



# Ombudsman Connection

Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Inc.  
*Improving the quality of care for residents in long-term care facilities.*

Fall 2015

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Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford

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## CARE MATTERS IN THE BLUEGRASS by Denise Kennedy, Bluegrass District Ombudsman

This year has been one of great growth and change for the Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency. If you've been following us on Facebook, you've seen new faces and our new office! If you haven't found us on Facebook, check us out at [www.facebook.com/NHOABluegrass](http://www.facebook.com/NHOABluegrass). We invite you to come meet our new staff and see the office during our Open House on October 22nd from 3:00-6:00 pm. As the new Bluegrass District Ombudsman, I'm eager to meet you! I began working with NHOA in October 2014 in the state program as the Eastern Regional Ombudsman and this April, I was honored to accept the position of District Ombudsman. Every day I learn something new, but the best days happen when that knowledge helps a resident threatened by discharge or a family looking for a nursing home.



Here at the agency, we are in full swing for Residents' Rights month. In 1987, Congress passed the Nursing Home Reform Act and created a special bill of rights for long-term care residents. The law places a strong emphasis on individual dignity, choice, and self-determination. It also requires nursing homes to protect and promote the rights of each resident. These rights include the right to be fully informed; the right to participate in your own care; the right to make independent choices; the right to privacy and confidentiality; the right to dignity, respect, and freedom; the right to security of possessions; the right to visitors; the right to complain; and special rights during transfer or discharge. Every nursing home is required to provide services and activities to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident. We have updated and upgraded our *Know Your Rights* handbook for residents of long-term care facilities thanks to the generosity of the Fayette County Bar Association. For a copy of our new book, ask your facility ombudsman, call our office at (859) 277-9215, or email [denisekennedy@ombuddy.org](mailto:denisekennedy@ombuddy.org).



Our facility ombudsmen are also planning training events for long-term care facility staff. This year's theme for Residents' Rights month is **Care Matters**. Throughout the month of October, ombudsmen will provide education to facility staff to help them understand the rights of the residents they care for and how to make sure residents are free to exercise those rights. In addition, we will be educating residents about their rights during Resident Council meetings and special Residents' Rights Bingo games.

If you're interested in learning more about Residents' Rights, legislative advocacy, and how to make a difference in the lives of the thousands of long-term care residents of Kentucky, join our email list. We will help you stay informed of the issues facing long-term care residents and give you easy, simple ways to make sure your voice is heard. Call or email me to join.



### HEART OF KY UNITED WAY DAY OF ACTION

The Heart of Kentucky United Way's annual Day of Action was another resounding success. NHOA partnered with the United Way and volunteers to serve a pancake breakfast to personal care home residents and create tie dye t-shirts with nursing home residents in Boyle and Lincoln Counties. Thank you to the volunteers who dedicated their morning to brightening the day of some residents!



**WELCOME!**

**Amanda Curry,**  
Administrative  
Assistant

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**NHOA Board  
Members**

Peter Brown  
Mary Claire Cobetto  
Paula DeBoor  
Kathy Dedman  
Sandy DeFoor  
Sandy Dobozi  
Brian Dufresne  
H. "Gippy" Graham  
Joe Graviss  
Judy Hillard  
Steven D. Johnson  
Stacia Kaufmann  
Nancy Andrews Leonard  
Barbara Yearly Patrick  
Kathy Thompson  
Ruth Webb

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**NHOA Office Staff**

**Sherry Culp**  
State Long-Term Care  
Ombudsman  
**Laurie Clewett**  
Director of Fundraising and  
Administration  
**Amanda Curry**  
Administrative Assistant  
**Denise Kennedy**  
District Ombudsman  
**Mark Burress**  
Regional Ombudsman  
**Jodi Holsclaw**  
Regional Ombudsman

**WORKING TOGETHER FOR LTC RESIDENTS**

by **Laurie Clewett, Director of Fundraising and Administration**

I want to introduce myself as NHOA's new Director of Fundraising and Administration. I joined the staff in May and I'm so excited to be here! I became a social worker because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives—specifically, in the lives of seniors and people with disabilities. I'm grateful I've found an organization full of people dedicated to that same cause. From our board members to our ombudsmen to community supporters like you, we are all passionate about improving the quality of care for long-term care residents. I look forward to working with you in the coming years to fulfill that mission.



I encourage you to keep up with NHOA's advocacy work and events through email and on Facebook. Please feel free to contact me at (859) 277-9215 or [lclewett@ombuddy.org](mailto:lclewett@ombuddy.org) if you have questions about donating, about the agency's needs, to sign up for our e-mail list, or upcoming events.

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**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: FRIENDLY VISITORS**
**LEE KIEFER**

Living in a nursing home can be a lonely, isolating experience, and research shows that approximately 60% of residents do not have any visitors. NHOA's Friendly Visitor Volunteer Program brings comfort and friendship to residents. This year, we have welcomed more than 20 new Friendly Visitor Volunteers, including U.S. Olympian, Lee Kiefer.

Lee, a foil fencer, has taken her senior year off from studying pre-med at Notre Dame to travel the world competing for a place in the 2016 Sumer Olympics being held in Rio de Janeiro. Lee has committed her free time to making a difference for a resident in her local nursing home. Her new friend, Kathy, was all

the same!" Lee says. "Conversing with her has given me perspective and meaning as I take the year off to train."

**SALLY JOHNSTON**

After Sally Johnston retired from teaching, she became a Friendly Visitor at a Lexington nursing home. For almost five years, Sally has visited twice a week with Linda, a woman with Multiple Sclerosis who uses a wheelchair. Ombudsman Vanda Chambers notes that, before Sally started visiting, Linda spent most of her time in her room. "She wasn't getting dressed a lot and wasn't going to activities," Sally agreed.

Now, Sally and Linda attend activities together every Monday and Wednesday, including "Music, Movement, and More" and blackjack. Participating in activities gets Linda out of her room and gives her a chance to interact with other residents, as well as her Friendly Visitor. "They're a perfect match," according to Vanda. "Sally has really made a difference in the overall condition of the resident."

"I really enjoy being with Linda, and I know that it's important to her," Sally said. But Linda is not the only one who benefits from the relationship. "It's made a difference in my life. It makes me feel good after I've been there, like I've done something to help someone."

For more information about volunteering in your local nursing home, call our office at (859) 277-9215 or email [volunteer@ombuddy.org](mailto:volunteer@ombuddy.org).



smiles when Ombudsmen Denise Kennedy and Brenda Adkins introduced the pair. They instantly hit it off, sharing stories and laughs. Lee helps Kathy with her hair when she visits, and Kathy keeps Lee grounded when she's preparing for competition. "I have quite enjoyed my experience as a Friendly Visitor and hope that Kathy feels

**SILVER BELLS: MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**



Halloween is near, which means holiday decorations will be filling the shelves in a couple of weeks. As you prepare for the holiday season, consider donating gifts to the Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency for our annual Silver Bells gift drive. Long-term care residents are often forgotten during holidays, and most miss the traditions they once held dear. Last year, with your support, we provided holiday gifts to over 650 residents! These gifts go to residents throughout our

17 county service area and make an enormous difference to the people who receive them. Most residents wish for simple items, like sweatpants and sweatshirts, sweaters and gloves, blankets, socks and slippers, Jergen’s lotion and other name brand toiletries, and candy or snacks. Donations can be dropped off by December 14th at our new office, 3138 Custer Drive, Suite 110, Lexington, KY 40517. For more information, call (859) 277-9215.

**UPDATES FROM THE STATE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**  
**by Sherry Culp, Kentucky’s State LTC Ombudsman**

The Office of the Kentucky State Long-Term Care Ombudsman just celebrated its one year anniversary at the Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency (NHOA). It has been a rewarding and touching experience to serve as the State LTC Ombudsman with the assistance of Regional Ombudsmen Mark Burress and Jodi Holsclaw. Kentucky has 15 local district programs including the Bluegrass District Ombudsman Program, which is also housed at NHOA. As I travel across the state to visit residents and work with district ombudsmen, I encounter thousands of residents who are bravely navigating life in a long-term care facility despite poverty, illness, and disability. The ombudsmen and volunteers who serve these residents are truly dedicated advocates.

Ombudsmen work at the direction of the residents we serve. In Kentucky, there are 34 full-time staff, 107 certified ombudsman volunteers, and 274 Friendly Visitor and Advisory Council Volunteers working to improve the quality of care for residents. Ombudsmen from the local district programs served residents in 310 nursing facilities and 209 Personal and Family Care Homes. Over the past year, ombudsmen and volunteers made over 13,000 site visits to long-term care facilities to monitor care and advocate for residents. Ombudsmen identified, investigated, and worked to resolve 7,129 complaints. Over 300 complaints were related to abuse and neglect. Twenty-eight percent of complaints were poor care, injuries, falls, unanswered call bells, failure to follow doctor orders, pressure ulcers, and failure to notice a change in resident’s condition. On 7,193 occasions, program staff and volunteers across Kentucky provided information to individuals and families regarding long-term care placement, care planning, and questions about rights, abuse, Medicare and Medicaid. Ombudsmen provided 182 training sessions to facility staff and caregivers. Ombudsmen assisted residents in two long-term care facility closures this year. Residents were quickly relocated as ombudsmen ensured that they were given placement choices and their rights were respected during the relocation process.



*Regional ombudsmen Mark Burress and Jodi Holsclaw assisted residents during the closure of a Jefferson County facility.*

As we continue to work toward quality care and the prevention of poor care, we ask that you join us. All programs from Ashland to Paducah need volunteers. We also need you to share your experiences with long-term care and your suggestions for improving it. Please contact me at [sherryculp@ombuddy.org](mailto:sherryculp@ombuddy.org) or call (859) 277-9215.

**Bluegrass Ombudsmen**

- Brenda Adkins
- Michelle Barnett
- Beth Barrett
- Claudia Bledsoe
- Mary June Bruncker
- Angela Carpenter
- Vanda Chambers
- Pat DeMay
- Helen Downing
- Ann Evans
- Ken Evans
- Deanna Franklin
- Brenda Goodlet
- Becky Hacker
- Sue Landis
- Gene Layne
- Jerri Lucas
- Madge Lynn
- Brenda Mannino
- Susan McCray
- Paula Parks
- Edna Quire
- Vicki Talbert
- Kathy Thompson
- Mollie Wiseman
- Wini Yunker

**Love is ageless. Visit someone in a nursing home today!**



Become a Friendly Visitor.

Change the life of a resident, and your own, as a Volunteer Friendly Visitor.

Interested?  
 Call Denise Kennedy at (859) 277-9215



Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency

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NHOA is a local, independent nonprofit agency that relies on funding through individual donations, local United Way agencies, and grants.

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*NHOA's Services are free. Donate at [www.ombuddy.org](http://www.ombuddy.org)*



## NHOA FALL OPEN HOUSE

**You're invited to celebrate the opening of the Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency's new office. Please join us for light refreshments, show your support, and meet our staff!**

Thursday, October 22, 2015

3:00-6:00 P.M.

3138 Custer Drive, Suite 110

Lexington, KY 40517

(859) 277-9215