment.

(The above information was taken from
IRS Package 1040A-3.)



Presidential Election 2008

You must be registered, if you want to vote on November 4th. The deadline to register is October 8th. To verify your voter registration status, call 1-866-461-8683.

You can vote by mail, by traveling board, or at the polls. When voting by mail, you must return your ballot to the County Clerk's office by midnight, 8 days before Election Day. When voting by traveling board, the board comes to you during the Circuit Clerk's regular office hours. If you wish to vote at the polls, you must bring your government issued photo ID. You can obtain a photo ID, from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, free of charge. You can call 1-866-461-8683 with any questions.

- Step 1: Voice Concerns to Those Directly Involved**
- Step 2: Bring Your Concerns to Staff Supervisors**
- Step 3: Follow the Facility’s Complaint Process**
- Step 4: Work With the Resident or Family Council**

For further information on steps 1 through 4, see prior issues of *VOICES Viewpoint*, or go online to www.voicesinc.info and click on “newsletters”.

Step 5: Contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

A long-term care ombudsman helps long-term care residents. Federal and state laws give the ombudsman the power to help consumers with nursing home problems.

An ombudsman will investigate your complaint and work to resolve your concerns. The ombudsman can also find out if others at your home have similar issues. This allows problems to be handled on a facility-wide basis. If you desire, the ombudsman can keep your complaint a secret.

If you need help, contact the ombudsman, Michelle Motta, at 423-2927. When calling, try to provide detailed information about the complaint, who has been contacted, and what answer has been received. Services are free and confidential.

(Taken from National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform’s Resolving Problems in Nursing Homes, Consumer Information Sheet, 1999.)



JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holidays are fast approaching – time for cooking, baking, and gift giving. Luckily, we have the answer—*Timeless Recipes and Memories*. This cookbook contains 178 recipes from area long-term care residents. It is a colorful 3-ring binder including large print, category dividers, and a plastic stand.

Call 423-2927 today, to receive your copy for just \$10.00.

All proceeds go to VOICES, Inc. to assist in advocating for long-term care residents in Vanderburgh County. Such a wonderful way to give during the holidays!

AREA-WIDE RESIDENT COUNCIL MEETING

The quarterly area-wide resident council meeting will take place on **Friday, October 3rd**. It will be held at the **Browning Event Room at the Central Library from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.** Doors will open at 1:30 p.m. There will be a short program in celebration of Resident Rights Week, discussion about transportation issues, refreshments, socializing and bingo.

Please encourage residents from your home to attend. Also, persuade your Activity Director to add this event to your home’s calendar and make transportation arrangements for those residents who wish to go. If you have any questions, please call 423-2927.

Who makes health care decisions for me?

You make your own health care decisions as long as you are able. If you are unable, your eligible family members can make decisions about your health care. By law, eligible family members are your spouse, parents, adult children, or siblings. There is no priority among your eligible family members. That is one reason why it is a good idea to appoint a HEALTH CARE REPRESENTATIVE. If you appoint a Health Care Representative, you give that person the authority to make decisions for you over and above your eligible family members. If you become incompetent, have not appointed a Healthcare Representative, have no eligible family members or your family members disagree regarding your healthcare, the court may appoint a guardian to make health care decisions for you.

How do I appoint a HEALTH CARE REPRESENTATIVE?

An Appointment of Health Care Representative must be in writing, signed by you, and witnessed. The Appointment is not effective until you are unable to make your own healthcare decisions. You can revoke an Appointment, in writing, if you do not want your representative to make decisions for you anymore.

Who makes financial decisions for me?

A joint owner of a bank account can act on your behalf in managing the account. A representative payee can manage your Social Security benefits. Most people need more financial assistance. Therefore, you can grant POWER OF ATTORNEY to someone who can handle a wider variety of decisions for you. This person is called your Attorney in Fact. Even after you appoint your Attorney in Fact, you can continue to make your own decisions as long as you are able. If you become incompetent and you have not appointed an Attorney in Fact, the court may appoint a guardian to make financial decisions for you.

How do I appoint an ATTORNEY IN FACT?

A Power of Attorney must be in writing, signed by you, and notarized. You can control when the Power of Attorney goes into effect. You can revoke a Power of Attorney, in writing, if you do not want your Attorney in Fact to make decisions for you anymore.

Where can I get legal help with important legal documents?

Indiana Legal Services, Inc., provides **free** legal services to individuals over the age of 60. Applications are accepted by telephone on Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Call today. Don't delay!

(The information above was provided as a public service by Indiana Legal Services, Inc. Consult an attorney before you sign any legal documents to make certain that the documents meet your needs.)

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ALL SERVICES ARE FREE
AND CONFIDENTIAL



Upholding the rights and dignity
of Nursing Home Residents

DONATIONS AND MEMORIAL
CONTRIBUTIONS ARE
GREATLY APPRECIATED!

