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What is *Friends & Families*?

Friends & Families is a consumer organization dedicated to providing information, advocacy and support for long-term care while also boosting public understanding of the many issues involved. Our goals are to help educate and support the friends and families of long-term care patients in Tennessee and to make them more aware of the issues that affect their lives. *Friends & Families* is sponsored by the Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA)/Tennessee Center for Assisted Living (TNCAL), a nonprofit organization whose members include long-term care facilities throughout Tennessee.

Friends & Families
THCA/TNCAL
P. O. Box 100129
Nashville, TN 37224
friendsandfamilies@thca.org

Friends & Families

a partnership for long-term care

www.thca.org

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friendsandfamilies@thca.org

Award winners recognized at Convention

THCA's Awards of Excellence program recognizes individuals, groups, vendors and member nursing homes for their contributions to the long-term care profession and their outstanding work in caring for the state's elderly and disabled. From encouraging patients to have positive outlooks on life to helping them realize unfulfilled dreams, this year's award recipients have made a difference in the lives of nursing home and assisted care living residents.

Among the honorees are exceptional volunteers who go above and beyond the call of duty in offering nursing home patients companionship, assistance and positive attitudes. Each year an individual and a group are honored as volunteers of the year in recognition of the important role they play in patients' lives.

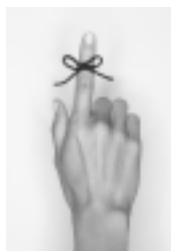
Jack and Theresa Holiwski, 2011 Group Volunteer of the Year, have been a fixture at the Center on Aging & Health in Erwin for more than nine years. The Holiwskis volunteer at the facility three times a day every day, giving more than 1,000 hours a piece over the course of a year. They assist in the nursing home's dining room with every meal. They help with religious services and recruited a local Catholic church to conduct Mass at the facility. Once a month they lead a karaoke program that they initiated. And each day they visit with residents one-on-one, embodying the true spirit of volunteerism with their passion for helping others.

Individual Volunteer of the Year winner April Warren has a debilitating form of multiple sclerosis that started at age 14. But despite being confined to a wheelchair, the 31-year-old volunteers at Fairpark Healthcare Center in Maryville three times a week, giving more than 900 hours a year. Warren leads religious services, provides welcome



Individual Volunteer of the Year April Warren receives her award at THCA's Convention in Nashville.

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visits to new patients, gives out mail, helps with bingo, leads the resident choir, and facilitates group discussions. She even launched a program for residents called Beginners Computer 101. But as a former resident of the Maryville facility, her most vital role may be that of friend and comforter who has formed close bonds with many patients who feel she understands them in a unique way. She is a source of hope for everyone around her.

The 2011 Awards of Excellence were presented Aug. 30 during a special gala at THCA's Convention & Trade Show at the Gaylord Opryland Convention Center & Resort. THCA President Mark Davis, chief operating officer of Tennessee Health Management in Parsons, presented each award after a moving video tribute.

Also honored that evening were:

- ◆ George Munchow, Applingwood Healthcare Center in Cordova, Richard T. Sadler Distinguished Association Service Award
- ◆ Doyle Love, Life Care Center of East Ridge, Distinguished Professional Service Award
- ◆ "Celebrity of the Week," McNairy County Health Care Center in Selmer, Innovative Program Award
- ◆ Blood Glucose Monitoring, Shannondale Health Care Center in Knoxville, Best Practices Award
- ◆ Bobbie Ball, Shannondale Assisted Living Center in Knoxville, Assisted Care Living Facility Service Excellence Award
- ◆ McKesson Medical Surgical, Vendor of the Year

- ◆ *Independent Appeal*, Selmer, Long-term Care Communicator Award
- ◆ Randy Hutchinson, The Cambridge House in Bristol, Activity Directors of Tennessee Member of the Year
- ◆ Brandy Franks, Savannah Health Care & Rehabilitation Center, Directors of Nursing Association Member of the Year
- ◆ Lorraine Belew, McKenzie Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, Dietary Supervisors Association Member of the Year
- ◆ Dennis Bearden, McNairy County Health Care Center in Selmer, Environmental Supervisors Association Member of the Year
- ◆ Lee Ann Warren, McNairy County Health Care Center in Selmer, Social Service Workers Association Member of the Year



The 2011 Awards of Excellence winners

Changes to government programs set for 2012

It's that time of year again. Those with Medicare are reviewing health care plans and coverage options for 2012. The open enrollment period began Oct. 15 and continues through Dec. 7.

New this year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has implemented a quality rating system for Medicare Advantage (Part C) and prescription drug (Part D) plans. These ratings, which are available at www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan, highlight those plans with "five-star" ratings. Medicare recipients can change to available five-star plans at any time throughout the year.

In addition to the quality ratings, a variety of resources can help Medicare beneficiaries choose their plans. Medicare recipients should have received a 2012 Medicare & You handbook in the mail, and recipients can visit www.medicare.gov or call (800) MEDICARE (663-4227) for more information on the available plans. Those with limited resources may also qualify for the Extra Help program to assist with prescription drug costs. More information on Extra Help can be found at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp or 800) 772-1213.

Next year's average cost of Medicare Advantage (Part C) premiums will be 4 percent lower than in 2011. The estimated average cost for prescription drug coverage (Part D) will be \$38 per month in 2012.

For those choosing to stay with Original Medicare (Parts A and B), premiums will be going up slightly for 2012. For those with less than 30 quarters of Medicare-covered employment, Part A coverage will go up \$1 per month next year. The deductibles and co-pays for inpatient hospital stays will also increase with rates varying by length of stay. The Part B monthly premium will increase \$3.50 per month for most beneficiaries. This increase will be offset by a 3.6 percent increase in monthly Social Security benefits for 2012.

Also in 2012, the state of Tennessee has announced plans for cuts to the Medicaid program effective Jan. 1. Several health care providers, including nursing homes, will be affected. These cuts were announced after the Bureau of TennCare, which administers the state's Medicaid program, learned that it will not be receiving \$82 million it is owed by the federal government. Until Congress passes legislation releasing these funds to the state, there will be a 4.25 percent decrease in Medicaid payments to facilities.

This decrease will most likely result in staff cuts at nursing homes across the state. Residents, family members and staff members at nursing homes are encouraged to contact their members of Congress and urge them to act on this issue.

Scenes from National Assisted Living Week



Residents of Baptist Assisted Living Center in Lenoir City challenged another assisted living community to a pie-making contest.



Lou and Maxine Corrington of Garden Plaza at Cleveland danced to the big band music of Sweet Georgia Sound.



Stonecrest Assisted Living in Lafayette hosted a potluck for residents, family and friends.



An Elvis impersonator visited residents at Trousdale Senior Living Center in Hartsville during their National Assisted Living Week celebration.



Residents at The White House Assisted Living in Lafayette enjoyed horse and buggy rides during the week Sept. 11-17.



Ask the Experts

Q My grandmother's nursing home says it's an "Eden-certified facility." What does that mean?

A Several years ago, long-term care communities began shifting from a traditional medical model of care to one that still offers high-quality, 24-7 clinical care but tries to create a "patient-centered" atmosphere that is more like home. You may also hear this referred to as "culture change" in the nursing home.

There are a few different organizations leading the charge to make these changes, and the Eden Alternative is one of them. When a facility is Eden-certified, it means that their staff has undergone special training and made the commitment to adopting a more person-centered model of care. In Eden-certified facilities, the residents choose what they

would like to be called, often picking names like "neighbors," "friends" or "elders." The elders vote on what to call the hall or wing where they live, so it's not uncommon to hear that a room is located on "Magnolia Lane" or "Orange Blossom Trail."

The purpose of the Eden Alternative is to combat feelings of loneliness, helplessness and boredom among residents. In an Eden-certified facility, it's not uncommon to see children or pets roaming the hallways. Some facilities may have cats, dogs and birds that live onsite, while others encourage staff members and volunteers to bring pets to visit the residents. Many Eden facilities have onsite child care facilities to bring generations together.

Residents in Eden-certified facilities are encouraged to personalize their rooms with furnishings and decorations from home. Many communities have accessible gardens where residents can enjoy the beauty of flowers, tend to plants and taste the bounty of the harvest.

Perhaps one of the most important things about Eden facilities is the way they are staffed. Each day, a care team is responsible for the same group of residents. This allows the residents and caregivers to build lasting relationships and helps the staff members make decisions based on the residents' needs. This not only leads to increased resident satisfaction and better care, but also reduces employee turnover.

Long-term care communities throughout Tennessee are changing their approaches to patient care. A few communities have even built "Green Houses," which are small, self-contained houses where six to 12 residents live. These houses feature individual bedrooms and bathrooms, along with a common kitchen and living area, and meet all of the state and federal regulations for skilled nursing facilities. The dedicated care team not only provides nursing care, but also prepares meals, assists with laundry and performs housekeeping tasks.

Family involvement is also an important part of this process. The next time you visit your grandmother's nursing home, look around to see what changes have been made. Ask the staff questions about what they are doing to provide patient-centered care.

Have a question about long-term care in Tennessee?

In each issue, THCA/TNCAL will answer readers' questions about living in nursing homes or assisted care living facilities (ACLF), Medicare and Medicaid benefits and other long-term care issues. Please send questions to friendsandfamilies@thca.org or *Friends & Families*, P.O. Box 100129, Nashville, TN 37224.

We want to hear from you.

The quest for excellence in long-term care is a team effort involving family members, facility caregivers, volunteers and community groups. Likewise, your input is needed to find new ideas to improve *Friends & Families*. Please send your thoughts, personal stories regarding long-term care or questions for "Ask the Experts."

Your membership in *Friends & Families* is valued and appreciated by caregivers, patients at nursing homes and residents of assisted care living facilities throughout Tennessee. But if you'd like to stop receiving this newsletter, we'll be glad to remove your name from our mailing list. Send us an email to friendsandfamilies@thca.org or a quick note with your name and address (include mailing label if possible).

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