

Serving residents of long-term care homes in Vanderburgh County

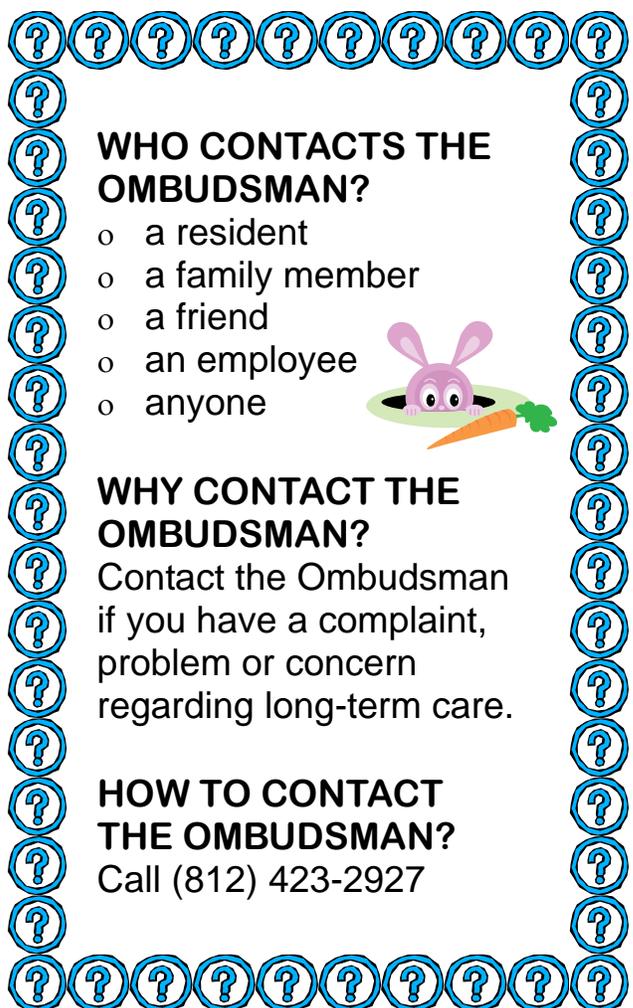


# VOICES VIEWPOINT

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## WHAT IS VOICES?

VOICES, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1980. We provide free and confidential Long-Term Care Ombudsman services. VOICES, Inc. is the only agency in Vanderburgh County dedicated solely to advocate for residents in nursing homes and licensed assisted living homes in Evansville. Our 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.



### WHO CONTACTS THE OMBUDSMAN?

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

## Michelle's Message

Many residents of long-term care facilities tell me they feel like they are in jail when they are told they can't leave the building to walk around the block, go shopping or sit outside. Long-term care facilities have a duty to protect those living in the building; but, there needs to be a balance with the rights of residents. After all, residents have the right to make decisions about aspects of their life that are important to them. If a resident is competent, it should be possible to get their doctor to write an order for formal "permission" to go out of the building without supervision. If the resident has some memory problems or a mental illness, the resident may be required to have supervision when leaving the building. Either way, the resident should not be a prisoner in the facility. Recently, I advocated for a resident so he could go shopping for a pair of shoes. A local store had a pair he wanted that were even on sale. He was able to go to the store and find a pair that fit, save money and no longer be a prisoner in the facility.





## ~PROBLEM SOLVING WITHIN THE FACILITY~

### Step 2: Bring Your Concerns to Staff Supervisors:

If talking with the staff person most directly involved does not resolve the problem, bring the concern to those who supervise the staff. This may be the charge nurse or the director of nursing. They will need to have concrete information. *What happened? When? What efforts were made to resolve the situation? How did it affect the resident?*

The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for staff to look into the problem. It is often difficult for staff, who are not involved in a situation, to be able to respond to general concerns such as "Staff people aren't nice." For example, staff respond more easily to a complaint that a particular aid was gruff in a particular situation. Providing detailed information also will demonstrate the seriousness of the concern. Record the date and time, the name of the supervisor you contact, and their response to your concern. (Taken from National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform's Resolving Problems in Nursing Homes, Consumer Information Sheet, 1999)

Problem solving steps to be continued in upcoming publications of *Voices Viewpoint*.



Today is the day when  
bold kites fly,  
When cumulus clouds roar  
across the sky.  
When robins return,  
when children cheer,  
When light rain beckons  
spring to appear.  
Today is the day  
when daffodils bloom,  
Which children pick  
to fill the room,  
Today is the day  
when grasses green,  
When leaves burst forth for  
spring to be seen.  
-By Robert McCracken

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE OLYMPICS!



#### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 2012

9:00 a.m. – assisted living residents

1:00 p.m. – nursing home residents

The Vanderburgh County Senior Olympics is fast approaching! The games will be sponsored by Southwestern Indiana Regional Council on Aging (SWIRCA and More) for residents of nursing homes and assisted living homes. This will be a wonderful time to get out, socialize, compete, and show your strength. Ring toss, fishing, ball toss, washers, and wheelchair races are just a few of the categories available. Don't forget to show your team spirit by wearing coordinating hats, scarves or other ornaments to set your team out from the rest; make up a team name, cheer or song. The top three winners in each category are awarded medals, so start training now to be in your best shape for the Olympics!

# E-mail and the internet - How do you Protect Yourself from Criminals

After 13 years of serving as your Ombudsman, it wasn't until recently that I received a complaint about a resident living in a long-term care facility being scammed through the internet. Laptop computers have become more affordable and more long-term care facilities offer internet access to residents. So, it was just a matter of time before criminals victimized this vulnerable population. The World Wide Web (the computer version of a library and post office all rolled up into one) is a valuable internet tool to help residents learn about anything, buy anything and stay connected with their family and friends. However, internet users who are uninformed or too trusting can easily fall prey to criminals. Just as we have learned not to give personal information over the phone, to someone who contacts us, the same goes for e-mails and the internet.

What follows is information I found on the internet (of course) at [www.atg.wa.gov/InternetSafety/](http://www.atg.wa.gov/InternetSafety/)

## Phishing (pronounced fishing) scams

Phishing scams are an attempt to trick you into revealing sensitive personal information that allows somebody to steal your identity or empty your bank account. These scams can come in many forms. Be very skeptical if you receive an e-mail that looks like it is from your bank or other trusted company, and asks you to provide personal or financial information. Contact the institution using a phone number from a statement or from another trusted source.

Look for these warning signs to spot a phishing e-mail:

- The sender is unknown to you.
- The e-mail is illiterate with grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.
- You are asked to provide personal information such as an account number, phone number, address, birth date, or social security number.
- The message contains words like URGENT or SECRET, and/or includes lots of exclamation marks.
- The message may state that you've won the lottery or some other prize.

It is usually best to delete any suspicious email and avoid flashy advertisements with promises that are too good to be true.

Besides phishing scams, there are other kinds of scams. Many of these are used to try to get you to click on a link or open an attachment which will then cause harm to your computer or allow access to your personal information. There will be more about computer safety in the next edition of *VOICES Viewpoint*.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* **The Days of Spring** \*  
 \* The days of spring are here. \*  
 \* Warm sunny days are near. \*  
 \* Birds in trees, flowers and bees. \*  
 \* The days of spring are here! \*  
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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!

“LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK!

