



The Beacon

A Newsletter for Long-Term Care Residents

October 2021

LGBTQ and HIV+ Residents Have Rights!



In March, Governor Murphy signed a law that guarantees protections for LGBTQ and HIV+ residents in long-term care facilities, including nursing homes. It prohibits discrimination across many aspects of nursing home life, including privacy, appropriate care, roommate choice, being called by preferred names and pronouns, and many other areas. It also requires that all facility staff receive training

within the next year about basic LGBTQ history, the requirements of the new law, best care practices, and how to make the nursing home a more welcoming environment.

It is important to recognize that when older LGBTQ people go into long-term care, they legitimately fear discrimination, poor treatment, and disrespect. Sadly, many residents go back “in the closet” for these reasons, feeling the need to hide or downplay their gender identify or sexual preferences. A highly trained LTCO team will proactively visit nursing homes to make sure that facilities are doing what they need to do to comply with the law’s requirements. We will also produce posters and pamphlets on the new law. If you or any of your fellow residents is LGBTQ or HIV-positive and are not treated with dignity or respect, please call our office at **877-582-6995**.

October is Residents’ Rights Month



October is Residents’ Rights Month. The 2021 Residents’ Rights Month theme, **“Reclaiming My Rights, My Home, My Life,”** acknowledges the impact of this past year on residents and highlights the need for residents’ rights to be recognized, recovered, and reasserted. It emphasizes the recognition of the long-term care facility as the residents’ home, and the importance of residents reclaiming their own lives.

LTCO MEMORY LANE TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. What American actress, whose real name was Norma Jean, was found dead in August 1962?
2. Fred, Wilma, Betty, and Barney were characters on which animated television show?
3. What US President was an actor before entering into politics?
4. What music festival took place in 1969?
5. What theme park opened in Florida in 1971?

Answers: 1. Marilyn Monroe 2. The Flintstones 3. Ronald Reagan 4. Woodstock 5. Disney World

“The Mayor” Won’t Let a Nursing Home Define Her



They call her the Mayor of Regency Grande nursing home in Dover.

Carol Jordan, 81, doesn’t let life in a nursing home stop her from being her uninhibited, take-charge self. If they bring in a guest singer to perform, she will sing and dance from her seat in the front row. She wears sparkly make-up.

“I have a lot of feather boas and sparkly things. I like to get dressed. They say I’m different. I’m not going to change now,” says the former Staten Island resident and stock exchange worker, now in her sixth year living at Regency.

In fact, if the mood strikes, she and some friends will go in a limo to see a show in New York. But isn’t the Big Apple intimidating? “Around the block scares me, but not New York,” she jokes.

Carol will speak out for other residents if they need help. She leads the 10-person Resident Council, and serves on the Food Committee and other groups that may form. She even acts as an intermediary between residents and their families: “I communicate with family members on what they need and what they’re doing.”

“I guess I’m Mayor. I think it’s great. I want to help the people here,” said Carol. “I’m lucky, I’m outgoing and I know what I’m talking about. Some people here don’t know where they are. I want them to be happy.”

“She’ll actually yell at residents, ‘If you want that, write it down! I’ll get it for you,’” said facility administrator Abe Miara.

But that’s not all. “I lead group exercises every morning – moving hands, bicycling, a whole routine. I’ll play different records and we’ll dance, exercise, and sing. The residents really like that.”

She takes pride in the work of the Food Committee, which makes sure that the food is hot, snacks are available and that residents have choice in their meals: “If you don’t want a baked potato, you can have a mashed potato,” she said.

Speaking up and resolving problems with the facility administration, especially during the public health emergency, is important to Carol. “We’re getting there.... It doesn’t all happen overnight; we have to work on things. I’m not giving up. There’s lots of things I like to do and I do them...It’s up to me to be happy.”

New Jersey Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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