



Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021

The Residents' Advocate—Management's Friend www.mlcra.org

Showing Our Appreciation *by Allison Dolan, Brooksby Village*

In 2017, the Patriot ran a story about what MLCRA member communities did in lieu of tipping the many employees who contribute so much to our lives. The current Board thought another survey could be useful to see what might have changed since then. Conclusion - although the amount given has generally increased, the processes are still fairly similar. This time, a survey was sent to the Resident Association President/Chair and all seventeen member communities responded.

To no one's surprise, all communities have a no tipping policy and all communities reported having a Staff Appreciation Fund of some kind.

Four communities run a Staff Appreciation Fund drive twice a year; the others run a drive once a year, typically in the late fall. Residents typically coordinate the drive, in some cases with support from administration.

Although donating is voluntary at all communities, half of the communities suggest a donation amount.

Almost two thirds of the communities reported their resident participation is over 80 percent; for the others, participation is between 50 percent and 80 percent.

Anecdotally, communities are likely to focus on increasing participation rates, highlighting progress with a thermometer

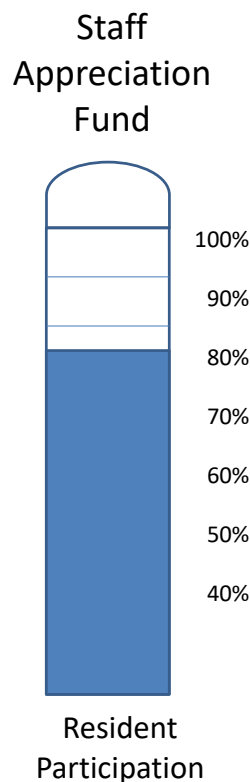
graphic like the example shown. Residents who have recently moved in are encouraged to participate, with their contribution prorated to the length of time they have lived there. Some communities mentioned reaching out to residents' families, especially for those residents who may no longer be managing their own finances.

For the communities that shared information about the average donation per resident, figures ranged from \$200 to \$1,250, with several mentioning donations of \$400 - \$800.

All communities recognize hourly staff, while most communities also include salaried staff. However, about 40 percent of the communities indicated that some staff were excluded from the appreciation gift, such as executive staff, department heads or other senior leadership.

When it comes to calculating how much an individual receives there were several different factors. The most common approach, used by nearly 90 percent of the

communities, was hours worked. Other considerations included length of service, pay, whether a staff person was part time or full time, and whether a person was hourly or salaried. A couple of respondents shared detail about how their process works. *(cont'd next page)*



Showing Our Appreciation (*cont'd from p.1*)

At six communities, management/human resources writes the checks, and at the other communities, the Resident Association writes the checks. We didn't ask about the size of the community – the difference between writing fifty checks or several hundred checks may be a factor.

Half of the communities have a luncheon or other ceremony where checks are handed

out; in other cases the checks are distributed by management or included in the regular paycheck envelope. Several communities include handwritten or personalized notes along with the check.

Regardless of the specifics, it was clear that all communities place a priority on showing appreciation for the many people who are such a part of our lives! ●



EDITOR OF PATRIOT NEWSLETTER

We are looking for a new editor to help produce our quarterly newsletter, the Patriot. A background or interest in writing, journalism or desktop publishing would be very helpful. The new editor will work with our current editor, Lauren Hale, and our editorial committee this fall and take over as editor in 2022. Please contact Jean Stringham at jean.stringham@gmail.com or 617-244-2492 for questions or more information.

STORIES: Please tell us if there are issues related to senior living that you would like the Patriot to cover. Topics should be of general interest to MLCRA members. We also want to publish stories written by residents about their

individual communities. We are looking for articles of 250-500 words about interesting activities or events in your community. You may want to fact check your information with management, but the stories should be written by residents. Please contact Lauren Hale at LHale20003@aol.com or 508-842-0515 with story ideas or questions.

PHOTOGRAPHS of scenes at your community or residents enjoying activities are wanted for both the Patriot newsletter and our website, www.mlcra.org. Please send jpeg files with the resident photographer's name and community to Jean Stringham at jean.stringham@gmail.com

President's Message

by Jean Stringham, Lasell Village

"If you want to go fast, go alone; But if you want to go far, go together."
African proverb

I like this proverb because it is relevant to many things in life. MLCRA members go together when they communicate and collaborate, especially on advocacy with our legislators.

Our lead article in this issue of The Patriot is a good example. The topic of staff appreciation comes up from time to time. Learning what other communities do can be very useful. We are delighted that all seventeen of our communities participated in our recent survey that forms the basis for this article.

Our board of directors is working on revisiting another example of collaboration. Caroline Jacobs, our vice president for membership, and Cynthia Childs, a new board member from The Overlook, are looking into how to bring back Area Meetings. In the past, MLCRA delegates gathered over lunch to talk about topics of interest. Although we are disappointed that we cannot get together in person, we can meet "face to face" by Zoom. We're considering calling these new meetings "Community Conversations". You'll be hearing more about these conversations from us in the future. Your MLCRA representative will be invited. so connect with her or him if you want to learn more or want to participate.



Please visit our website at www.mlcra.org to look for Member Associations and the name of your representative. While you're there, check out the many resources available to you.

As I write this, we don't know what the future holds for the pandemic with masks and social distancing. We do want to take the time to be grateful and appreciate what we have. I hope you will enjoy the

photographs of residents in various communities having fun with each other. Please continue to send us your photos and stories to share with others in future issues of the Patriot. We appreciate all the Patriot readers who are also MLCRA members; together we will go far.

Please stay healthy and safe.
Jean Stringham, MLCRA President

MLCRA Submits Testimony to Massachusetts Legislature

by the MLCRA Advocacy Committee

Due to Covid-19 restrictions regarding in-person testimony, MLCRA submitted written testimony to the Massachusetts legislature on behalf of the two bills we are currently supporting. One of the bills concerns entrance fee refund policy in Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) and the other bill is about health services in Assisted Living facilities.

The MLCRA Advocacy Committee submitted the testimony to the legislature's **Joint Committee on Elder Affairs** for a hearing held on June 14. The top legislators from the Joint Committee -- **Senate Chair Patricia Jehlen, Senate Vice Chair Julian Cyr, House Chair Thomas Stanley** and **House Vice Chair Kate Lipper Garabedian** -- spoke via Zoom to the MLCRA 2021 Annual Meeting in May.

The MLCRA Advocacy Committee members who prepared the testimony for the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs are **Joan Kerzner, Charles Sokoloff, and Dave VanArsdale**. Dave, who was elected to the MLCRA board at our Annual Meeting, is MLCRA's new Advocacy chair.

The first bill (**H746** and **S417**) would require CCRCs to provide more transparency regarding entrance fees and the refundable portion of that entrance fee paid either to the resident's estate upon death, or to the resident him/herself should he/she decide to leave the community. Disclosure varies greatly among the CCRCs and this bill would clarify and codify the requirements regarding this transaction and require that information regarding the disposition of this fee be disclosed upon admission.

The second bill (**H753** and **S409**) would authorize common sense health services in Assisted Living facilities. Under current Massachusetts law, Covid-19 exceptions notwithstanding, Assisted Living facilities are authorized only to provide residents with help to accomplish "activities of daily living" (ADL's), e.g., bathing, dressing, medication reminders. They are not permitted to provide basic health services, such as injections, application or replacement of non-sterile wound dressings, application of ointment or drops, and management of oxygen on a regular and continuing basis when the resident's medical condition warrants it. This legislation would enable Assisted Living facilities to provide the basic health services enumerated above, if they choose to do so. It is important to note that since Governor Baker declared a state of emergency in April 2020, and continuing through the end of this calendar year, Assisted Living facilities in the Commonwealth have been permitted to provide, temporarily, these services.

Watch for upcoming news regarding these two pieces of legislation as they move through the legislative process. They will have a significant impact on your future and the care that may be available for you. ●



Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer

Summer this year brought welcome relief from pandemic restrictions. Residents of MLCRA communities had fun outdoors -- sometimes without having to wear masks!

The photos on pages six and seven show residents enjoying themselves on land and on water. There are resident gardens, a parade, a concert, games, kayaking and a cookout. Here are details on some of the activities shown in the photos:

GARDEN BOXES

Sophia Snow Place sits at the edge of the Allendale Woods in West Roxbury which is great for hiking but not for gardening. So several years ago, at the suggestion of residents, three raised garden boxes were installed at the end of our property. The boxes are high so that residents do not have to bend over to do some gardening.

In the photo on page seven, the box on the left is reserved for tomato and herb plants. The box on the right holds annual flowers and bulbs for a lovely view along the walking path, and at the rear a third box was planted a few years ago with perennials so that it only requires maintenance and enjoyment of the rotation of the blooms. The Garden Committee takes turns with the watering and cleanup. It's a lovely spot for reading or conversation.

Ruth Klepper

COME RAIN OR COME SHINE

Southgate at Shrewsbury residents were looking forward to our annual series of outdoor concerts. Then came one of the wettest summers on record for our area. Three of the seven concerts were moved inside to Southgate's theater.

Among the concerts moved indoors by the rain was an 18-piece Big Band that played music of the 1930s and 1940s. Later in the summer, another Big Band was able to perform under the stars. Over the seven weeks of the concert series, residents also enjoyed two jazz bands, a country music band, a Beatles tribute band, and an oldies group that played music from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Lauren Hale

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE GARDEN

At *Lasell Village* in Newton, resident Dorothea Santos researched and planted twenty different flowers and vegetables that are cited in the plays and poems of William Shakespeare. Nearby are thirty raised beds and ground level garden plots of flowers and vegetables that resident gardeners lovingly tend. Each July the gardeners invite all our residents to a Garden Party to stroll through and enjoy the gardens. Colorful summer hats complement the colors of the beautiful gardens.

Jean Stringham



Brooksby Village Garden Patches

photo by Allison Dolan



Edgewood Residents Kayaking on Lake Cochichewick

photo by Dave Schmehl



Toasting Marshmallows at Willows Westborough

photo by Polly Horenstein

OUTDOOR
SUMMER FUN



Southgate Summer Concert *photo by Ruth Skala*



Beautifying the Overlook Campus.

photo by Susan Siopes



Garden Boxes at Sophia Snow Place.

photo by Ruth Klepper



Shakespeare Garden at Lasell Village.

photo by Jean Stringham



Brooksby Village July 4th Parade.

photo by Allison Dolan



Ladder Toss at Edgewood.

photo by Dave VanArsdale

For the Love of Gardening *by Allison Dolan, Brooksby Village*

“The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies”, said Gertrude Jekyll, British garden designer and horticulturist. Many of the gardeners at Brooksby Village would agree with Gertrude’s sentiment. As hard as it was to leave a house they may have lived in for decades, it was equally hard to leave gardens they had tended for years. In some cases, this was so important that their move-in date was linked to whether a garden patch would be available.

Resident gardens have been part of Brooksby Village since it opened in 2000. The first residents quickly signed up for up all the available 10’ x 10’ garden patches. (Note: We call them patches, because someone once observed that “plots are for dead people”.) As Brooksby expanded their campus, additional garden patches were added. As mobility issues increased, some raised beds were added. There are now 123 garden patches and raised beds available to any resident who agrees to some basic gardening courtesies.

I am the garden patch administrator – I keep track of the wait list, and who has been assigned a patch. Those assigned a patch are called “stewards”, reflecting their responsibility to maintain their small domain. Those interested in a patch can call me at any time of the year, and I can let them know what patches are available. We have been fortunate so far that most people can be accommodated. Each year there is a renewal process, so that those who have invested in soil enrichment and/or perennials can continue with the same patch. The annual renewal has also been a good time for stewards

to assess their physical abilities, and perhaps move from a ground level patch to a raised bed, or to reluctantly give up their patch altogether.

There is a variety of gardening preferences represented. Some people focus on flowers, typically with a mix of perennials and annuals. Some people are exclusively vegetable gardeners, where each year is a fresh start with tried-and-true varieties or exotic experiments; this year there was a black cherry tomato plant! A few of the vegetable gardeners look longer term, and have planted perennials, such as rhubarb and asparagus. Given that there is nothing like a garden fresh tomato, many of the “flower” gardeners also try to tuck in a tomato plant or two. Neighbors benefit from any excess produce.

Since the garden patches are an integral part of the campus, all residents get to enjoy the variety and colors of the different areas as well as the birds, bees, and butterflies in the vicinity. Rabbits are also attracted to the buffet much to the dismay of those whose plantings become rabbit food. Whether it is climate change or just having access to such a smorgasbord, even formerly impervious plants like marigolds have been consumed. Several of the vegetable gardeners have put up fencing to protect their tomatoes, eggplant, peas, beans and squash.

By the time you read this, the gardens will be winding down. And come next spring, the colorful cycle will resume. ●



Welcome to The Willows at Worcester

by David McKinley, The Willows MLCRA Representative

The Willows at Worcester is happy to be a new member of MLCRA. Residents in our community can enjoy anything from bridge to chorus, to gardening, to book clubs, and have formed interest groups focused on genealogy, opera, philosophy, and history. We enjoy listening to local ensembles, opera singers, pianists, and jazz musicians. In addition, many residents are accomplished musicians themselves and perform in our in-house concerts. Though interrupted by COVID-19, we look forward to the resumption of our collaboration with Assumption University and the WISE (Worcester Institute for Senior Education)

program where local University and retired educators present lectures on a variety of topics at no cost to our residents. Occasionally, some of our own residents take center stage and offer their expertise as part of the program.

Our Resident Advisory Committee (RAC) is made up of five elected members who act as liaisons between The Willows community and our Executive Director (ED) providing a means to communicate policy and general information between management and residents. In this process residents communicate their issues to the RAC via comment cards. Then the RAC meets monthly by itself and with the ED prior to the monthly ED breakfast where issues and announcements are addressed. Finally, the minutes of the ED Breakfast are disseminated to the residents.

The Willows at Worcester opened in 2009 and offers a variety of living options including 151 one-and two-bedroom apartments and 40 attached and free-standing cottages. Residents have priority access to the Health Center at The Willows



and to the SALMON Health and Retirement continuum if a need arises for assisted living, short-and-long-term rehab services, or long-term nursing care. Personal care options (PCO) and the SALMON VNA visiting nurse services are also available allowing Residents to “age in place” in many instances.

Amenities include two restaurants, a library, a movie lounge, a staffed fitness center, an indoor aquatic center with heated salt-water pool and hot tub, spa, a woodworking shop, a professional Full Swing Golf Simulator, billiard and table tennis lounges, and indoor heated parking garages. In addition, a bank, convenience shop and a hair salon are located on the premises. When Covid restrictions have finally lifted, we welcome residents of other MLCRA communities to come visit us!●

MLCRA Board and Resident Associations

MLCRA represents over 1,000 older residents throughout Massachusetts. Its membership includes individual resident members and 17 Resident Associations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Jean Stringham

Lasell Village
617-244-2492
jean.stringham@gmail.com

Vice-President for Membership

Caroline Jacobs

The Commons in Lincoln
781-430-6119
c.jacobs57@gmail.com

Vice President for Advocacy and Education

Vacant

Recording Secretary

Eunice White

Orchard Cove
339-502-8985 or 617-784-3294
eunicewhitehome@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary

Mary-Louise Eggimann

Southgate at Shrewsbury
508-925-5745
mleggimann@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Allison Dolan

Brooksby Village
978-587-2955
allisondolan77@gmail.com

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Cynthia Childs

The Overlook
508-434-2824 or 978-697-6460
cchilds_rindge@yahoo.com

Lauren Hale

Southgate at Shrewsbury
508-842-0515
LHale20003@aol.com

Charlie Sokoloff

Orchard Cove
508-202-0818
sokoman@sokolawyer.com

David VanArsdale

Edgewood
978-655-8345
emvdlv2013@gmail.com

Webmaster - Consultant

Allen Broughton
brought@rose-hulman.edu

PATRIOT EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Lauren Hale, Southgate, Patriot
Editor; **Patricia Walsh**, Sophia Snow
Place, Design and Layout; **Elizabeth
Losa**, Brooksby Village, Copy Editor

MLCRA COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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Brooksby Village, Peabody

Edgewood, North Andover

Lasell Village, Newton

Loomis Lakeside at Reeds

Landing, Springfield

NewBridge on the Charles,
Dedham

Newbury Court, Concord

Orchard Cove, Canton

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West Roxbury

Southgate at Shrewsbury

Springhouse, Jamaica Plain

Sweetwood of Williamstown

The Briarwood Community,
Worcester

The Commons in Lincoln

The Overlook, Charlton

The Willows at Westborough

The Willows at Worcester

The Massachusetts Patriot

The Massachusetts Patriot is the quarterly newsletter of the Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA). As the residents' voice, the Patriot covers news about Massachusetts retirement communities, monitors laws and regulations that affect residents of retirement communities, and serves as an advocate for residents' rights. Readers are encouraged to send letters or articles to:

Lauren Hale, Patriot Editor
LHale20003@aol.com or 508-842-0515

Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association

MLCRA Membership Application for new members

for year ending 12/31/2021

(please print)

Date: _____

Member Name(s): _____

Street: _____ Apt. # _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Email: _____ (for MLCRA purposes only)

Phone: _____ (for MLCRA purposes only)

Your Retirement Community: _____

Due to the pandemic, MLCRA is waiving membership dues for 2021 for new members; current members automatically have had one year added to their membership.

*Members will receive renewal information in the Oct-Dec 2021 Patriot.

Current members may use this form to update their information if there are changes, or send email with updates to allisondolan77@gmail.com

Please give this form to your MLCRA representative or mail it to:

Allison Dolan, Treasurer
104 Brooksby Village Drive, Unit 405
Peabody, MA 01960



Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association

Lauren Hale, Editor
Southgate
35 Julio Drive- Apt 208
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

NOTE: The date next to your name on the mailing label above indicates when your membership expires.

<p>Join MLCRA now to maintain your quality of life!</p>	<p>What is the Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association?</p> <p><i>The voice of residents of Continuing Care Retirement Communities</i></p> <p>The Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association (MLCRA), founded in 1998, is a state-wide non-profit volunteer organization. It represents individual members and resident associations located in non-profit and for-profit retirement communities known as Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) or Life Care Communities. These communities are also sometimes referred to as Life Plan Communities. They provide facilities and services for independent living and assisted living/skilled nursing care or both.</p> <p>The general purposes of MLCRA are communication, education, advocacy, and collaboration with members, resident associations and other organizations to support the well-being of seniors living in retirement communities. MLCRA is the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA).</p> <p>MLCRA recognizes and respects the common interests of residents and management. It supports efforts to promote a mutually beneficial relationship. When the interests of management and residents occasionally diverge, MLCRA serves as the residents' advocate.</p>
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