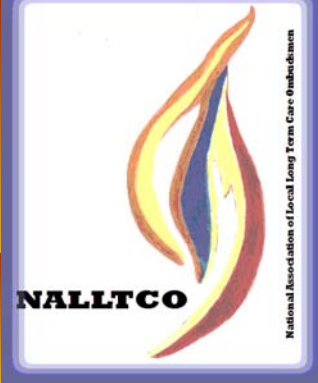


# NALLTCO EXCHANGE

National Association of Local  
Long Term Care Ombudsmen



FALL  
2008

## NALLTCO WELCOMES NCCNHR FOUNDER

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*'To get something  
you never had, you  
have to do something  
you never  
did'  
Unknown*



ELMA HOLDER,  
NCCNHR FOUNDER

The NALLTCO Board is proud to announce that Elma Holder will be the keynote speaker at our annual membership meeting. Her seminal work in advocating for the rights of older and disabled adults in nursing homes is compelling and inspiring. Elma's unassuming demeanor belies the dogged determination that she has shown to all nature of challenges in long term care. Owners, operators, surveyors, legislators, policy makers, doctors, lawyers and probably a few Indian chiefs to boot, Elma has quietly and consistently insisted that the Quality of Life for residents can and should be better. Mark your calendar now and attend the

### NALLTCO Membership Meeting

Thursday, October 16, 2008 -12:15 p.m.

NALLTCO is also a co-sponsor of the Newcomer Orientation

Thursday, October 16, 2008 7:30—8:15 a.m.

### GET OUT THE VOTE!

Whatever your own political leanings, our residents are getting fired up to vote in the historical election. Let's be sure to assist them in exercising this essential component of being a citizen in the United States. Contact your local board of elections to determine the procedure for absentee votes, and to determine the accessibility of local voting precincts. **Residents can find out more about each candidate and their platforms for health care, Medicaid/ Medicare reform and other topics at [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) a volunteer research organization with no political affiliation.**



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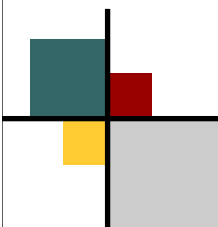
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21 state coordinators, covering 23 states  
(we have 25 states with members)

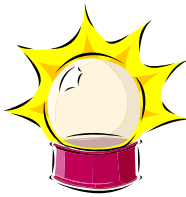


“The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.”

—Frederick Buechner (b. 1926), educator, writer, theologian

## THE FUTURE IS NOW...the N4A Conference-D. Lee (NC)

Like most conferences, there were great speakers, great workshops and great networking opportunities. But this year the N4A (National Association of Area Agencies on Aging) Annual Conference in Nashville, TN, held a breath of expectation for growth. Growth, not only of population; you'd have to be asleep for the last 10 years to have missed the mantra, “*The baby boomers are coming*”, but growth in professional development, in depth and expectation of service and in intricacy of collaboration with community partners like never before. **PROJECT 2020**, the centerpiece of the N4A legislative agenda, is a multi-faceted plan to take AAA's and other Older American Act programs into the future based on three simple premises that address these expectations



1. “**Person-Centered**” Access to information
2. Focus on **evidence based disease prevention/health Promotion**
3. Save money in the Medicaid program through **Nursing Home “Diversions”**

If you have not seen or heard of Project 2020, go to the N4A website [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org). Of special interest to local ombudsman, was one session with Lori Smentanka, Director of National Ombudsman Resource Center, and two other panelists. They described the expansion of the “person-centered” advocacy which ombudsman now do in long-term care facilities into NON-institutional settings. Some states have already expanded their coverage to home health complaint resolution in response to these types of changes. Local Ombudsman must stay alert, participate in local, state and national discussion about the future of Long term care in your area, and continue to be the strong voice for older and disabled adults in facility settings. Visit [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org) for additional information about this and other initiatives.

## ELDER JUSTICE UPDATE

Bob Blancato, Co-chair of the Elder Justice Coalition, shares his principles of advocacy, encouraging local and regional long term care ombudsmen to keep focused in promoting residents' rights and the legislation designed to protect them.

### PRINCIPLES OF ADVOCACY

**P** ... PROACTIVE, PERSISTENT

**R** ... REALISTIC, RESEARCH, REACT

**I** ... INTELLIGENT, INTELLIGENCE

**N** ... NUDGE

**C** ... COORDINATE, COALITIONS

**I** ... INFRASTRUCTURE, INTEGRITY

**P** ... PROMOTE, PUBLICIZE

**L** ... LEARN, LISTEN

**E** ... EXPECT, EVALUATE

**S** ... SUCCEED

Contact your congressional representatives and encourage their support of the Elder Justice Act during this fall session.

Don't know your congressional representative? Go to [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) a comprehensive resource of all things government.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**J**oin the Assisted Living Consumer Alliance for a discussion of Fair Housing Act rights that provide important protections for residents of assisted living facilities and other long term care settings. Because assisted living facilities are regulated by the states and state statutes and administrative rules don't address specific Fair Housing Act rights, there is widespread unawareness about their applicability.

**This session will review the Fair Housing Act and its application to seniors with "activity limiting conditions" in assisted living. The session will focus on the right to reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, and services.** The session will also provide information on ways to advocate for and exercise the important fair housing rights of seniors living in these settings.

The speakers are Holly Robinson, Associate Staff Director for the ABA Commission on Law and Aging, and Aisha Bierma, Staff Attorney with the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis.

The training will start at 3 p.m. Eastern, 2 p.m. Central, 1 p.m. Mountain, and noon Pacific, on **Wednesday, September 24**

You have two options for calling in. If you think you might want to ask a question, you can call in at 718-709-0655, code 314-374-067.

*(Continued on page 7)*

## FROM THE FIELD

### CALIFORNIA

During our **quarterly meeting with the Department of Public Health (DPH)\*\*** in July, 2008, the District Manager of the DPH Sacramento office was explaining to the Ombudsmen that she was proud to say that the Sacramento DPH office had completed all their Federal and State required surveys of all Skilled Nursing Facilities within the allowed 15 month time frame. I reminded her that one of our nursing homes had not had a survey in 25 months. She then assured me that it had indeed had a survey within the last 15 months. I have been the assigned Ombudsman to that facility for over 5 years and I knew that the staff at this facility had been expecting the Federal and State Mandated Survey since July 2007. I mentioned this to the District Manager again. She asked her co-worker to find out when Lincoln Manor had last been in survey. Her co-worker came back into our meeting and whispered to the District Manager and didn't mention this particular facility or surveys again during our meeting.

The following week, DPH entered the above-noted facility for survey 25 months after the last survey of June 2006. ***I was pleased to attend the Surveyor's Resident's Council meeting the DPH exit interview! Advocacy does make a difference!***

Geneva Carroll, Ombudsman  
Ombudsman Services of Northern  
California

**\*\* Editor's note: I for one would like to know more about these quarterly meetings. Sounds like a terrific idea! So Geneva, what's up with that?**

### KENTUCKY

I've been using an excellent video

called *Bathing Without A Battle* in a new way. I've used *Bathing Without A Battle* to help me do Resident Rights in-service sessions at NFs with staff. I talk about resident rights and the bathing experience- particularly dignity, privacy, choice, etc... My handout at this in-service is the resident rights info sheet from NCCNHR.org. The in-service is about 45 minutes long by the time I show a significant clip from the video (25 min. or so), review the handout and discuss in detail certain rights. It has been very well received as a "new" rights training in my area and it gives me an opportunity as an ombudsman to introduce a culture change idea- dignified bathing. The video is very inexpensive considering the cost of training videos. Google *Bathing Without A Battle* for video ordering information.

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### MISSOURI

#### **Evicting the Elderly**

The St Louis Post-Dispatch ran an editorial on Friday, August 22, 2008 criticizing the growing problem of area nursing homes discharging residents from skilled nursing facilities largely because they require too much care. Richard Cavanagh, President of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program in St Louis, was quoted as saying that the forced discharge is happening more often recently. "Staffing is the



biggest problem nursing homes face. Very often, we hear facilities say that this [resident] is taking up too many of our resources."

Jon Dolan, Executive Director of the Missouri Health Care Association stated that he does not find people being evicted or being treated unfairly.

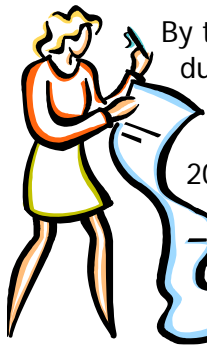
But the editorial cited a recent St Louis County Court case which found that Bethesda Meadows Nursing Facility in suburban St Louis had tried to force a resident out because she required too much care. The facility was required to keep her and to provide appropriate care for her.

The paper also cited a recent study of admission agreements in Missouri nursing facilities that found that many of these agreements required residents to waive their resident rights regarding many things (including discharge issues) in order to enter the facility. One agreement claimed the right to discharge patients who are unduly noisy, untidy or uncooperative.

**The St Louis Long Term Care Ombudsman Program wonders why facilities can continue to be licensed as skilled nursing facilities when they choose not to provide skilled care as required under state and federal regulations. Too many facilities still have a 1970's mindset that nursing home residents should be obedient, sit quietly in their rocking**

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Message from the Chair—Jacqueline Case (NJ)



By the time you read this, Labor Day will be officially over, the crying and gnashing of teeth due to the end of summer and beginning of the school year will have abated, and the NALLTCO Board will have had its' first preparation meeting for the NALLTCO activities at the NCCNHR Annual Conference, held this year in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 15-17, 2008.

We hope to meet many of you there. **Elma Holder, the founder of NCCNHR and a current, active ombudsman in Oklahoma, will be the NALLTCO Keynote Speaker at our General Membership Meeting held on Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, at 12:15 pm.** We will have a chance to discuss how and

where we want to see the ombudsman program move into the next decade with someone who was in at the beginning of advocacy work for those in long-term facilities, oh so many years ago. So, mark it on your calendar to be at this most important meeting. There will be many sessions specifically geared towards ombudsman work at the conference, terrific intensives, and many opportunities to network with colleagues. We hope to see many new faces this year join with our old friends. The **"Orientation Breakfast for First Time Attendees/New Members", co-sponsored by NALLTCO, will be held on Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 – 8:15 am.** If this is your first NCCNHR Conference, be sure to stop by. It will help you navigate the proceedings.

We have a **winner in the NALLTCO Scholarship Essay Contest, Beth Simpson, Missouri.** Congratulations, Beth, and thanks to the other members who sent in essays. The Registration Scholarship is one way NALLTCO tries to support its members and use your dues to support you.

We also try to give you practical information. As I sit here listening to the Governor of Louisiana urging his constituents to evacuate the Louisiana coast because another hurricane is imminent for that area, I think of the article I read recently that informed us that 50% of those who died during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita a few years ago were 75 years of age and older. **If you haven't done this yet, you should have a disaster plan in place for yourself, your family including your pets, and your program.** We've given you resources in the last two newsletters that are still on the NALLTCO web-site. Use them to help you in your preparations. And then find out how your facilities plan to assist their residents during a "disaster" so they are as safe as possible. **A "disaster" can happen at any time – remember the blackout that immobilized almost half the country several years ago because of extreme heat?** It doesn't hurt to be prepared!



You will see a ballot for the election of NALLTCO Board members and **you will be able to vote by Survey Monkey, snail – mail, or at our General Membership Meeting in October.** We have had tremendous results in responses using the Survey Monkey tool this past year. We got the "Ombudsman Code of Ethics" reviewed and passed by the general membership. We got ideas of where you want to see NALLTCO focus its' efforts in the future. We got candidates for the Board. And be reassured, the results are as confidential as if we used only snail-mail.

I wish to say a special "thank-you" to those rotating off the NALLTCO Board – **Patrice Berry, Texas, Alana Kietzman, Montana, and Joe Ortel, Washington.** Your services have been greatly appreciated. You have enriched the organization in many ways by your service.

(Continued on page 8)

## Local and Regional Ombudsmen Attend the OmbudsManager Users Group Conference

Burlington, Vermont is a quaint college town right on Lake Champlain. It is also the recurring home of the annual Synergy now Harmony conference. For those of you who are wondering who Synergy now Harmony is, they're the originators of *Ombudsmanager*, a case management, data tracking, and reporting system that is used by 30 different states.

Several states were represented either by State Ombudsmen or office staff or by local Ombudsmen and staff. Local staff included: Ellen Ott (NY), Eileen Bennett (MD), Karen Hausrath (WA) and Alice Nicholson (VT and Ombudsmanager User Group Co-Chair). The Ombudsmanager User group participated in their own work group for the extent of the conference. We were invited to attend other sessions, especially the national speakers—Frank Burns from AoA, Bob Blancato from the Elder Justice Coalition, and Tonya Harmon (CEO and founder of Harmony) talk about her passion—creating software to track how people work with people at a local level and how we can report this work to others. Almost everyone went on the group outing Thursday evening and had an opportunity to socialize and talk with others, including Sue Wheaton the Ombudsman Specialist from AoA.

Most of our time was spent in the work group looking at tweaks to the current program (problems recurring over and over and not addressed) and what we would like to see in the upcoming .net platform. This platform will be built on the data platform that is currently being constructed for APS.

Imagine you were looking at a blueprint for a neighborhood. Everyone uses many of the same ideas with individualized results leading to a neighborhood more similar than different and all separate in their own homes. There will be no overlap with the APS product which was a fear that many of the Ombudsmanager users expressed.

The final discussion came down to prioritizing our long list of issues and what local, regional, and state ombudsmen want included in the new system. It was explained that the new system will allow for states to create reports and some features in addition to collecting the data for the NORS report; again, the same neighborhood, different homes. It looks as though there will be a focus group

in the near future to work on the new format. If you're interested in participating in the users group, contact Louise Ryan at [louiser@multi-servicecenter.com](mailto:louiser@multi-servicecenter.com) or Alice Nicholson at [ANicholson@vtlegalaid.org](mailto:ANicholson@vtlegalaid.org).

Submitted by former NALLTCO Board member Karen Hasurath, Tacoma WA

The Ombudsmanager website is

[www.harmonyis.com](http://www.harmonyis.com)



### PICTURE:

Ombudsmanager Users Group at their recent meeting in Vermont: From left to right: Cathy Dufresne (MI), Sue Wheaton (AoA), Eileen Bennett (MD), Kathleen McMahon (Harmony), Vicky Radford (CA), Travis Lobdell (Harmony), Allen Myers (MD), Theresa Sticker (NV), Cindy Sam (WA), Cheryl Hennen (MN), Jenny Beaujean (MA), Louise Ryan (WA), Susan Root (NY), Ellen Ott (NY), Alice Nicholson (VT), Karen Hausrath (WA)

(Continued from page 3)

Don't use a cell phone, and it would be best if you have the technology to mute your phone when you're listening. If for some reason you cannot be connected, call in as a listen-only attendee, following the instructions in the next sentence.

If you expect to listen only, call in as an attendee at 718-709-0655, code 661-296-857. You will be able to submit questions with your computer keyboard through the Question and Answer feature of the Webinar program. Please contact them With any questions, at [alca.assistedliving@gmail.com](mailto:alca.assistedliving@gmail.com).

*“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

**Bonnie Wasmund**

## From the field (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

**chair, and do what they are told. Those people are aging in place at home. Skilled care is for really sick and needy residents.**

Richard Cavanagh, President Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, St. Louis, MO

### OHIO

***Jones, T. S., & Brinkert, R. (2008). Conflict Coaching: Strategies and Skills for the Individual. Sage Publications.***

This book provides an in-depth explanation of the Comprehensive Conflict Coaching model with a strong foundation built on research and theory from a variety of ADR practitioners, authors, and theorists. This book, at first glance, may appear outside the realm of a LTCO's daily work, but upon closer inspection, the connections between this coaching model and the resident empowerment we do each day becomes increasingly evident. I found myself saying over and over again, “This is what I do.” The great thing about this book is that the text provides practical tools and methods to take your skills and awareness to a deeper level and share them with the residents we serve. Our primary focus is to empower residents and advocate in a variety of ways to protect their rights. Comprehensive Conflict Coaching leans on education, training, practice and application – all aspects of a typical empowerment process for the residents we meet each day. Jones and Brinkert offer example case studies illustrating the subject of each chapter, scholarly research throughout, a wonderfully approachable text and a companion CD of tools that makes a perfect addition to any Ombudsperson's library. Not only is this a terrific resource for us LTCOs, but also for Organizational Ombuds and other ADR professionals and practitioners seeking to clarify the whats and hows of empowering those we serve to better respond to the conflicts they face.

(Drew Strayer is a LTCO in Dayton, Ohio and currently serves as NALLTCO's Ohio State Coordinator. He has also worked in Organizational and Classical ombudsman offices. Drew obtained an MA in Conflict Transformation and Organizational Leadership from Eastern Mennonite University and in his free time, enjoys developing and presenting trainings to groups on tools and methods of conflict transformation.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: It was exciting to see so many submissions from local staff for this newsletter. You guys do such tremendous work and I know there is precious little time to do what has to be done, much less “extras”. We are stronger together, we can work smarter when we share great ideas. You can submit your ideas to me at anytime and I will save them for upcoming editions. The book review was a great edition, many of us read materials that increase our skills, so if you have read a good book lately, let me know.



**Montana Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**  
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Six years ago I joined the Montana Long-term Care Ombudsman Program with much enthusiasm as I believed, and still do, that Ombudsmen are a necessary part of the aging network. However, as with all professionals, I wanted an organization to represent me as a professional and lend a collective voice to important issues that impact residents in the long-term care setting. Shortly after expressing my desire, our State Ombudsman waived an application for NALLTCO in my presence. I quickly joined and became the State Coordinator where I promoted the importance of Montana Ombudsmen joining the organization. I later had the opportunity to run for a position on the NALLTCO Board in 2004, and four years later I am ready to pass this torch to someone else.

I can hear someone questioning why is it important to join NALLTCO, let alone run for a board position. Put simply, NALLTCO is a professional organization that lends a collective voice to issues that surround our ability as Ombudsmen to effectively advocate for the residents we are hired to serve, which is really more of a privilege than a job. I have heard murmurs from some Ombudsmen that they do not see the benefits of joining, but I can tell you from having been on the board for four years that NALLTCO does make a difference. Board Members serve on different committees as well as collaborate with the National Ombudsman Resource Center and NCCNHR. Because of NALLTCO, all Ombudsmen have a voice in committees such as AoA, the Elder Justice Coalition, NASOP, and NASUA. Furthermore, we collectively support or oppose bills that are put before congress that impact our residents. Were you aware that NALLTCO supported Sen. Chuck Grassley's Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act, or that we were a part of the Disaster Planning Tool creation? Clearly, some very important issues! We also have worked on creating a code of ethics for all non-state ombudsmen, which is very important to us as professionals.

It is for these reasons and more that I have proudly served on the board for the past four years. However, there comes a time to step aside and allow others with a fresh perspective to take over and propel the organization into the future. So I am stepping down to allow for that fresh voice; however, I will continue to be a member of NALLTCO and whole heartedly support the collective voice.

I want to thank everyone for their votes that sent me to the board in 2004 that has allowed me to serve, and I want to encourage someone out there thinking about running to run, as he or she can make a difference. The experience provides the chance to connect with others across the United States, act on behalf of all ombudsmen, and see first-hand the impact the organization has on issues that concern your residents.

Best Wishes,  
 Alana Kietzman,  
 Regional Ombudsman, Montana

## New Elder Abuse Study:

The following is a summary from the *Journal of Gerontology: Social Science's* new article on Elder Abuse. Full text can be viewed, [via purchase](http://psychsoc.gerontologyjournals.org/current.shtml), at <http://psychsoc.gerontologyjournals.org/current.shtml>

### ELDER ABUSE: MORE THAN 10 PERCENT OF OLDER AMERICANS SUFFER MISTREATMENT



About **13 percent** of elderly Americans are mistreated, most commonly by someone who verbally mistreats or financially takes advantage of them, according to a University of Chicago study that is the first comprehensive look at elder mistreatment in the country. Other studies have been based on small, non-representative samples of the population or on data gathered from the criminal justice system or welfare agencies such as adult protection services. The study, published in *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, comes in response to a report from the National Research Council calling for scientific study of elder mistreatment. **The researchers found that that 9 percent of adults reported verbal mistreatment, 3.5 percent reported financial mistreatment and 0.2 percent reported physical mistreatment. Physical impairment apparently plays a role in mistreatment, the study found.**

This reinforces the need to work toward the passage of the Elder Justice Act. See the Principals of advocacy for ideas on how to revitalize your efforts (page 3).

*(Continued from page 5) Message from the chair—Jacqueline Case (NJ)*



*And I want to extend a very special "thank-you" to the Board as a whole. Board members work tirelessly to make this organization grow and become the force in long-term care that it is. All your NALLTCO work is over and above everything else you have to do as ombudsmen. And yet, all of you find time to do more to make NALLTCO, and by extension, all local programs stronger. I am truly grateful for all of you.*

And, lastly, a special "thank-you" goes out to all NALLTCO members. It hasn't been an easy year for you either. And yet, you work tirelessly to fulfill your mandate to protect the rights and improve the quality of life of your residents. I can't wait to see what we will accomplish in 2009.

*See you in Indianapolis.*

## NOTES FROM NORC: Lori Smentanka, Director

Here at the NORC and NCCNHR, we are feverishly planning the October NCCNHR Conference. We are working on some terrific sessions that I know you won't want to miss, including:



- Dr. Wayne Nelson will introduce the **LTC Ombudsman Conflict Assessment Instrument** in a workshop, *Conflict Resolution for Advocates: Case, Contest and Closure*, where he will lead participants through strategies for managing and resolving conflict with a range of “difficult people.”
- With the recent hurricanes and tropical storm threatening the Southeastern states and Gulf Coast and the terrible flooding in the Midwest earlier this summer, disaster preparedness becomes more and more important. In this workshop the presenters will review how institutionalized elders fare in emergency events; **and will discuss the role of the ombudsman in disaster preparation, response, and recovery.** Don't miss “*The Ombudsman in the Fog of Disaster!*”
- Hear from the representatives of the Ohio ombudsman program, which has expanded its strategies for recruiting volunteers into the ombudsman program. In the workshop, “*Advocacy 101: Three Ohio Models of Recruitment and Utilization of Student Interns,*” presenters from Ohio will share their proven techniques for partnering with local colleges/universities to **meet the ombudsman program's need for volunteers**, while also helping students meet their educational requirements. For many of your programs that are struggling to recruit volunteers --- this session is for you!

**Ombudsman Basics for “New” Long-Term Care Ombudsmen** ... A 3 hour intensive session for “new” (meaning on the job for two years or less) Long-Term Care Ombudsmen which will delve into the heritage and roots of the ombudsman program; including core ombudsman principles, ethical considerations, and program strengths. We'll look at how the history of the program affects ombudsman practice today. This interactive session is a **MUST** for “new” ombudsmen; and a great refresher for “seasoned” ombudsmen as well! (There is an extra charge for intensives).

Go to the NCCNHR ([www.nccnhr.org](http://www.nccnhr.org)) or NORC websites ([www.ltcombudsman.org](http://www.ltcombudsman.org)) for more information about the conference and how to register!

In preparation for Residents' Rights Week (October 5-11), the Center put out a call to residents to describe what “home” means to them. We've received very touching and eloquent entries from all over the country where residents share what “home” means. Over the next couple weeks, as we lead up to Residents' Rights Week, we will be featuring these residents on our website (see link above). Stop by the website and view these “Recipes for Home.”

And check out the new *Gazette* newsletter! It's been re-formatted, and now goes to a wider audience, but still has the same great information! It's sent monthly to all state and local ombudsmen and also to NCCNHR members. You should be getting in your inbox – if you're not, let me know! It's also available on the NORC website. Share it with your volunteers! Let me know how you like it's new look! [lsmentanka@nccnhr.org](mailto:lsmentanka@nccnhr.org).

See you in Indianapolis!

Lori

### WHAT ADVOCATE CAN RESIST A GOOD BARGAIN?

NALLTCO has a membership drive for 2008 which saves you a bundle. During this special promotion:

- For every two new members you sign up, one free membership credit is available.
- Credit is transferable to another membership or you can claim the credit to cover your own cost for 2008!
- New members do not have to be from the same program, or even the same state!



CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB

[WWW.NALLTCO.ORG](http://WWW.NALLTCO.ORG)

#### Editor's Note to ALICE HEDT , NCCNHR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There are still residents in Albemarle, NC who can remember Alice as their local ombudsman. When I visit, they will ask me about her red hair, quiet voice, and exacting way of getting things done. I reassure them that she is still a strong advocate for them and they smile, confident that Alice, like she has for decades, will fight for their rights. Now, as Alice announces that she is stepping down as the ED for NCCNHR, I can't help but remember my own journey with her as a mentor and hero.



As a young social worker in a nursing home, I would call my local ombudsman for help with problematic issues to be sure I had not missed any possibilities. Alice, like all good ombudsman, was ready with ideas. The type of ideas born of a "anything is possible if you put your mind and heart to it" type of attitude. Alice, while not the easiest person to reach on the phone, (*oh, yeah, she was out in the field covering the 8,000 residents our region had at that time*) she was always ready to be helpful, share successes, signal challenges, and offer support when I called. Working on issues in a systemic way, even in the early 80's before the NH Reform Law, Alice worked to have local Social Workers from our nine county region, come together to share aspects of care planning, working with difficult staff attitudes, reluctant physicians, the intricacies of Medicare and Medicaid and how to make good referrals to home based agencies for discharges. I was one of those starry eyed Social Workers, and she must have seen something in me, for she let me know that soon she would be taking a new job, and the local Ombudsman program would be looking for a new person.

Now, 16 years later, I supervise 5 paid staff and over 200 volunteers, still listening to Alice's voice in my ear everyday, "*anything is possible*". Our region is preparing for the annual Resident Rights Celebrations, and many of the ideas, practices and seeds of creativity that she planted in the Charlotte program have flourished, just as she grew the National Ombudsman Resource Center to be a sentinel source for relevant tools that residents, families and ombudsman can use in their everyday practice. prior to her leaving there to become NCCNHR's ED. Alice's personal experiences have shaped her vision of long-term care, her passion for quality, and her commitment to people. While I don't know the reasons Alice is taking a new step in her journey, I know that all those who have known and been influenced by her will continue to take some of her passion with them on their own voyage. Her guidance to me in my first official national role as NALLTCO's chairperson was invaluable. [ O.K. This last part is just between Alice and I, so everyone else close your eyes, and ears: "And while I'm still a diamond in the rough, I know that Alice will appreciate it when I say I wish you a shit-pot full of luck on your next adventure!"]

*Debt L. Lee*