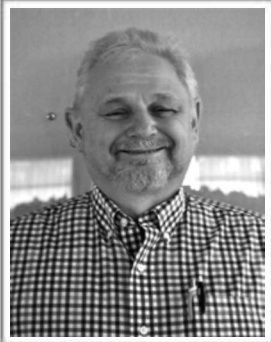


**MLCRA Digital Initiatives: In the Wires and in the Clouds:
MLCRA Website and Constant Contact Email Communication (MLCRA in the Wires)**

by Allen Broughton, MLCRA Webmaster



Allen Broughton

As reported at the annual meeting the MLCRA website (www.mlcra.org) supports these goals:

- Informing the MLCRA membership about legislative and senior living issues,

- Exchanging ideas among MLCRA communities,
- Providing a timely source of information complementary to the *Patriot*.

In the past six months we have added more content, images, and video while maintaining the current simple structure and senior-friendly format. Two major accomplishments to date are making the website usable on smart phones and the introduction of a series of best practices articles (www.mlcra.org/best-practices). See the companion information box on “What is on the MLCRA website” (p. 2).

Our next “in the wires” project is to use the email program *Constant Contact* to send timely emails and alerts on matters of interest to MLCRA members. The visually attractive emails are designed to be short, with links to longer articles either on the MLCRA website or other sites of interest. Our plan is to use the digital media communication (email and website) in concert with the print media communication of the *Patriot*. The two different media are serving similar communication and information goals from different but complementary directions.

Constant Contact is used by many non-profits to communicate with their members. It is secure,

there are good privacy rules, there are no email attachments, and is easy to unsubscribe if you are no longer interested in the emails.

Please look forward to an inaugural email this summer. We have already sent a follow-up email to the annual meeting attendees and it was well received. We have email addresses for about half the membership, i.e., those who have supplied email addresses with their membership forms. If you wish to be included but have not given us an email address, please send your email address to the webmaster at broughton@rose-hulman.edu.

List Management Committee and the Collaboration Data Space (MLCRA in the clouds)

The initial goal of this committee was to develop and maintain lists for communicating with the MLCRA communities on things such as membership drives and the annual meeting. The project has expanded into a “data space” in the cloud where the MLCRA Board can store, retrieve, and share all the documents needed to conduct operations. This includes corporate documents, meeting and event planning documents, committee documents, legislation documents, and meeting minutes. For instance, all the planning documents and lists for this year’s annual meeting are now available for guiding the planning of next year’s meeting.

The data space is a Google Drive account with a software suite of basic office tools allowing the Board to collaborate more effectively.

Everything is in one place, secure and accessible to Board members, not distributed on several different computers or on paper. Because of the collaborative capability the *(cont’d on p. 9)*

NEW LEGISLATION ABOUT RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

by *Lauren Hale*

Two bills concerning Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) were introduced in the Massachusetts legislature in January 2019. One would require CCRCs to give prospective residents a separate document that describes their entrance fee refund policy. The other would establish a commission to study CCRCs.

A **CCRC entrance fee disclosure bill** was introduced in both the House (H.617) and the Senate (S. 368). It would require providers to give prospective residents a 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.

A Senate measure (S. 378) would establish a **commission** “to study the regulation of (CCRCs) with the goal of protecting **“the consumer and financial rights of residents.”** Some members of the commission would be appointed by state officials. Others would be nominated by groups including the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, LeadingAge Massachusetts, and MLCRA.

The bills are the result of a request to their State Senator from a group of residents in a MLCRA member community. The residents are seeking legislation to protect entrance fees in the event a retirement community experiences financial difficulty. This is a subject that has been discussed in past editions of the *Patriot* and raised at previous MLCRA annual meetings.

Some MLCRA members think the new bills do not go far enough to address protection of entrance fees. Others see the **disclosure bill** as a

THANKS, WILL



MLCRA President Lauren Hale presents an award to Will Holton in gratitude for his leadership as president of MLCRA from 2015 to 2018.

first step in discussing issues related to entrance fees. And if a **commission** were established, it could address other concerns as well. The MLCRA board voted to support both measures.

You can access the text of the bills on the MLCRA website. Go to www.mlcra.org and click on the link for the Legislation and Advocacy page. ●



Annual Meeting *(cont'd from p. 8)*

working to meet them in ways that older residents consider age-friendly. In this model, aging is considered an asset and Massachusetts is a fount of knowledge and services for older folks that can be exported to other states. The Commonwealth will reimagine a continuum of care that is better integrated and better informed than the current model. People of all ages will have access to health and social supports and disparities are reduced. People will expect a 100-year life span and plan for it financially so that older folks will have the resources to live a meaningful life in the community they choose.

Systems will be developed that will relieve some of the stress currently experienced by family caregivers, and other systems will help provide greater economic security for those who do not have enough money to make ends meet but are not poor enough to currently qualify for services. There will be an increase in affordable housing and of transportation possibilities. All of this will combine to create an age-friendly Massachusetts.

Next Allen Broughton gave a presentation about our website, what can be found there now, and what will be there in the near future.

We all went home with new information and ideas about how we could make our community better. ●



Robin Lipson, acting secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs answers members questions and discusses legislation.

Wires *(cont'd from p. 5)*

space has been called the **MLCRA Collaboration Data Space**.

Because it is expected that the Collaboration Data Space will allow us to work together more efficiently, we will be able to better focus on:

- Educating MLCRA residents about senior living issues through the *Patriot*, email, and the website,
- Helping MLCRA communities share information and ideas through the *Patriot* and the website, and
- Encouraging MLCRA members to participate in legislative advocacy campaigns about issues of concern to CCRC residents. ●

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