

NEWSLETTER

FALL
2020
ISSUE 1



An educational and advocacy organization formed to promote and protect the interests of the residents of CCRCs in the commonwealth of Virginia

Virginia Continuing Care Residents Association

Officers:

President..... Susan Hinderleider
President@vacra.org

Sr. Vice President.....Penny Jez
SeniorVP@vacra.org

VP Newsletter... Barbara McNamee
Newsletter@vacra.org

Secretary..... Unfilled

Treasurer.....Claudia Blake
Treasurer@vacra.org

Parliamentarian..... Mary Swain
mswain1899@aol.com

Immediate Past President....
Joan Lewis
jwlewis1@mac.com

Message from Susan Hinderleider, VaCCRA President 2016-2020 and Penny Jez Ph.D., Senior Vice President 2018-2020

VaCCRA Members, Greetings from Continuing Quarantine!

We've been restricted for so long that we're having trouble remembering what social life is like. The world during Covid-19 is a weird place. We are cocooned for our own safety. Our mantra has become "Mask, Wash, Distance". Cable TV, Streaming Services such as Amazon Prime, Hulu and Netflix plus YouTube have become our best friends. And ZOOM has become a welcome and vital communications link for our conference calls and board meetings. We're wondering if the next step will be answering the scam calls just to talk to the recordings from the world OUT THERE!

- On a more serious note, we want to take this opportunity to update you on the progress your officers have made since the start of 2020. While we have been sequestered, your VaCCRA Board has been busy on a weekly and monthly basis in a series of group and individual meetings via telephone conference calls and zoom meetings. Most notably was our **Executive Committee Retreat** in December at Covenant Woods where we gathered in an all-day meeting to evaluate and revise VaCCRA's key source documents and make a solid plan for 2020-2022.



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[VaCCRA Web Pages Link http://www.VaCCRA.org](http://www.VaCCRA.org)

[NaCCRA Web Pages Link http://www.NaCCRA.com](http://www.NaCCRA.com)

Welcome to NaCCRA/VaCCRA Partnership

Message from President Susan Hinderleider and Sr. Vice President Penny Jez

That Master Plan for 2020-2022 was an ambitious and comprehensive effort to address continuous member growth and officer development, the addition of new communities under the VaCCRA wing, a more prominent education and advocacy program designed to meet the coming challenges to senior communities, and a comprehensive program to revise our publications and highlight our web presence with a revitalized and more contemporary website.

And although we have not been able to meet in larger groups at different communities during the quarantine, VaCCRA's Board had one ZOOM meeting (pre-quarantine) in February and two more during the quarantine over the summer in June and August. At our last communications during the Zoom Board Meetings, **Board Members from our VaCCRA communities** reported they were all coping well while still in some forms of lockdown. While we'd had some cases of Covid-19 scattered among our communities, there have been very few deaths.

During those meetings throughout the spring and summer, VaCCRA Officers acknowledged a hard truth—we had crafted an ambitious two-year plan for growth but had too few members on the bench (so to speak) to move up the officer ladder to help us make that plan a reality. Furthermore, our statewide total membership and community rosters have been going down, not up, and finally, despite having over 55 CCRCs in the state of Virginia, we have been

able to secure memberships from only three more communities—Lakewood, Cedarfield and Covenant Woods.

During the past few months, we received and responded to a **promising proposal from NaCCRA Leaders to join forces with NaCCRA on a more formal basis** than just a state affiliate. In June, VaCCRA's Board heard the proposal and approved the move to join forces with NaCCRA in a joint membership in January 2021. To accommodate the move, VaCCRA's dues were reduced and combined with NaCCRA for \$35 for individual membership and \$60 for joint membership for couples.

By combining our strengths, we can more effectively monitor and influence issues affecting seniors at both the national and state levels. **By using the expanded communication and organizational capabilities** that will be available to use through the use of their association management software (ClubExpress), we can meet many of our goals to revitalize our publications, improve our web presence and increase our communications with members through targeted email blasts and better monitor and influence legislative efforts to address issues that have come to the fore as the result of Covid-19.

Seniors will need to have strong voices in addressing these developing issues at multiple levels and in the many regulatory, medical and financial environments in the senior living/care industry. **We believe we have made the best decision to strengthen VaCCRA in both the immediate and long term by placing Virginia at the national table for decision making with regard to senior issues in the CCRC industry.**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING VIA ZOOM December 9, 2020

- 10:00 a.m.** **Call to Order and Welcome**
Susan Hinderleider, President of VaCCRA
Protocols for Zoom Meeting: Time limits and hand signals
- 10:15 a.m.** **Business Meeting**
Approval of Minutes
Financial Report - Claudia Blake, Treasurer
Legislative Report – Sara Coleman
Nominations and Elections for President, Sr. Vice President, Secretary
- 10:30 AM** **Program: Guest Speaker**

Update on State and Federal Legislation
Dana Parson, Vice President & Legislative Counsel
LeadingAge Virginia
- 11:15 AM** **Community Reports: Best Practices during Covid Restrictions**
Covenant Woods, Goodwin House at Bailey's Crossroads, Lakewood, Cedarfield, Westminster Canterbury on Chesapeake Bay, Westminster at Lake Ridge, WindsorMeade
- 11:45 AM** **New Business**
2021 Master Calendar with Meeting and Newsletter dates
- 12:00 PM** **Adjourn**

IMPORTANT

In order to access any of the URLs mentioned in this Newsletter, please either copy and paste the URL in your browser or type the URL in your browser directly.

Membership Renewal: A benefit from the VaCCRA/NaCCRA Partnership

Beginning this winter 2020, you will receive renewal notices from NaCCRA for both **VaCCRA and NaCCRA annual dues**. To ease the transition, VaCCRA's Board decided to subsidize our share of the annual dues so that you will pay \$35 for a single membership, and \$60 for a couples' membership in both organizations. Because of this new NaCCRA/VaCCRA partnership, you can now join and renew via **credit card** at vaccra.org or naccra.com. If you prefer to join/renew by **check**, the treasurer is Claudia Blake, 3440 S. Jefferson St. #636, Falls Church, VA 22041. Please include your name, spouse's name if applicable, address, and email.

To better manage our communications with and support members and chapters, VaCCRA now has access to ClubExpress, the premiere association management software. By bringing VaCCRA under the NaCCRA umbrella, we can use ClubExpress to manage, coordinate, and support our organization at no cost beyond association and member dues to NaCCRA. We will save on the need to hire an administrative assistant, and, by handling most of our transactions via internet, we also save on paper, toner, and postage, thus managing your dues wisely.

Legislative Priority 1 Achieved: Support for the Redistricting Amendment

By making contributions to One Virginia and by each VaCCRA community sending statements of support to their legislators, VaCCRA was part of the successful passage of a constitutional amendment on the ballot this November that will establish a bipartisan commission to prevent gerrymandering in Virginia.

Approximately 65% of Virginia voters approved the constitutional amendment for nonpartisan redistricting. The amendment calls for party leaders to select four Republicans and four Democrats to serve on the commission, along with eight private citizens. Party leaders will compile a list of private citizens to serve on the commission while a panel of retired judges will reduce the list to eight citizens. The amendment requires racial, ethnic, geographic, and gender representation. It also prohibits party leaders from appointing themselves, even banning family members and lobbyists.

However, legislator Mark Levine (D-Alexandria) wants the General Assembly in 2021 to pass additional safeguards. He wants legislators removed entirely from the process; he wants to know about political contributions made by the citizens appointed to the commission; he wants Independents represented on the commission; and he wants public hearings before and after maps are drawn.

The General Assembly must pass the maps developed by the Commission. If the maps fail twice in the General Assembly, then the Supreme Court of Virginia will intervene. Another hurdle is a possible delay in receiving U.S. Census numbers. According to Senator George Barker (D-Fairfax), this might result in pushing back the June 2021 primary to late August.

IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

By Sara Coleman, VaCCRA Legislative Chair

Brief History of CCRC Regulation in Virginia

Since 1985, Virginia's State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Insurance (SCC BOI) has had regulatory oversight of continuing care retirement communities. Specifically, by requiring initial and annual disclosure statements, the Commission monitors CCRCs contracts and their on-going financial status. Furthermore, the Commission also specifies Residents Rights in that same document. Although the Commission can impose fines, the Guide to the Regulation of Continuing Care Retirement Communities <https://scc.virginia.gov/getdoc/b4d1ea14-6089-4485-bf6a-304d8aec8997/ccrcguide.pdf> clearly states that the SCC BOI has no jurisdiction to adjudicate controversies between residents and management.

In 2012, a working group of the Virginia Housing Commission recommended that residents have an effective voice in financial decisions that impact the present and future stability of their communities. However, no proposed legislation has come from this working group.

HJR 118: Study of Independent Living CCRCs

More recently, in 2018, the General Assembly adopted House Joint Resolution 118 mandating that the Department of Social Services examine the operations and level of services provided in independent living communities and evaluate whether the Commonwealth of Virginia should regulate these communities further. It is important to note that in 1978 the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman was established; thus, Assisted Living and Nursing Care residents have had this protection for 42 years. This program was expanded in 1983 to include

community based long-term care services provided by state and private agencies and is funded by state, local and charitable contributions.

When *House Document 6: Report on Regulation of Independent Living Communities* was presented to the Virginia General Assembly on January 30, 2019, one of the eight recommendations was to "Establish and manage an Office of Independent Living Community Ombudsman at the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and a complaint line to receive, record and respond to concerns by or on behalf of residents." See published Executive Summary <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2019/HD6>

On December 31, 2019, Delegate Hala Ayala (51st District) <https://viriniageneralassembly.gov/house/members/members.php?id=H0290>

filed an Ombudsman Bill that was assigned to the Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee. On January 16th, the Social Services Subcommittee recommended the bill be removed from the docket for further work with DARS. Beginning in July 2020, VaCCRA began discussions with the Virginia AARP about working together to get the ombudsman and possibly other senior related bills passed in the January 2021 legislative session. Joyce Williams, the state president of AARP, has written about the need for ombudsman oversight as well as about the need for more transparency and better communication between residents and management.

VaCCRA's Position on the Need for an Independent Living Ombudsman and Complaint Line

Your VaCCRA Executive Board concurs that an ombudsman position and complaint line for independent living residents can serve as a safety net for CCRC residents in many ways. Residents could seek assistance from the Ombudsman after they were unable to resolve disagreements with the management of their CCRC or when management ignored their repeated requests to address a problem. A few specific examples: 1) when management fails to provide the financial transparency needed for residents to plan and adjust their personal finances; 2) when management does not adhere to its contracts and marketing promises; 3) when management insists a resident move to a higher level of care, but the resident and family disagree with management; and 4) when management allows a voting resident to serve on the governing board, but creates a system by which the resident is a "token" representative, who rubber stamps management's every decision. VaCCRA is working with Delegate Ayala and other senior community stakeholders on preparing this bill for a full introduction in the 2021 General Assembly Session January 13 – February 27, 2021.

VaCCRA's Statement on CCRC Representation on Corporate Boards of Directors

In 2018, VaCCRA published a statement of support for resident representation on CCRC Boards of Directors. This statement noted that the newer generation of CCRC residents come from extensive and successful careers in government, business and philanthropy. They also have significant experience in service and leadership positions. Although the original conception of CCRCs was one of passive residents and custodial providers, this change in resident profiles has resulted in significant modifications in resident expectations, in which residents want to have a voice in the direction of their long-term care communities.

Managing companies (not-for-profit & for-profit) have been resistant to adopting a model whereby residents have increased roles in managing their independent living communities. CCRCs in other states are working with their state legislatures on these issues. New Mexico's CCRC Association has lobbied for its legislature to improve the state's current Continuing Care Act because it is insufficient in the areas of management oversight and financial protections. Washington State's WaCCRA is working to get their legislators to mandate greater resident involvement in decision-making, more rapid refunds of entrance fees, disclosure of actuarial information, and accountability and consequences for non-compliance.

The time has come for Virginia to review its CCRC regulations and modernize its requirements to be more in keeping with the significant changes in clientele and their demands to be part of the decision-making process with board representation.

Additional Legislative Priorities

At its October Executive Committee Meeting, VaCCRA’s leadership team agreed to focus on the following Federal legislative priorities in 2021:

1. VaCCRA will monitor (and lobby when needed) all Medicare changes;
2. Advocate for controlling the pricing of prescription drugs; and
3. Lobby to make permanent the 7.5% threshold for medical deductions.

VaCCRA’s leadership team will focus on the following state legislative priorities in 2021:

VaCCRA’s Lobbying Initiatives	
<p><i>Successes in 2020 ~</i></p> <p>Passage of the Constitutional Amendment for the creation of a bipartisan commission tasked to draw new redistricting maps. See page - 4</p> <p>Partnering with NaCCRA to improve communication with members and to better manage administrative tasks under Club Express</p> <p>Support for HB-5048 requiring congregate care facilities to disclose outbreaks of diseases to the Virginia Department of Health, and make the data available to the public online.</p> <p>Progress on the Independent Living Ombudsman Bill for Virginia’s CCRCs See Page—6</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocating for an independent living ombudsman position and complaint line; 2. Advocating for increased resident input regarding long range planning in CCRCs with resident representation (with a voice and vote) on corporate Boards of Directors; 3. Advocating for improved regulations and safeguards for CCRCs. <p>To keep members informed throughout the upcoming year, email notices requesting that VaCCRA members communicate their support and articles related to these matters will be published in the VaCCRA newsletter and on its new website.</p>
<p><i>Upcoming for 2021 ~</i></p> <p>Advocating for resident representation with a voice and a vote on CCRC corporate boards of directors.</p> <p>Monitoring access to and changes to Medicare.</p> <p>Advocating and lobbying for price controls of prescription drugs.</p> <p>Lobbying to make <u>permanent</u> the 7.5% threshold for medical deductions.</p> <p>Advocating for improved regulations and safeguards for CCRCs in Virginia.</p>	<p>Sara Coleman, Legislative Vice President, VaCCRA Westminster at Lake Ridge SL.Coleman@verizon.net</p> <p>Penny Jez, Ph.D., Sr. Vice President, VaCCRA Covenant Woods pjez@comcast.net</p>

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

Goodwin House Shares its Covid-19 Playbook

All life plan communities have had to develop detailed strategies for dealing with the unexpected and widespread pandemic. We listened to our medical staff, followed the news, cooperated with our public health departments and consulted experts to help keep our 2,000 older adults and 900 staff safe.

What Did We Do?

Initiated more than 200 infection precaution protocols

Trained all employees in proper protection hygiene

Organized a group-buying effort to purchase more than 500,000 items of Personal Protective Equipment -- enough supplies to support our residents and staff as well as small, local nonprofits

Launched an ongoing Covid-19 testing program for residents and staff

Established regular, often daily communications to inform residents, staff and partners about our protocols and situation

Now we are sharing our playbook with any who might find it helpful: organizations or community and church groups. It includes protocols for resuming operations and templates that can be adopted such as:



Keeping facilities safe

Signage and guidance to employees, guests, and business partners

On-site workspaces and practices

Facility Screening

Sample communications

Access to testing labs

Access to PPE group buying

If you have questions, contact covidsupport@goodwinhouse.org.

With the permission of Goodwin House, we share this link <https://www.goodwinhouse.org/>

Westminster at Lake Ridge ~

Despite Covid > Some Positives

After almost two years of major renovations at Westminster at Lake Ridge (WLR) with daily disruptions and inconveniences, most of the work is completed except for the dining room. The renovated Fitness Center, Saltwater Pool, Bistro, Library, and various public spaces are now available for use, but because of Covid only three residents can sign up to use these locations.

Since social distancing started in March, Zoom has been the lifeline at WLR. Our residents play bridge, have book club meetings, and conduct committee meetings all on Zoom. Similarly, WLR's administration holds its routine meetings using Zoom, and then rebroadcasts these meetings on our in-house television channel.

To keep everyone informed, the administration also sends daily fliers with our meal deliveries to our apartments or cottages once a day. Since August, we now have the option of picking up our meals from the Bistro between noon and 4 p.m. To alleviate loneliness and isolation, WLR has a daily "wave" at 4:30, when residents go outside to talk at an appropriate social distance while others take lawn chairs and sit under the carports for an hour of visiting and sharing.

To date, Covid-related deaths at WLR total 6 residents and one staff member from our population of 332 residents. With the exception of one Independent Living resident, the others were in Assisted Care and the Nursing Center. WLR continues to test staff based on county positivity rates per CMS guidelines, which presently require weekly testing here. Also, per CMS, we test all AL and NC residents weekly whenever a new staff or resident case is discovered, and do so until we get fourteen consecutive days with no new cases.

In general, most of our residents are pleased with all the precautions and restrictions the administration has implemented, and understand the reasons for their cautious and slow re-opening of our campus. Children are now able to visit parents, but must make a reservation, since a limited number of visitors are allowed on campus each day.

As for our VaCCRA chapter at WLR, the start of the pandemic immobilized us for four months. In late May, the leadership team began regrouping and planning. In July, VaCCRA at WLR hosted a zoom meeting for the entire community with Jim Haynes (NaCCRA President) as the guest speaker. This meeting helped us recruit three talented women, who have held leadership roles in various political and senior organizations. In August, we developed a survey to assess the interests of residents in order to plan programs and activities for the remainder of 2020 as well as for 2021. The surveys were distributed to all 332 WLR residents. Eighty-six (86) residents completed the surveys, which is 26% of the WLR community. The respondents expressed considerable interest in all things related to Medicare, in obtaining the Real ID compliant driver's license, and in learning ways to make WLR a more environmentally friendly campus. During November and December, our Chapter's leadership team will focus on a membership campaign, and will distribute information about changes in Medicare and other senior issues.

Submitted by Sara Coleman