

Serving residents of long-term care homes in Vanderburgh County



# 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 include quality of life, residents' rights, selection of a home, advanced directives and sources of payment for care.

## Problem Solving Within the Home—Continued

### Step 1: Voice Concerns to Those Directly Involved

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

If you have talked with staff, most immediately involved, and the problem was not resolved, bring the concern to those who supervise the staff. This may be the charge nurse for the shift or the director of nursing. You will need to give the supervisor details. *What happened? When? Where? Who was involved?* You remember the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How from school?

The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for staff to look into the problem. It is often difficult for staff 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 told a resident “You WILL do what I say \$#%^!!!”. 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.

To be continued in upcoming publications of *VOICES Viewpoint*.

(From: The National Citizens’ Coalition for Nursing Home Reform, Consumer Fact Sheet No., 5 August 2002)





## Leaves, Pumpkins, Apples and Thanksgiving

“Oh, look. Do you see what I see? Let’s do it!” Running as fast as they can, the children jump into the biggest pile of leaves, throwing handfuls of leaves into the air.

They wait, shouting with glee, as the leaves waft slowly back down into the now messy pile. It was fun, but now time to make the pile neat again. “Do we dare do it again?” Before their eyes are so many more piles of leaves waiting for children’s cries of glee. Alas, it is time to put each pile into a bag. Residents remember having fun with leaves, but not bagging them. They talked of the comforting smell of leaves as they were burned. What a pleasant, but indescribable smell it was. Oh the memories of it! When you smelled the leaves burning, you knew Fall had arrived. Now bags of leaves replace the burning ones. Safer than burning, but not as much fun.

In October, we jump into our cars to take a ride into the country. Time to see the lovely colorful leaves on the trees all looking back at us one more time before falling to the earth to enrich the soil for spring.



We went apple picking at the local orchard. There were red ones, yellow ones, green and even golden ones . . . all there for the pickin’. “I like to eat the golden delicious.” “I like the Granny Smith. They are crispy and I like the sound when I bite into them.”

Now I have no idea which apple is the best to cook with, but this writer loves sweet, fresh, warm cinnamon applesauce with a bit of clove thrown in for good measure. Yum! Fresh cobbler or fresh apple pie rates high in the memories of the season.

“Trick or Treat!” As a child, our thoughts drift back to the day in October when we excitedly and hurriedly ate our supper, not tasting what we ate. We remember donning our best costume, going door to door, ringing the bell and shouting those words “Trick or Treat!” Then opening our bags, we waited expectantly to see what tidbit we got. “I couldn’t wait to get home, pour candy loot out on the carpet, look at the sweet-tasty things I got, then compare mine to my sister’s.”



Like many things, times change. Today, less children go door-to-door. They celebrate differently for safety reasons. However, whether going door to door or celebrating at a community party, you see happy smiles on each child’s face.



Rounding out fall is the smell of roasting turkey with all the trimmings. And oh how wonderful are the fresh pecan and pumpkin pies complete with whipped cream. Thanksgiving is here. The smell of mom’s and grandma’s cooking makes the entire home smell so good that our mouths water. “Oh my it is good! But, every year I eat too much.”

Here’s to Fall with its apples, pumpkins, sweet treats, turkeys and falling leaves of gold. Enjoy the season with all it brings as winter is fastly approaching along with it’s cold north winds.

May you be blessed with autumn childhood memories.



Until we meet again, I am Judith Mangum . . . Resident.

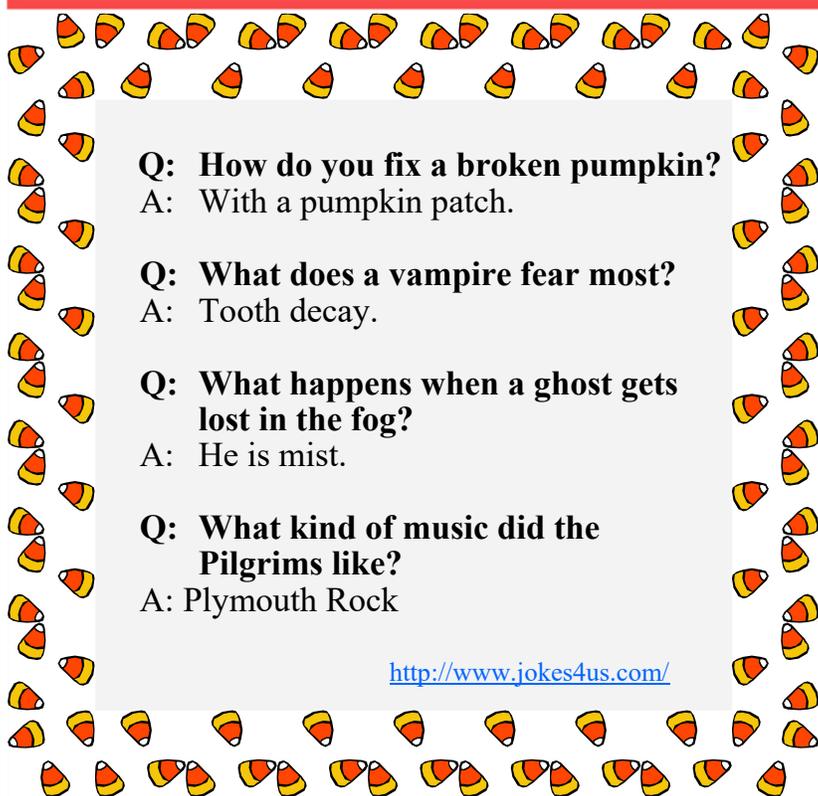
# How Your Home Can Assist You in Voting

## A facility can:

- Assist you in registering.
- Provide you with information on upcoming elections.
- Encourage you to become educated about candidates and issues.

## A facility cannot:

- Request a mail-in ballot for you without your knowledge.
- Witness more than one mail-in ballot for you per election.
- Influence your vote.
- Mark a ballot in a way other than instructed by you.
- Tell anyone how you voted.



**Q: How do you fix a broken pumpkin?**

A: With a pumpkin patch.

**Q: What does a vampire fear most?**

A: Tooth decay.

**Q: What happens when a ghost gets lost in the fog?**

A: He is mist.

**Q: What kind of music did the Pilgrims like?**

A: Plymouth Rock

<http://www.jokes4us.com/>

## 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?

1 (812) 423-2927  
mmotta@voicesinc.info



## Upcoming Events

**October 28th**—*Dance the Night Away Twist or Treat*

**October**—*Residents' Rights Month*

**November and December**—*Holiday Cheer Generation to Generation holiday card drive and distribution*

## *Michelle's Message*

**You have the right** (under federal and state regulations) **to voice complaints without fear of punishment!** PERIOD!!!!

Now, it is understandable that when you rely on staff for your basic needs to be met, you may be afraid to speak up. However, **if you don't speak up, things won't get better** for you and those you live with.

**You should inform the Director of Nursing (DON) when:**

- It takes more than 15 minutes to get your call light answered
- Someone is being mean to you
- Your meds are late, or
- You are not getting your showers.



**You should inform the Dietary Manager when:**

- Meals are late
- Your food is cold, or
- You are receiving food items you previously indicated you didn't like.

**After you voice your concern, YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE TO HEAR ANY THREATS especially:**

- "We can't meet your needs, so you need to go live somewhere else."
- "Since you are not happy here, you need to leave."

No! No! NO! It greatly angers me when staff say things like this to residents. They are threats! Just threats, because **complaining is not one of the legal reasons you can be forced to leave the home.** However, **this emotional blackmail can be considered verbal abuse and should be reported.** If you don't feel comfortable reporting these threats to staff, please contact me.

**If the facility wants you to leave, and you don't want to go:**

The facility has to give you a written notice on a form from the State of Indiana. This form is called *Notice of Transfer or Discharge*. You must appeal the notice within 10 days, after receiving it, or your right to appeal is forfeited. If you wish to appeal the *Notice of Transfer or Discharge*, or are being threatened with eviction, please contact me for free assistance at 812-423-2927.

**Here's to using your voice to stand up for yourself!**

*Michelle*

***"And just like that, Summer fell into Fall."***

*— Author Unknown*

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ALL SERVICES ARE FREE



Upholding the rights and dignity  
of Nursing Home Residents

DONATIONS AND MEMORIAL  
CONTRIBUTIONS ARE GREATLY  
APPRECIATED!

#voicesevv

