



June 2007

Volume XXI

Issue Two

in this
ISSUE

*Words from the
Board Chair*
Page 2

*Words from the
PPC Chair*
Page 3

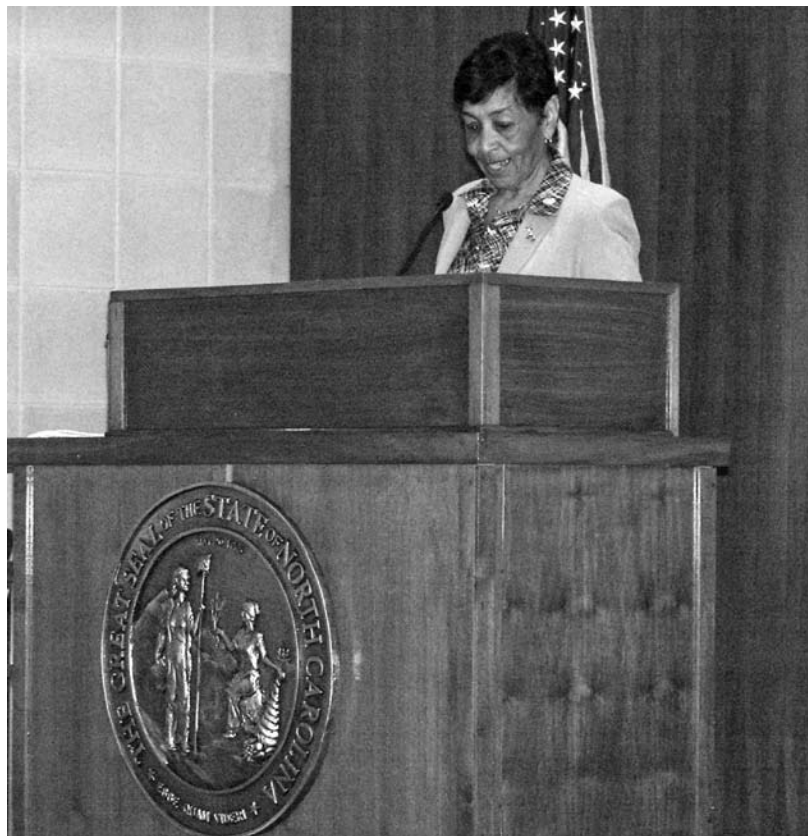
*Membership
Contributions*
Page 3

NOVA Designee
Page 5

*More Conference
Photos*
Page 7

and much more..!!!

ADVOCATES JOIN FORCES TO PROMOTE QUALITY CARE



Representative Beverly Earle, legislative sponsor of the Long Term Care Advocacy Day held in Raleigh on April 17, welcomes participants.

On April 16 and 17, FORLTC brought together hundreds of citizens determined to make an impact on behalf of vulnerable North Carolinians.

“You are an amazing group to work with. Thanks for letting us be a part of your efforts,” one participant and sponsor of the 2007 Long Term Care Conference and Advocacy Day events said later. “It was an honor to be there.”

Please turn to page six

The mission of Friends of Residents in Long Term Care is to promote the highest quality of life for those who cannot live independently, and for those who care for them.

Words from the Board Chair

By Chris Ivy

It has been a busy spring at the legislature, and I would like to thank all of our sponsors and participants in the Fifth Biennial Long Term Care Public Policy Conference and Advocacy Day events held on April 16 and 17 in Raleigh.

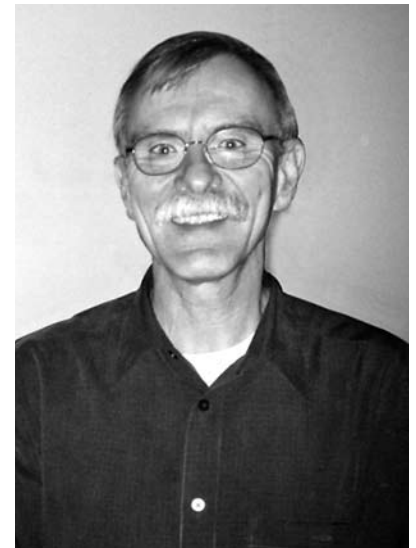
One of the first successes of this session was a review of the Penalty Review process. You have seen a lot written in this newsletter about the changes to the Penalty Review process that were implemented last year. The changes were neither in the best interests of the residents nor of the Penalty Review Committee (PRC) members who volunteered to serve on the committee.

The major change was that the PRC did not review all penalty proposals as they had in the past. The few times the committee met, the meetings often lasted less than 30 minutes as there was very little business to conduct.

I am pleased by the efforts of the advocates as well as staff at the Division of Facility Services for advocating for change and revising the process so that all penalty proposals are again reviewed by the PRC. If there are penalty proposals, the PRC will meet the second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at the Division of Facility Services in Raleigh. FORLTC will have a presence at the meetings; Board Member Jim Ankeny is attending the meetings to observe the proceedings and to keep us informed of the committee's actions.

Advocacy is an on-going process and does not come to an end. With persistence, things do change, and the revisions to the Penalty Review process should be looked upon as a success. The first meeting under the new system was held May 10, and two proposals were presented. Recommendations for penalties against South Haven Long Term Care in Gaston County and Pine Tree Villa in Wake County were considered in detail, during a meeting lasting approximately 90 minutes, and then upheld.

New long term care issues continue to surface, and legislators need to be educated about their impact. A Star Rating System for long term care facilities has been brought to the table and is supported by the majority of the people in North Carolina. The state of North Carolina was at the forefront when it came to developing a Star Rating System for children's day care centers. Let's work to show that North Carolina cares about its seniors, just like it cares about its children, and continue to strive toward the implementation of the Star Rating System.



FORLTC Board Chair Chris Ivy

For Your Information

The newsletter of Friends of Residents in Long Term Care

2007 Officers

ChairChristopher Ivy
Immediate Past Board Chair..... Bill Lamb
Vice Chair.....Dr. J. LeRoy King
Secretary Charles Lee
Treasurer Helen Savage

Staff

Office Manager..... June Bolton

Layout and Printing..... Sir Speedy Printing
Hillsborough Street, Raleigh, NC

For Your Information is published four times yearly and is a benefit of annual membership in Friends of Residents in Long Term Care.

Words from the Public Policy Chair

By Bob Konrad

The Public Policy Committee of Friends of Residents in Long Term Care has been meeting on a monthly basis during 2007 to set and accomplish an ambitious public policy agenda. As a new chair and relatively new member of the committee and Friends, I have been assisted especially by our able vice-chair Polly Williams as well as other committee members Mary Bethel, Dan Hudgins, Christopher Ivy, Roger Manus, Philip Miller, Jill Passmore, Sharon Wilder, John Wasson, and John Young. I would also like to acknowledge the support and guidance of the AARP public policy staff, especially Mary Bethel and Bill Wilson, who have been generous in helping our committee become acquainted with the ins and outs of the legislative process. Finally, we have secured the services of Randolph Cloud who is representing us on a daily basis during this legislative session.

Several of our goals were met early on. For example, the NC NOVA legislation was passed last year, and more frequent meetings of the adult care home Penalty Review Commission have been restored. Other relevant legislation is currently under consideration, and our voice is being heard in mental health reforms. In another article in this issue of the newsletter, Polly Williams explains where we are on the "Star Rating System" (HB 248) for long term care, an issue that has attracted a lot of attention and interest from both Republican and Democratic members of the House and which is now under consideration in the Senate. Given the limited budgets agreed upon in both the House and Senate, with the appropriations we project, we anticipate that it will be an uphill battle to secure the full level of funding requested in the bills we are supporting.

The next meeting of the committee will be on Friday, June 8, from 10-12 at the Triangle J Offices in Cary.

Membership Contributions from March through May of 2007

Thank you to these contributors for helping continue our mission!

BENEFACTORS AND SUPER FRIENDS

(\$1,000 and up)

Anonymous
Sally and Ronald Johnson
Bill Lamb

PATRON

(\$500-999)

Sue Floyd
Dr. George Maddox

ADVOCATE

(\$100-249)

Alamance County DSS
Community United Church of Christ
Karen Gottovi
Carol Kepler
Charles and Lois Lee
Greg Patterson
Gail and Tom Scullion

IN HONOR OF

Aurora and Ted Gregory

By Dorothy Bell

Bill Lamb

By Harriet Bartnick

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Sandy Babb
June Bolton
Sally Buckner
Jacqueline Dixon-Mason
Mary Jo Griffin
Lynn Jones
Nancy Stevens
Jack Suddreth
Susan Weaver

A Rating System: A Measure of Quality for Adult Care Homes

By Polly Williams

The search for an adult care home for a friend or relative often takes place in crisis mode. Grandma is to be discharged from the hospital in two days and can't live alone without care and supervision anymore. For the stressful search with a deadline, or even for a more leisurely one, a rating system that gives an indication of the quality of care a rest home provides would be a superb benefit.

A bill introduced in the General Assembly, H248, "ACH Star Rating Authorization/Funds," provided for a five-star rating system that would benefit those looking for care and would also give an incentive for adult care home administrators to earn stars. But along the way the bill fell on hard times. It had opposition from those who didn't want a rating system at all and from those who wanted a more comprehensive system. While a subcommittee of the House Aging Committee was trying to alter the bill to meet some objections, an appropriations committee axed its funds. Never mind, the subcommittee has now found agreement on a bill that makes inspection reports for nursing homes, adult care homes, and home care agencies available on the web and at the facilities and provides for a study to look at rating systems for several types of facilities for the elderly. The information provided would be more extensive than envisioned in the bill as originally written.

The original system was very basic, a kind of Model T. It was good in that its components are already in place, are measurable, and are achievable even by small family care homes and those that primarily admit residents eligible for Medicaid benefits. There were four criteria with points that would be awarded to earn stars, up to a total of five.

The first criterion was simply compliance with the rules that accompany a facility's licensure. An annual inspection of the facility by the state and investigations of complaints will show whether a home meets this standard. This is a minimum requirement for any decent home.

The second criterion was the existence of Type A or Type B penalties imposed on the facility by the state. These penalties are not trifling—Type A penalties involve death or serious risk—and certainly constitute a black mark on any adult care home. A question still being debated is how long a penalty should be kept under consideration for lowering a rating. Often a facility in trouble will change its administration—should a penalty imposed on a prior administration be held against the home? Since sometimes the administration has technically been changed but actually consists of the same persons, maybe the answer is yes—for a while.

The third criterion was participating in any quality improvement program approved by the state Department of Health and Human Services. This one is not hard to meet either. The current improvement program (and the first one ever) is a medication safety program, chosen because of its importance for care of residents and also—this is the scary part—because of the "high number of deficiencies in this area." What is the deficiency rate? It is 20 %. Yes, getting the meds right is very important, and yes, still, errors are made that can have serious results. A home signing on to this program must survey the residents to assess their satisfaction with the way they receive their medications and must provide a self-assessment by the facility on their medication system. Any home can participate in this program, and we can hope that a large proportion of them will do so.

The last criterion was harder to achieve because it means devoting time and energy to a worker retention program labeled NOVA (New Organizational Vision Award). Since the rate of turnover of aides in adult care homes is more than 100 percent, an effort to keep good and experienced aides is well worthwhile, good for the home's administration and good for the residents. The home must afford its aides training, monitoring, and support for education and for problems such as child care. It must offer balanced workloads and consultation in care planning and work assignments.

The latest version of the House bill, and certainly there is no guarantee that it will be the last, is a sketch for a Cadillac plan. First of all, the committee substitute, passed by the subcommittee of the House Aging

Committee, provides that inspection reports by the state Division of Facility Services on an adult care homes, nursing homes, and home care agencies will be available on the web and by request at a facility so that anyone considering placing a relative there can see the reports. Second, there will be a study by the Division of Facility Services to devise a possible rating system for nursing homes, adult care homes, home care agencies, adult day centers, and adult day health centers. (Why single out adult care homes? Rate them all!) It would include specific information (rather than stars) for several categories for each facility. It could also take into consideration participation in quality improvement programs and NOVA.

The cost for this bill, mostly a study bill, is minimal (remember, the Appropriations Committee whacked the funding). The cost for a certification system for all these facilities would be a great deal more, but the amount of information furnished for a prospective resident would be valuable indeed, as would a numerical or alphabetical rating (not a star). This bill is House Bill 248—we need to ask our legislators to support it, in whatever form it ends up, because it would be the first move toward a rating system that advocates for the elderly have long worked for.

Polly Williams is Vice Chair of the FORLTC Public Policy Committee.

FORLTC CONGRATULATES THIRD NOVA DESIGNEE



On May 29, the North Carolina Division of Facility Services awarded the third NC NOVA special license, the first given to a home care agency, to Sloop/CAP Avery Home Care Services of Avery County during the organization’s annual appreciation day celebration for workers. The agency agreed to be one of the pilot sites for NOVA in 2005, and since then a local team has been working to establish the policies and procedures of the program. “What was important to us about NC NOVA was to give our workers the reward and recognition they deserve,” said Director Carol Holland, center. With her, from left, are Chuck Mantoath, CEO of Cannon Memorial Hospital, which operates the service; Kathie Smith, RN, Association for Home and Hospice Care of North Carolina; Joanne Mozgo of the Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence, which performed the independent review; and DFS Chief Operating Office Jeff Horton.

Continued from page one

The Monday afternoon conference, held at Glenaire Retirement Center in Cary, began with a keynote address by Dr. Don Schmechel, who gave insights from his personal as well as professional perspective as a researcher of neurodegenerative diseases, and ended with lobbying tips presented by Executive Director Ran Coble of the NC Center for Policy Research. In between, FORLTC Board Member and Lead Long Term Care Ombudsman Jill Passmore and other experts briefed participants on three key issues.

On Tuesday, many of the same people and dozens of others thronged the Legislature Building in Raleigh, wearing gold and red visors bearing the conference theme, *"In Pursuit of Quality Care,"* to make them stand out. Issues briefings in the morning continued the focus begun on Monday, highlighting the needs of mental health clients in long term care, resources for families providing long term care, and the possibility of using a star rating system to evaluate the quality of care. After visiting legislators' offices to support specific bills, participants attended a public forum in the afternoon.

What does it take to bring approximately 200 people to one location, feed them, provide a full afternoon jam-packed with critical information and practical insights, and motivate many of them to attend Advocacy Day, also open to the general public, on the following day? To give you an idea, when Conference Coordinator Emily Paynter came on board, she had 77 logistical questions to raise during her initial meeting with FORLTC board members and staff. And this was after representatives of several prestigious groups had already been meeting for several weeks as a consortium to plan the biennial events.

It would be difficult to understate the amount of support that was needed from FORLTC's allies; board, committee and general members; and the sponsors recruited largely by Sponsor Coordinator Harriet Bartnick. Program participants also included FORLTC Board Members Helen Savage and June Brotherton as moderators and many others who made presentations and prepared materials on the topics under consideration. We want to thank them all, as well as every individual who attended. The level of understanding of, and support for, worthwhile initiatives to improve long term care has risen because of what YOU did!

SPONSORS RECOGNIZED

AARP, a sponsor at the Angel level, provided substantial support. Benefactors were the Eastern NC Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and the Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence, with Booth Harrington & Johns contributing at the Patron level. Conference sponsors also included: the Association for Home & Hospice Care of NC; Brady, Nordgren, Morton & Malone; Carolina Meadows; Dickens Destinations; Direct Care Workers Association of NC; Duke HomeCare & Hospice; Evergreens Senior Health Care System; Golden Eldercare Management; C. Gordon & Associates; Heartfield's Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care; Hospice of Wake County; Interim Healthcare of the Triangle; Law Offices of Walter L. Sheffield III; Mental Health Association in NC; NC Chapters of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society; NC Adult Day Services Association; NC Social Workers in LTC Association; Salem Senior Housing; and the UNC Institute on Aging. In-kind contributors included Glenaire Retirement Center and the Glenaire Men's Group; BOOM! Magazine; NC Area Agencies on Aging Association; NC Coalition for LTC Enhancement; NC LTC Ombudsman Program, and the Regional LTC Ombudsman Association.



*Citizens
Speak—
Legislators
Listen*



FORLTC and a prestigious group of co-organizers and sponsors brought together a large and diverse assemblage of advocates, consumers of long term care and other citizens, including these folks who spoke at the Legislature Building on April 17, the Fifth Biennial Long Term Care Advocacy Day. House Speaker Joe Hackney, left, was on hand to make comments at the end of the public forum convened by Rep. Jean Farmer-Butterfield, who chairs the House Aging Committee.



Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Raleigh, NC.
Permit No. 1636

2007

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Jim Ankeny
- June Brotherton
- Wendy Craig
- Sue Floyd
- Christopher Ivy
- Dr. J. LeRoy King
- William E. Lamb
- Charles D. Lee
- David Moser
- Jill Passmore
- Fredda Pippin
- Helen Savage
- Walt Sheffield
- John Suddath
- John Wasson

ADVISORY BOARD

- Marlene Chasson
- Dorothy Crawford
- Elizabeth Ivester
- George Maddox
- Wendy Sause
- Robert Seymour

883-C Washington St.
Raleigh, NC 27605
Telephone: 919.782.1530
Toll Free: 1.888.411.7571
Fax: 919.782.1558
Email: friends@forltc.org
Website: www.forltc.org

**SAVE THE DATE -- Please mark your calendar for Tuesday, October 23,
for the "Quest for Quality" Recognition Dinner at the University Club in Raleigh**

2007 Membership Form

General Memberships (Individual - \$35 and over; Organization - \$100 and over)

- \$35 Supporter
 \$100 to \$249 Advocate
 \$250 to \$499 Sponsor
 \$500 to \$999 Patron
 \$1000 and over Benefactor

Super Supporters

- Super Friend** (\$1,000 per year for 3 years)
 Grand Advocate (\$3,000 during one year)
 Angel (\$5,000+)

Corporate Sponsorships

- \$500 to \$999 Bronze
 \$1000 to \$2499 Silver
 \$2500 to \$4999 Gold
 \$5000+ Platinum

My gift is in honor / memory of: _____

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address

City State Zip

Phone E-Mail

Please make checks payable to Friends of Residents in Long Term Care. Contributions are tax deductible (Federal Tax ID #56-1551521). (Membership is from January - December) Please mail to: 883-C Washington Street, Raleigh, NC 27605.