

Lee and Russell
County Nursing
Homes

Arbor Springs Health
and Rehabilitation

EAMC SNF

Oak Park

Phenix City Health
Care

Canterbury Health
Care

Parkwood Health Care

Lee and Russell
County Assisted Living
Facilities

Cambridge Place
(SCALF)

Northridge (SCALF)

Azalea Place (ALF)

Camellia Place
(SCALF)

Magnolia (SCALF)

Morningside ALF

Lakewood ALF

Ombudsman News

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 1, 2011

From the Ombudsman.....

Making the decision to place a loved one into a nursing home is a very hard decision to make. The person making the decision experiences many different emotions. They range from extreme guilt to extreme relief. Nursing homes tend to have a negative reputation due to the stereotypes that are depicted on television and how they were in the past. This year, I would like to dispel those stereotypes in our area. The nursing home is an excellent resource for those who need it.

There is nothing wrong with nursing homes but we do recognize that everyone in a nursing home does not need to be there. This quarter's newsletter will focus on some issues regarding caregiving. There are so many issues to consider when deciding to become the primary caregiver for a loved one. The responsibility of caring for a loved one and taking care of yourself can be overwhelming

for anyone. Future issues will include tips for making caregiving easier.

There are also our regular segments discussing wellness, recipes, and coming events. As I have stated in previous newsletters, "Knowledge is Power." As the Ombudsman, I plan to do all that I can to ensure that residents in and around the Lee and Russell counties areas are prepared for long-term care. There will be events scheduled throughout this year that will educate the community



on what resources are available and how to use them. I look forward to a busy and enlightening year.

Please remember that the LRCOG Ombudsman program is in desperate need of volunteers. Anyone who visits nursing homes with a church ministry or group would be a great asset to the program. There is also a pen pal program for those who do not wish to visit the nursing home but would not mind corresponding with a resident. Please contact me if you are interested or you know of a group that would be willing to act as Ombudsman Volunteers to conduct friendly visits.

Maria Davis
Long-Term Care Ombudsman
LRCOG
(334) 749-5264 ext 207

Area Agency on Aging

The Lee-Russell Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging is able to provide a number of services to area seniors. The agency is available to residents of Lee and Russell Counties. Programs available include the following:

SenioRx assist seniors age 55-64 with applying for free medications offered

by pharmaceutical companies.

Senior Centers provide socialization for those seniors able to get out of their homes with minimal assistance.

Home delivered meals provide those who qualify with at least one nutritious meal a day.

Medicaid Waiver program enables persons to remain in their home as

opposed to a long-term care facility.

Ombudsman program advocate for those residing in long-term care facilities.

For additional information on agency programs call the Lee-Russell Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging @ (334) 749-5264.

What is an Ombudsman?

Ombudsmen are advocates for residents of long-term care facilities, or their friends or families, who work to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of Alabama's senior citizens. An Ombudsman's job is to protect the rights of residents and assure that residents receive fair treatment and quality care by:

- Investigating and resolving complaints
- Visiting each facility to evaluate conditions
- Ensuring that residents are

receiving the legal, financial, and other services to which they are entitled

- Acting as a mediator between residents, their families, and facility staff
- Educating individuals on Resident's Rights
- Providing information to the public.

Anyone can use the Ombudsman, including residents or employees of long-term care facilities, or their friends and families. A complaint may be filed in writing, by phone,

or in person. Complaints may be made anonymously; however, it is better if we are able to contact the complainant. All calls and information is kept confidential.

For additional information or to contact the Ombudsman, please call Maria M. Davis (334) 749-5264 ext. 207 or via email Maria.Davis@adss.alabama.gov

"Ombwho? What is an Ombudsman?"

"You know what is best for you better than anyone else."

"Remember we only have one body let us treat it special"

Planning For Your Own Care

I cannot think of one person who has chosen to be sick or who has chosen to need facility placement. We never know what life will throw at us. We just have to deal with what we are thrown.

Although you cannot predict exactly what you will require with regards to long-term care, you can anticipate some general needs. Once you re-

ceive a particular diagnosis you should research and find out everything you can about the diagnosis. This information is the first step in reviewing what possible options there are for your care. If there is the possibility of facility placement in the future, you can go ahead and research area facilities. If you have children who live out of town, would you prefer a

facility closer to them? You have to make sure that you have adequate insurance to pay for care. Be sure that if you plan to apply for any type of assistance, the necessary information is available. There is so much that can be done to prepare. What ever is going to be best for you is what you do. You know what is best for you better than anyone else.

Wellness...

This time of year we are all making plans for the coming year. We are making plans for "the best year ever." We have spent the last few weeks eating cookies, cakes, and all the other wonderful foods that taste good but are not good for us. We set these long detailed goals and we hit the

ground rolling. We go to the gym everyday and exercise an hour a day. While it is great to set New Year's resolutions, if you set unrealistic goals, you are not gaining anything. Maintaining physical health is not all about losing weight. It is about feeling good, inside and out. As the year progresses, make

taking care of **you** a priority. A healthy lifestyle will allow you to maintain a healthy body and mind. You will feel and look great. Instead of setting New Year's resolutions, make lifelong changes that will go well beyond the first three months of the year.

Broccoli & Garlic Penne Pasta

Prep: 20 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 C Swanson Chicken Broth
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil leaves, crushed
 1/8 teaspoon ground pepper
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 3 cups broccoli florets
 4 1/2 cups penne pasta, cooked and drained

1 tablespoon lemon juice

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Heat the broth, basil, black pepper, garlic and broccoli in a 10 inch skillet over medium heat to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and cook until the broccoli is tender-crisp.

Add pasta and lemon juice and toss to coat. Sprinkle the pasta mixture with the cheese.

Nutrition Information:

Calories 124

Total fat: 2g

Saturated fat: 1g

Cholesterol: 3mg

Sodium: 209mg

Total Carbohydrates: 22g

Dietary fiber: 3g

Protein: 7g

Disaster Preparedness...

As we all know a disaster does not necessarily have to be weather related. Right now we are entering what has been predicted to be a very critical flu season. The elderly is a segment of our population that is especially vulnerable to catching the flu and experiencing complications associated with it. There are several actions that can be taken to keep not only the elderly healthy

but also the general population healthy. **Following are some steps to take to help stop the spread of germs:**

- Cover you mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough
- Clean your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

- Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed
- Practice other good health habits
- Get a flu shot annually

For more information on disaster preparedness you may contact your health department or log on to www.adph.org.

“Preparation is key.”

Proper Hand Washing Techniques...

Proper hand washing has to be the single most important step in fighting the spread of the flu and many other diseases. Although washing your hands seems to be a simple task that we were all taught as young children, some people seems to have forgotten some aspects of properly washing their hands. Following are some simple hand washing steps to ensure that we are all

doing the best we can to prevent the spread of germs:

1. Wet hands with WARM water.
2. Lather up both hands with soap.
3. Scrub hands together for at least 20 seconds scrubbing areas vigorously.

4. Rinse hands thoroughly using warm running water. If possible, use a towel to turn off faucet when you are finished rinsing.
5. Dry hands completely with a clean towel. If it is disposable, throw it away. If you have no towel, you can let your hands air-dry. **If using a public restroom, use a tissue or towel to open the door.**

Following these simple steps can go a long way in keeping you and our community healthy.



**Lee-Russell Council of Governments
Area Agency on Aging**

2207 Gateway Drive
Opelika, AL 36801

Phone: 334-749-5264

1-800-243-5463

Fax: 334-749-6582

Website: www.LRCOG.com

Funding for this publication was made in partnership with the Administration on Aging, the Alabama Department of Senior Services and the local Governments of Lee and Russell Counties.

The Lee Russell Council of Governments is pleased to service and provide assistance and benefits to seniors and their families in Lee and Russell Counties.

Our Area Agency on Aging will assess the needs of persons 60 years or older and coordinate programs which improve the quality of life and promote independence.

There are no income requirements for participation in most programs.

Call our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Take Care of Yourself....

Time management is an important aspect of caregiving. As a caregiver it is easy to become overwhelmed with being able to get everything done on a day to day basis. The caregiver has the task of balancing caring for the care recipient as well as their on personal needs.

As a caregiver, it is important that you take a realistic look at what is expected of you and what you are able to do. Once you have taken everything into consideration, you are ready to begin. Following are some suggestions to get started:

- Get organized. Make a to-do list of what needs to be done, when it needs to be done and how often.
- Prioritize the items on your list. Determine what must be done and what can be put off if need be.
- Do what you can and get help

doing what you cannot do. If you are unable to hire assistance and there is no other family available, let the little things go. You should also research area resources to see what assistance is available to you.

- Reevaluate your abilities on a regular basis. As the needs of the person you are caring for changes, so will your abilities to provide those needs. It is important that you do not take on more than you can handle

Remember that you cannot care for a loved one if you do not care for yourself first.

