

PLANS FOR MLCRA ANNUAL MEETING

by Lauren Hale, MLCRA President

The MLCRA annual meeting, planned for June 3, 2020 at Lasell Village in Newton, has been postponed. The information below was written before the decision to postpone. We anticipate that the program will remain the same.



Sen. Patricia Jehlen

We are very happy to announce that State Senator Patricia Jehlen and State Representative Ruth Balser, the Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs in the Massachusetts legislature, have agreed to be the keynote speakers at the annual meeting.

The work of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs is important for seniors. We anticipate learning about the scope of the Committee's work as well as discussing pending bills of concern to residents of retirement communities. We will also talk about the best ways for MLCRA and its members to communicate with their legislators.

Senator Patricia Jehlen is the current Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs. She also held that position in 2012, when the Massachusetts legislature passed a Continuing Care Retirement Community "residents' rights" law. MLCRA members advocated for the law, which gives CCRC residents the right to receive information about the organization, operation and finances of their communities.

Senator Jehlen's support for the legislation was crucial to its passage.

Senator Jehlen served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1991 to 2005. She was elected to the Massachusetts Senate in 2005. She represents Medford, Somerville, and parts of Winchester and Cambridge. In addition to her work



Rep. Ruth Balser

on the Elder Affairs Committee, Senator Jehlen is Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development and Senate Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Cannabis Policy. She also serves on three other Joint Committees: Ways and Means, Revenue, and Community Development and Small Businesses.

(cont'd on p. 7)

ANNUAL MEETING POSTPONED

As the *Patriot* was going to press, the MLCRA board voted to postpone the 2020 annual meeting, previously announced for June 3, 2020, because of the coronavirus situation. We anticipate holding the meeting later this year at Lasell Village with the program as described in the story on this page. We will notify MLCRA communities of the new date. ●



Sheila McMahon

Sheila and former Medical Editor Susan Holton were responsible for reviving the *Patriot* after it had been suspended following the passing of longtime editor Joe Strain

We thank Sheila for the wonderful job she did leading the *Patriot* for six years. Sheila wrote dozens of news stories about MLCRA and its communities. She also wrote feature stories on many subjects of interest to our readers, including Medicare regulations, emergency preparedness in CCRCs, and communication between residents and their Board of Directors.

Lauren Hale and Jean Stringham, president and vice president of MLCRA, are interim co-chairs of the editorial committee. Pat Walsh of Sophia Snow Place continues as the design and layout editor. Elizabeth Losa of Brooksby Village continues as copy editor.

LONG-TIME PATRIOT EDITOR STEPS DOWN

Sheila McMahon, a resident of Springhouse, recently retired from her position as chair of the Patriot's editorial committee.

We are seeking a volunteer to become the new chair of the Patriot Editorial Committee. Responsibilities would include planning each issue in collaboration with the MLCRA board, writing articles, soliciting contributions from MLCRA members and other sources, and working with the editorial committee to publish the *Patriot*.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact either of the interim co-chairs:

Lauren Hale:
LHale20003@aol.com or
508-842-0515.

Jean Stringham:
jean.stringham@gmail.com or
617-244-2492.

Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) 2013-2019

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

Climate Change Initiatives at Massachusetts CCRCs

by Jean Stringham, Lasell Village



Retirement community residents discuss climate change at Brookhaven in Lexington

Photo:Ralph Miller, Brookhaven

On December 5, 2019 over 20 representatives from seven retirement communities met for the first time ever to share ideas and efforts about climate change and the environment. Thanks to Dr. Fred Hoppin of Brookhaven for convening this meeting. Topics discussed included climate change and food, advocacy, energy, trash, transportation, sustainability and education.

Communities that sent representatives were Brookhaven, The Commons at Lincoln, Carleton-Willard Village, Lasell Village, NewBridge on the Charles, Newbury Court and North Hill. People were enthusiastic about meeting again in the future.

The following is a piece that Deborah Ecker of Newbury Court wrote and read that day. Thanks to her for allowing us to reproduce it in this issue of *Patriot*.



Jean Stringham

Statement Read at CCRC Climate Change Meeting Brookhaven, December 5, 2019

by Deborah Ecker, member of the Newbury Court representatives

Thank you Brookhaven for launching what we would like to see as the initiation of a Consensus Statement about climate change from residents of the Boston Metropolitan Area's Life Care Communities and the need for action to reduce its inevitability. It is the intention of our Newbury Court Climate Change Group to achieve a consensus, beyond those of our Group, to come from our entire residential community about climate

change and our facility's commitment to do what we can to alter its progress.

Our proposal to this group is that this would be replicated by all the Life Care Communities represented here, and possibly beyond, possibly here and beyond, to construct a public statement that could draw attention about senior citizens' concerns. Could we be the Greta

(cont'd on p. 7)

A Successful Membership Drive at Brooksby Village

by Barbara Blandford, Chairperson, Brooksby Village MLCRA Committee

Over the past two or three years, Brooksby Village resident membership in MLCRA dropped off from around 200 members to 40. Residents were no longer hearing about the importance of MLCRA. To change this, we have



Barbara Blandford

Photo: Paul Blandford

done several things, and membership has increased from about 40 members in May 2019 to over 300 for 2020.

First of all, we had a general meeting with Lauren Hale and Jean Stringham, President and Vice President of Membership for MLCA, to talk about MLCRA'S mission, importance, and current pending legislation. At our monthly community Resident Advisory Council (RAC) meetings information about MLCRA was discussed. We wanted residents to know what MLCRA is an acronym for, how to say it, and the importance of membership. Even if

individual residents do not have the energy or inclination to be actively involved in the MLCRA Board and its committees, we stressed that numbers equals strength.

With the 2020 membership drive looming, we formed a Brooksby MLCRA Committee which has now been accepted as a formal committee of our RAC. We delivered the November *Patriot* to all current members late November to coincide with our formal membership drive. A week later we stuffed all 1350 independent living resident "cubbies" with information about MLCRA and a membership form, including a return addressed envelope to our MLCRA committee Chairperson which could be sent via campus mail saving individual residents postage. This also allowed the Committee to make their own membership list of Brooksby Village MLCRA members before returning member forms and checks in bulk to Jerry Lyle, Treasurer of MLCRA. MLCRA's calendar year was stressed, encouraging residents to renew or join now, not wait until later in 2020.

Four days after stuffing "cubbies", we staffed tables outside each of our three main dining venues where residents could get more information about MLCRA, return their 2020 membership forms before misplacing them, or join right then. Following this, returned membership forms were compiled, and reminder notices sent to residents who were already 2019 members but had not yet renewed for 2020. Thank you letters and receipts were sent to all with email addresses, and printed letters to those without.

Going forward: New residents who agree to have their names published are (*cont'd on p. 7*)

SOUTHGATE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS WITH ANNIVERSARY SHOW*by Lauren Hale**Photo: Richard Gaudette*

Residents of Southgate at Shrewsbury celebrated the 30th anniversary of their retirement community last November with a musical comedy revue. Friends and family filled Southgate's 200-seat Flanagan Theater to capacity for three performances.

The show featured a variety of resident talent. Line dancers wowed the audience with performances of "September in the Rain" and "Old Bones." There were songs

by solo artists and by the men's and the women's choruses.

Resident actors presented scenes from the Beverly Hillbillies and Star Wars. During the show, there were appearances by stars of yesteryear including Marilyn Monroe, Bob Hope, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans.

The 30th anniversary show was written and directed by Southgate program director, Deanna Swan. ●

What is happening where you live?

Share with us a short item about an interesting or unusual activity in your community. If you have questions or want to send a story, please contact Lauren Hale at LHale20003@aol.com or 508-842-0515. ●

*Photo: Ruth Skala, Southgate*

A Cane-Do Attitude

by Mary-Louise Eggimann, Southgate

Perhaps your doctor or rehab specialist has suggested that you use a cane to improve balance or to protect an injured leg. Maybe you already use a cane but it just doesn't give you the assist you need. How do you adjust the cane so that it provides the best support?

Most metal canes are adjustable in one-inch increments. Older wooden canes must be cut to the proper height. If your cane is too long, or too short, your ability to walk safely can be affected. So here is an easy and simple way to check your cane height for optimum performance: (You may need someone to assist you.)

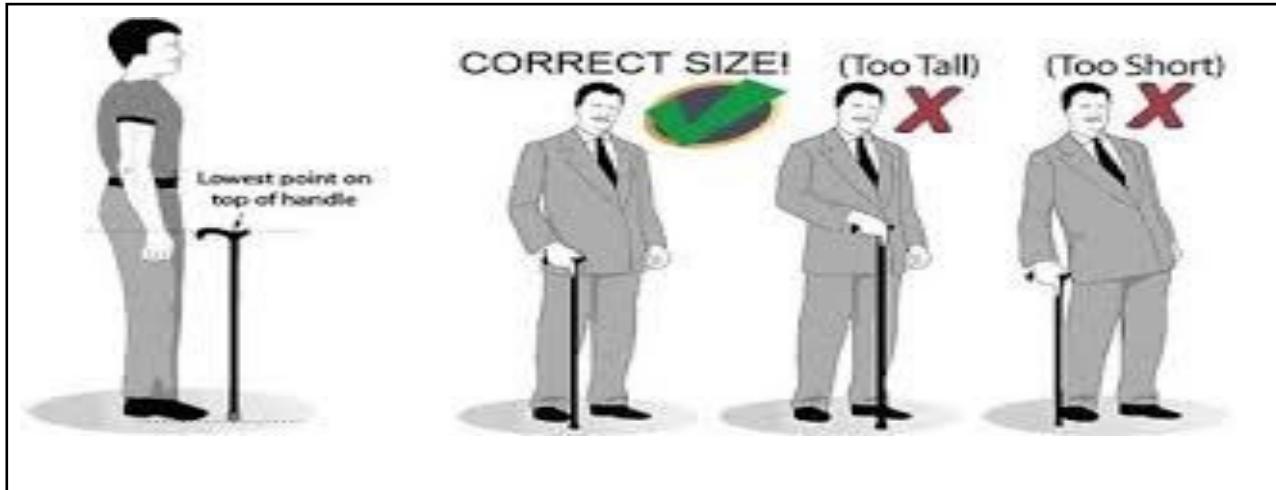
Stand wearing shoes with your cane at your side. Let your arm hang down, relaxed, at your side. The top of the cane should come to your wrist crease.

When you are holding the cane, your elbow should be slightly bent. And always hold the cane on the OPPOSITE side of your painful or injured leg.

Walk by moving the cane forward at the same time as your opposite leg. Use the cane for support as you put weight on your painful or injured leg. If you are using the cane for balance, try walking with the cane in each hand to find the side that offers you the most support.

Finally check the rubber tip. It should have grooves in it and be pliable. If it is worn smooth or has hardened, it needs to be replaced.

Mary-Louise Eggimann is a retired physical therapist with over 40 years experience working with seniors. ●



<https://www.foxumbrellas.com/content/16-sticksolid-sizing-guide>

Annual Meeting (cont'd from p. 1)

Representative Ruth Balser became the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs in 2019. She has served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives since 1999. She represents the 12th Middlesex District, which includes roughly the southern half of the city of Newton. Representative Balser, who holds a PhD in clinical psychology from New York University, is the first psychologist to serve in the Massachusetts legislature. She was the first House Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

We have also invited **Elissa Sherman**, the president of LeadingAge Massachusetts, to participate in the MLCRA annual meeting.

LeadingAge is an organization of not-for-profit providers of housing, healthcare, and other services for older adults. Dr. Sherman has attended recent MLCRA annual meetings and shared insights about senior living issues. She has worked on legislative issues with several

MLCRA boards over the past few years.

The agenda for the annual meeting will include election of the 2020-2021 MLCRA Board of Directors. A. nominating committee is seeking candidates from MLCRA communities.



Elissa Sherman

After lunch, there will be small group discussions to consider MLCRA priorities and activities for the coming year.

MLCRA communities are invited to send four MLCRA members to the annual meeting. Invitation packets will be sent to Resident Association presidents and MLCRA representatives in each community. ●

Climate Change (cont'd from p. 3)

Thunbergs of our generation? Could we make a strong enough public statement that could attract a broad range of citizens of our generation throughout the Boston Metropolitan Area?

Our goal: To be so effective we would bring about regulations at the local and state levels to require adaptations in the ways in which energy is produced and waste products are reduced. We are suggesting that this meeting be step one in this political process.” ●

Membership Drive (cont'd from p. 4)

are listed in our monthly management newsletter. So as not to overwhelm them with more information upon arrival, information about MLCRA and a membership form will be sent to them approximately three months after moving here. We also hope to sponsor community programs occasionally about MLCRA-related activities.

We have been very excited about the increased MLCRA membership at Brooksby. Getting word out continually about the importance of MLCRA makes a big difference for membership drives. ●

UPDATE ON CCRC ENTRANCE FEE DISCLOSURE BILL

by Lauren Hale

At the initiative of a group of residents from a MLCRA community, a bill that would require Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) to give prospective residents a written explanation of their entrance fee refund policy was introduced in the Massachusetts legislature in January 2019.

The bill would require CCRC providers to give prospective residents a separate document that states the amount of the entrance fee to be refunded after the resident leaves the facility or dies. The document would also state the ‘terms, conditions and explanation of the process’ by which the refund is made. Identical versions of the bill were introduced in the Senate (S. 368) and the House (H. 617).

The proposed legislation is the result of a request to State Senator Joan Lovely from a group of her constituents, who are residents of Brooksby Village. The residents are seeking legislation to protect entrance fees in the event a retirement community experiences financial difficulty.

This is a subject that has long been of interest to MLCRA members throughout Massachusetts. The issue has been raised at past MLCRA annual meetings and discussed in the *Patriot*. Some MLCRA members think the proposed legislation does not go far enough to address protection of entrance fees. Others see it as a significant first step.

When the bill was introduced, it was referred to the legislature’s Joint Committee on Elder Affairs. The MLCRA board voted to support the bill and MLCRA submitted written testimony. The legislation was also supported by LeadingAge Massachusetts.

The Joint Committee on Elder Affairs gave the bill a favorable report in December. It has been referred to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. As of the *Patriot*’s publication time, the bill was still in that committee. We will post any new information on the MLCRA website (www.mlhra.org). ●

CONFUSED ABOUT CORONAVIRUS?

With updates daily, we are bombarded with information and misinformation about the coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19. How can we judge the veracity of what we hear and read? Here are some sources which can help guide you through the maze:

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

www.coronavirus.gov

Information from several government agencies, including the White House, involved in addressing the pandemic is here. The President’s guidelines are included.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

1-800-CDC-INFO1 or 800-232-4636

This is the CDC phone number for questions about the virus and the disease. Due to the

very high volume of calls, be prepared for a long wait time. They encourage you to use the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/COVID19 The homepage of this comprehensive website includes links to information for older adults and a COVID-19 self- check (click on Symptoms, then Testing to reach the self-check side bar). (cont’d on next page)

BILL WOULD ADD HEALTH SERVICES TO ASSISTED LIVING

by Lauren Hale

A bill pending in the Massachusetts legislature would allow Assisted Living facilities to offer limited health services to their residents. The MLCRA board has voted to support the bill.

Under current Massachusetts law, Assisted Living facilities provide help with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing/grooming, ambulation, eating, and similar tasks. They do not provide medical or nursing services.

The proposed legislation, sponsored by Senator Patricia Jehlen, would allow Assisted Living facilities to offer “basic common sense health services” that include injections, application or replacement of simple non-sterile dressings, management of oxygen and application of ointments or drops. Assisted Living facilities would have the option of deciding whether or not to offer the additional services.

Identical versions of the bill have been introduced in the Senate (S. 365) and the House (H. 625) under the title ***“An Act authorizing the option of providing basic common sense health services for residents of assisted living residences.”***

Many MLCRA members live in retirement communities that include an Assisted Living component. They are sometimes surprised to learn that it does not directly provide even simple medical services. Assisted Living residents must arrange to receive these services from a family member or an outside agency.

In Massachusetts, the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) certifies that Assisted Living facilities are in compliance with state laws and regulations. If Assisted Living facilities choose to offer any of the services covered by the pending legislation, they would have to submit an operating plan to the EOEA. The plan would include information on “staff qualifications and training for providing such services.” The Department of Public Health would be involved with the EOEA in promulgating regulations to govern delivery of the new services.

Over the last several years, there have been attempts to pass similar legislation. Concerns have been raised about the need for additional staff if Assisted Living facilities choose to offer these new services. Cost of the additional staff would be passed on to residents.

The bill’s proponents think that any increase to the monthly fee should be less than what it now costs some residents to hire an outside agency to deliver these services. The availability of these services would be a great convenience to residents. They might be able to stay longer in Assisted Living and delay a move to a nursing home.●

Coronavirus (*cont’d from previous page*)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

www.mass.gov

Information from the state, including the Governor’s latest updates, can be found on this website. You can sign up to receive alerts texted to your phone (text COVIDMA to 888-777).

AARP

aarp.org/health

This website provides information about the coronavirus, plus alerts about scams and phony websites.●



MLCRA Board and Resident Associations

MLCRA represents thousands of older residents throughout Massachusetts. Its membership includes individual resident members and 15 Resident Associations.

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MLCRA COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The Briarwood Community, Worcester

Brookhaven at Lexington

Brooksby Village, Peabody

The Commons in Lincoln

Edgewood. North Andover

Lasell Village, Newton

Loomis Lakeside at Reeds Landing, Springfield

NewBridge on the Charles
Dedham

Newbury Court, Concord

Orchard Cove, Canton

The Overlook, Charlton

Sophia Snow Place
West Roxbury

Southgate at Shrewsbury

Springhouse, Jamaica Plain

Sweetwood of Williamstown

The Willows at Westborough

The Massachusetts Patriot

The Massachusetts Patriot is the quarterly newsletter of the Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association, Inc. (MLCRA). As the residents' voice, the *Patriot* includes information about member and non-member communities, monitors and initiates legislation, promotes the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities/Continuing Care Accreditation Commission (CARF-CCAC) accreditation, and serves as an advocate for residents' rights. CCRC residents are encouraged to send letters or articles by email to:

Lauren Hale, MLCRA president and Interim Co-Chair of the Patriot Editorial Committee,
LHale20003@aol.com, 508-842-0515 or

Jean Stringham, MLCRA Vice President and Interim Co-chair of the Patriot Editorial Committee,
jean.stringham@gmail.com, 617-244-2492

**Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association
MLCRA Membership Application for 2020 (Please print)**

Date_____

1st Member's Name _____ New _____ Renewal _____

If a couple, 2nd Member's Name _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Street _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Retirement Community_____

1-year membership: \$15.00

Couple: \$25.00

5-year membership: \$75.00

Life Membership \$150.00

Total amount enclosed_____

Please make checks payable to MLCRA, and mail with this form to:

Jerry Lyle
MLCRA Treasurer
Willows at Westborough
1 Lyman St., Apt 448
Westborough, MA 01581

Or give them to your MLCRA Representative.

Thank you



Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association

Lauren Hale, MLCRA President
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.

Join
MLCRA
now to
maintain
your
quality of
life!

What is the Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association?

*The voice of residents of nonprofit and for-profit
Continuing Care Retirement Communities*

Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association (MLCRA) is a nonprofit volunteer organization established in 1998 to represent individual members and resident associations located in retirement communities known as Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) or Life Care Communities (LCCs). These communities provide facilities and services for independent living, and assisted living/skilled nursing care or both.

MLCRA is the Massachusetts member of the National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA), and the state member of the National Continuing Care Association (NaCCA). MLCRA advocates for the rights of its members, as CCRC or LCC entry-fee depositors, to be fully informed and heard on matters affecting their health and welfare and the financial viability of their community.

MLCRA recognizes and respects the common interests of residents and management, and supports efforts to promote a mutually beneficial relationship. When those interests occasionally diverge, MLCRA serves as the residents' advocate.