

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 resident 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.

### AREA-WIDE RESIDENT COUNCIL MEETING



The quarterly area-wide resident council meeting will take place on **Friday, August 7th**. 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.

This will be a gathering of long-term care residents across Vanderburgh County. There will be a guest speaker from Indiana Legal Services to answer your questions about guardianships, Powers of Attorney, healthcare representatives, Living Wills, etc. Afterwards, stay for food 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.

### WHO CONTACTS THE OMBUDSMAN?

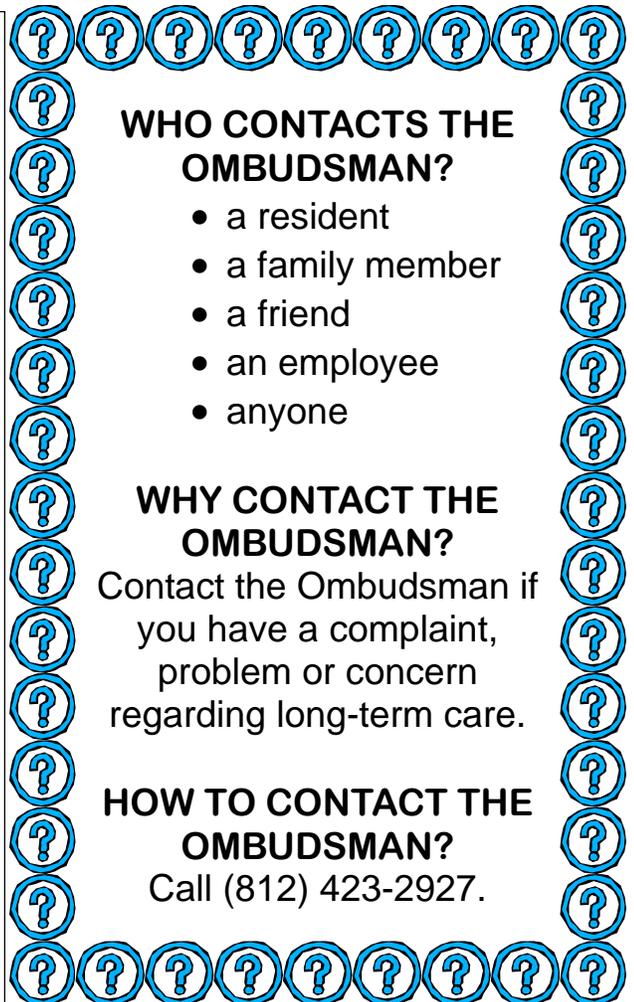
- a resident
- a family member
- a friend
- an employee
- anyone

### WHY CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN?

Contact the Ombudsman if you have a complaint, problem or concern regarding long-term care.

### HOW TO CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN?

Call (812) 423-2927.



# RESIDENT RIGHTS REVIEW

## BASIC RIGHTS

- You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- You have the right to have your individuality and preferences recognized.
- You have the right to receive quality care and treatment that is free from discrimination.
- You have the right to have a relative or legal representative exercise these rights when you are unable to do so.



## INDEPENDENCE DAY QUIZ

- Why did the Pilgrims come to America?
  - A) In search of gold
  - B) To meet Indians
  - C) For religious freedom
  - D) To escape the war
- Who said, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"?
  - A) Thomas Jefferson
  - B) Patrick Henry
  - C) George Washington
  - D) Benjamin Franklin
- How many representatives are there in Congress?
  - A) 50
  - B) 435
  - C) 102
  - D) 220
- Who selects the Supreme Court Justices?
  - A) The Electoral College
  - B) The Senate
  - C) The President
  - D) The people
- Who has the power to declare war?
  - A) Congress
  - B) The President
  - C) The Chief Justice
  - D) The Vice President

ANSWERS: 1. C 2. B 3. B 4. C 5. A

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN TO ATTEND!

### The first annual *Greatest Generation . . . A Celebration!*

will take place on Sunday, November 8th, 2009 at St. Mary's Medical Center Annex.

- 2:00 p.m.—Food
- 3:00 p.m.—Program: "The Good Old Days"
- 4:00 p.m.—Dance

We have a resident willing to donate one of his original works of art. And we are looking for other items made by residents to donate for our silent auction. If you have any hand-made items, please contact Michelle at (812) 423-2927.



More details will be in the next *VOICES Viewpoint* and on our website at [www.voicesinc.info](http://www.voicesinc.info).

Proceeds to benefit VOICES, Inc. in advocating for residents in long-term care homes in Vanderburgh County.

# PROBLEM SOLVING WITHIN YOUR HOME

- \*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
- \*Step 5: Contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- \*Step 6: Contact the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)



\*For further information on steps 1 through 6, see prior issues of *VOICES Viewpoint*, or go online to [www.voicesinc.info](http://www.voicesinc.info) and click on "newsletters".

## Step 7: Talk with Inspectors When They Investigate the Facility

Nursing homes are investigated annually and when a complaint is made to the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH). These state inspectors are nurses who conduct a complete investigation. Signs are posted on the outside doors of the home, by the state inspectors, indicating an investigation is taking place. During each survey, state inspectors are available for private interviews with residents to discuss their views about the care the facility provides. In addition, state inspectors may also talk with family members and friends of residents.

Make a point of talking with the state inspectors early on about your concerns. Be prepared to give them as much information as possible (who, what, when and where) so they can best investigate your concerns. If you wish, you can also remain anonymous.

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

## MID-AMERICA INSTITUTE ON AGING Living Long . . . Living Well . . .



Southwestern Indiana Regional Council on Aging (SWIRCA) and the University of Southern Indiana College of Nursing and Health Professionals are teaming up! They will present the second annual Mid-America Institute on Aging, August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at the USI campus. This conference is for elders, family members and those professionals who work with and care for elders. Lunch and refreshments will be provided and the location is ADA accessible. National and local presenters will speak on a variety of topics. The cost for retirees and students is \$25 for one day or \$50 for both days. The cost for all other individuals is \$75 for one day or \$140 for both days. Register by July 29<sup>th</sup>! For more information call **1-800-467-8600** or go to [www.health.usi.edu](http://www.health.usi.edu).



## QUALITY OF LIFE: WHAT IS IT and DO YOU HAVE IT?

Quality of life means that you are in control of your own life. This means that YOU, not the nursing home staff, determine what is best for you. By law, nursing homes cannot setup routines or programs and expect residents to adapt to them. Nursing homes must reasonably accommodate the decisions you make about your daily life.

Your quality of life is what you believe it to be. No one else can define what quality means to you. Federal and State laws require nursing homes to care for their residents in a manner and environment that respects each person as an individual.

Some questions to ask yourself to see if you have quality of life are:

- Do you decide what you will wear each day?
- Is your hair washed, trimmed, combed the way you want it?
- Are your nails kept clean and trimmed the way you like?
- Are you asked which activities you would like to attend?
- If there are no activities which interest you, does someone ask you what activities you would like?
- Is your private space respected? (No one should change the station on your radio or TV, open your drawers, or move your personal belongings without your permission.)
- When staff members come to your door do they knock AND wait for your response before they enter?
- Have staff members asked you what name you prefer to go by, and do they use it respectfully?
- Do staff members ask you your preferences and pay attention to them regarding room changes or roommates?
- Are you able to choose between a tub bath or shower and whether you prefer to bathe morning, afternoon, or evening? (Staff members should ask you your preferences and then follow them when setting up your care plan.)

These are just a few examples of the kind of things which may determine your quality of life. **It is very important for you to understand that you are not causing trouble by making your wishes known and expecting them to be respected and acted upon.** You are actually doing the nursing home a favor by helping them to meet the requirements of the law.

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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!

