



Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) Fall 2015

The Residents' Advocate-Management's Friend

The President's Message: by Will Holton

Let's Look at Recent MLCRA Accomplishments

Recent Successes and Current Efforts

This time my theme is "The Glass is Half Full and We Should Do More." We need to start by reporting good news. Membership Drive time is near and good things are happening. Two important communities are moving toward full affiliation with MLCRA and other member communities plan to increase their individual memberships for 2016. Some MLCRA board members now "attend" meetings by teleconferencing hookups so they don't have to drive. And MLCRA played an active role in the annual National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA)/LeadingAge meeting held in early November in Boston. (The next *Patriot* will include a report.)

Brookhaven in Lexington and The Overlook in Charlton both have growing numbers of MLCRA members now. I visited both communities this year, speaking at well-attended Residents Association meetings where people were interested in joining forces on common concerns. Brookhaven was part of MLCRA in the days of association memberships; a membership drive soon should bring them above the 15 percent level of individual memberships

for full affiliation. The Overlook hosted my visit during the summer and several residents have joined since then.

Sweetwood in Williamstown is fortunate to have a very enthusiastic MLCRA representative, Fred Ley. I visited there in early November for a meeting



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with their Residents Association, paired with an Area 1 meeting for communities in the Connecticut River valley or west of there. I have no doubt that Fred will reach his goal of 100 percent membership for the third straight year—exceptional even though

Sweetwood is quite small.

Because driving is hard for many us, the last two Board meetings were held at Springhouse with three members there and others participating by telephone. The experiment was successful so we will continue doing this to allow more people to join the Board and take on active roles in MLCRA.

The NaCCRA/LeadingAge annual conference drew large numbers of nonprofit management people in elder services organizations from around the nation. NaCCRA is growing and many members attended. I attended a state presidents' lunch and meeting on October 31. Others joined me for special morning programs for MLCRA members and a lunch on Monday, November 1.

(cont'd on p. 2)

INSIDE

LGBT, Medicare, and We	3
Tribute to Dieter Koch Weser	7
Thoughts on Being Mortal	8
Board of Directors	10
Goals and Achievements	12
What is MLCRA?	12

President's Message (*cont'd from p. 1*)

Reminders will come out soon to all MLCRA member communities that are not yet planning membership drives for increasing participation in

MLCRA for 2016. As always, dues paid after August of this year will cover membership through 2016.

Opportunities to Help MLCRA

Members can become involved with the good work of MLCRA in several ways that will not take much time but will really help the organization:

- Join with a few neighbors to run a local membership drive. The MLCRA administrative assistant, Cindy Berchuck (CNB30@yahoo.com), will produce a special notice about your membership drive that can be copied and put in the boxes of all your Independent Living residents. New members can then return the form with a check to you or another person who will pass on a list of members and the checks to Jeanne Stolbach, the MLCRA treasurer.

- Start an electronic chain of MLCRA members that links residents from various MLCRA member communities.

This can be as simple as sending out an email about a common issue or two to others, using email addresses that we will provide. If you know about blogs, this could also be done with a MLCRA Members' Blog for everyone to use. In either case, the goal would be to improve communication by sharing information about members' concerns at various communities in the state.

- Help MLCRA bring more people onto the Board. Speak to your neighbors who have interests and skills that would make MLCRA more effective. Ask them to attend Board meetings (by telephone conferencing if necessary) like I did for a year to see how they could contribute to the important work of MLCRA. The next election will be at the Annual Meeting, in May but the Board can vote in new members for a limited time period.

- Write in (by email if you prefer) with your suggestions for MLCRA projects to the *Patriot* Editor, Sheila McMahon, or to me, Will Holton. You'll find our contact information in this issue of the *Patriot*.●

