



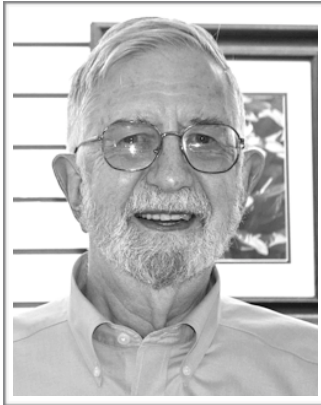
# Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) Winter 2017

The Residents' Advocate—Management's Friend [www.mlcra.org](http://www.mlcra.org)

President's Message by *Will Holton, Springhouse, Boston*

## MLCRA'S 2016 Accomplishments



Two thousand sixteen was a good year for the Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association. MLCRA's membership continues to grow with more five-year and Life Members than ever before. The *Patriot* has maintained its high level

of quality under of the leadership of Sheila McMahon and we all say thanks for her excellent work. A new board member, George Erickson, has improved the quality of our website. Members should help Sheila and George by sending them ideas and content.

MLCRA held two successful Area Meetings this year: in March at Brooksby Village in Peabody and at Southgate in Shrewsbury in November. More details will follow on the Southgate meeting for Areas 1 and 2. The Annual Meeting at Brookhaven in Lexington in May featured a keynote address presented by Alice Bonner,

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secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA).

**Our relationship with the EOEA continued in the fall when MLCRA was asked to work with them on a new handbook for people who are considering Continuing Care Residential Communities (CCRCs).** MLCRA board members reviewed and commented on a draft of the handbook and four of them attended a meeting at the EOEA office on

***Patriot Needs  
New Copy Editor***  
*(Details p. 9)*

Beacon Hill to review our input. There may also be a need for a handbook for people who already live in CCRCs.

### **Productive Work Group Sessions at the Southgate Area Meeting**

Work group sessions at round tables have become a common practice at our Area Meetings in recent years. On November 18, 2016, we had seven groups, starting with lunch with people at each table drawn from different communities to get a wide variety of ideas. A topic was assigned to each table and one person was chosen to take notes and prepare a list of priorities. The results of the good work at tables are as follows:

*(cont'd on p. 2)*

*President's Message (cont'd from p. 1)***Priorities for Topics Covered by Work Groups****The *Patriot* Newsletter and the MLCRA Website**

- An article on residents taking food from the dining room.
- An article on how management deals with residents who are deteriorating physically and/or mentally, but their families don't recognize the problem.
- An article on how staff appreciation is handled in the MLCRA member communities.
- Instructions on how the residents' views should be taken to the MLCRA Board.

**New Communication Methods and Promoting MLCRA Membership**

- Increase electronic access between MLCRA members and Board members, and among MLCRA members.
- Supply "rack cards" to every member community for use in membership drives.
- Talk about MLCRA membership in the individual communities.

**Implementing Existing Legislation**

- Print the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) for current laws in the *Patriot*.
- Promote the cleanup of existing language in Elder Affairs Laws, and remove loopholes and inappropriate modifications made after laws were passed.

**Possible Future Legislation**

- Promote legislation requiring that at least one resident must be an elected, voting member of each community's Board of Directors.

- Promote legislation requiring management to provide an appropriate level of communication technology (Internet and WI-FI access, etc.) to residents.

**Financial Issues including Understanding Disclosure Statements and Contracts**

- Do we receive sufficient information from management (i.e. balance sheets, income statements, cash flow statements, etc.)?
- When will residents or family members receive refunds and are refunds due when a resident moves within the community?
- What are the "normal" fee increases year-to-year in MLCRA member communities and how can large fee increases be challenged?
- Do some communities lack appropriate reserve funds?
- Do some communities lack adequate capital improvement funds for emergencies?

**Programs Provided to Residents at Local Communities**

- Are there trips outside the community and who pays for transportation and tickets or admission charges?
- Are there charges to residents for any activities inside the community?
- Is there an activities committee of residents and how much control do they have in the selection of programs and activities?

*(cont'd. on p. 5)*

***President's Message (cont'd from p. 2)***

- Are multi-day overnight trips provided as options to residents and who arranges for those trips?
- Are there charges to residents for transportation to medical appointments and/or for shopping?
- Are programs and activities at the community evaluated in a formal way; who carries out the evaluations; and how are the results communicated to residents?
- Electronic communications in some communities now include email lists used by management, a weekly newsletter/blog for messages among residents ("Over the Fence" at The Overlook), "Senior Portal" for notices and other information, and a pictorial directory of residents.

**Local Issues with Which MLCRA Could Help and Possible Ombudsman Role in MLCRA**

- If the Resident Council cannot solve a local issue, a MLCRA Ombudsman role might prove helpful to enlist specialized support.
- The decision-making structure of the organization could impact the desirability of using MLCRA.

**Outreach and Service by Residents for Surrounding Towns and Cities (including Political Work and Volunteering)**

- Individual and informal volunteering including in schools, libraries, and churches.
- Individual support with gifts, food banks, Haiti aid, etc.
- Neighbors – such as Briarwood — reaching out to the local mosque to provide education.

- Early voting
  - Shared programs.
  - Craft fairs.
  - Organized outreach to residents in the community, social issues, environmental issues.
- If you want to help with any of these projects, please contact Will Holton at 617-971-1614, wilfredholton@comcast.net)●***

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**Area 2 Meeting (cont'd from p.4)**

locations, to volunteering and the need for volunteering and the need for CCRC communities to be in touch with and be involved in the local communities in which they are located.

Several people signed up to continue working on the topics they had been discussing. Among these were:

- Bill Dill of Lasell Village and Mary Louise Eggimann of Southgate will continue work on the newsletter and on communication through the website;
- Jack Campbell of Overlook will work on communication and membership;
- Jerry Lyle and Bill Robinson, both from Willows at Westborough, will work on legislation and education;
- Bob Fulmer from Overlook will work on financial issues; and
- Bill Dill from Lasell Village showed an interest in outreach and services.

Unfortunately, not everyone had a chance to sign up and, of course, folks who did not attend the meeting might have an interest in working on one of these topics. Anyone wanting to add their name to the list of volunteers, should contact Will Holton.●