



Message from our Executive Director



It is not often that we find ourselves abuzz with excitement over some new innovation that provides hope for those of our

clients so deeply compromised by Alzheimer's. But that is just what has happened. "Alive Inside" was launched at this year's Sundance Film Festival, walking away with several awards. This innovative approach has, without doubt, found a way to reach into the deep psyche of people who have, for all intents and purposes, been disconnected from family and friends and from the day-to-day goings on about them through the inexorable encroachment of the disease. Kudos to Dan Cohen for his work in this field, and kudos to those of our facilities who have taken the time and have become certified in the use of this technique to better enable them to improve the lives of their residents. And of course, kudos to all our funders, who make it all possible. Read the article entitled "Music Brought my Sister to Life" to learn more about this remarkable work and be sure to attend our FREE screening of Alive Inside on January 29th. See inside for more details

Music Brought My Sister to Life

Terry Bullock

I know the heartbreak of having someone you love be here physically and yet not here mentally. My sister, Delia, had been ill with dementia for years. So when I attended the Sundance Film Festival and saw the movie "Alive Inside," it spoke to me in a very personal way. But I wasn't sure if this was "for real" or whether the people portrayed in the movie had been especially hand-picked because of their response to music.

In the spring, shortly after the festival, Delia was moved from the nursing home to the hospital. I downloaded two songs I knew she loved on my phone intending to play them for her, but I must admit I was also testing the hypothesis promoted in the movie. I walked into her room and could see immediately she was upset. Though she wasn't speaking, she was communicating her angst: she was gritting her teeth, glaring at us. It seemed like she was blaming us for her discomfort. With her Alzheimer's, there was just no way to explain why she needed to be in the hospital. But then this miracle happened. I told her I had brought some music to play for her. Delia opened her eyes, looked up and started to sing along to "I Hear A Symphony" by Diana Ross and the Supremes. Pretty soon nurses started peeking their heads into the room to see what was going on. When the song ended, she turned to Jeff, her husband, gave him a little push on the arm and told him how silly and funny he was. We were all laughing and tearing up. For a moment in time she was there with us. I had a glimpse of my sister back. Jeff had a moment of his wife knowing him, appreciating him and actually teasing him. It is a precious memory. Delia passed away two weeks later, but I will always be grateful, knowing we were able to inject moments of happiness into those last days, thanks to the music and the work of Dan Cohen.



Terry (right) and her sister Delia

Connecting with OSSMC

OSSMC is committed to keeping its clients, funders, donors, volunteers, and the community informed of issues, opportunities, and challenges facing our agency, residents in long-range care facilities, and elder care in general. To keep you informed, OSSMC is working to enhance our channels of communication through expanded content on our website, increased publication of our newsletter, Facebook posts, and a weekly blog. We hope that you feel informed and empowered by this increased communication we welcome your input and contributions. You can connect with us in the following ways.

- **Website:**

Be sure to check out the blog, Monthly Report at a Glance and FAQ Section

- **Newsletter:**

We will be publishing quarterly so look for them in your mailbox.

- **Facebook:**

Like our facebook page



Protecting our Frail Elders

As advocates for seniors and dependent adults in the long-term care facilities, we are frequently faced with challenging situations. Perhaps none are more challenging than when someone in authority who, we assume, has or should have the knowledge about our clients, or about our aging population, displays a level of ignorance that leaves us wondering. Over the years we have dealt with several such situations.

We have been working with a law enforcement agency in one of our cities in the county. A 92-year old client had run out of money and could not afford to stay at the facility where she had checked herself in. A less expensive (and far less ritzy) place was found for her but was not to her liking. She screamed at everyone, became combative and made every attempt to escape. Eventually the facility advised they were unable to provide care for her and she was transferred back to the facility from whence she had come. It wasn't long before she escaped from that home, refusing all the appeals of the administrator to stay. He followed her out and watched as she walked down the street, crossing at a traffic light, against the lights with a long line of cars bearing down on her. He called us and the local police department for help. This smart, well educated, well-dressed, woman, convinced the police that she was off to San Francisco to visit a friend. Our ombudsman was unable to persuade the police that, in fact, the woman was extremely demented and that she had no idea where she was going. The officer called a cab, put her in the cab and sent her off to San Francisco. Seven hours later, having been abandoned on the street by an extremely angry cabbie, she showed up in a small electronics store. Realizing the woman was lost and that she had no money on her, they went through her purse and found the business card of the facility she had left. They called, and at the request of the administrator, put her in a cab and returned her to that facility. A telephone call to the woman's physician ended in frustration as he too was stating that she was still fully in control of her faculties and able to make her own decisions, and that, indeed, she did not have a diagnosis of dementia. Two days later she attempted to repeat the performance. Once again on the phone with the police, it took our ombudsman all her skill to convince the police that she needed to be taken to a place where she could be fully assessed. She now has the diagnosis of dementia that we were seeking, and in the absence of any family, we have submitted to the county for conservatorship.

Ombudsmen Attend Circle of Care Conference



District Attorney, Janet Berry

Ombudsman Services is a proud partner of Alzheimer's Association of Northern California and Northern Nevada and sponsor of their Circle of Care and Updates in Dementia Conferences. We are always eager to participate in deeper conversations about aging, dementia and long-term care with family members and professionals. However, this conference was especially important as our Director of Operations, Nicole Howell, facilitated a session with Music and Memory founder, Dan Cohen. After watching a short clip of "Alive Inside", the documentary featuring Dan and his program, Music and Memory, the audience of three hundred engaged in an exciting conversation about how they can bring personal music devices to individuals experiencing dementia in their homes and facilities.



Congresswoman Jackie Speier

Nicole also announced that thanks to the generosity of Eric Lochtefeld, the owner of the historic Fox Theatre in downtown Redwood City, Deloitte, and others, the Music and Memory program is being implemented in seven dementia care and skilled nursing facilities in San Mateo County.

Our thanks to Alzheimer's Association and Dan Cohen for such an important session.

Free Screening of Alive Inside

Join Ombudsman Services, the Senior Affairs Commission, The Veterans Memorial Senior Center and Sequoia Healthcare District for a free screening of this award-winning documentary. This groundbreaking movie provides a new path through personal music devices for those experiencing dementia. Learn how an iTunes library and a personal music device can revolutionize the lives of those experiencing dementia without using drugs.

Thursday, January 29th at 1:00pm
Veterans Memorial Senior Center
1451 Madison Ave
Redwood City, CA 94061

The screening is complimentary, but please RSVP to Nicole Howell at nicolehowell@ossmc.org



Seniors on the Square!

In observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness and Prevention Day, we will be partnering with the City of Redwood City and the San Mateo Daily Journal to bring you a one of a kind event for seniors and their families at Courthouse Square in Redwood City on Friday, June 12, 2015. So join us for a morning of conversation, prizes and games. More details to come, so check our website soon more information.

Upcoming Events

Elder Protection Must be as Important as Child Protection



Leza Coleman,
Executive Director
CLTCOA(Advocacy
Group for California
Ombudsman Programs

Before I became the Executive Director for the California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA) I was a LTC Field Ombudsman. As a Field Ombudsman, friends and acquaintances frequently inquired about interesting cases I was working on. Often they would lavish praise for the tireless work of the LTC Ombudsman and all the good I was doing for the individuals residing in the local facilities I regularly monitored. Strangely now that I advocate on a state level, primarily through legislative efforts working at the State Capital, I don't get nearly as much kudos.

I can't say I blame folks for being discouraged or feeling powerless. As Californians we talk a good game on valuing our elders, but the disparity in government funding for programs that serve older adults quickly challenges this assertion. Currently \$22 million is spent annually on training and services for Child Protective Services while only \$3 million is spent for similar services for Adult Protective Services. California receives a tenth of the nation's funding for LTC Ombudsman services, less than \$3 million annually. With nearly 300,000 licensed long-term care beds across the state, \$3 million doesn't go very far.

However, in spite of the seeming lack of enthusiasm for California's frail and elderly population, 2014 was a good year at the State Capitol. I am proud to share that during this legislative year CLTCOA staff and members attended 41 legislative hearings, submitted 50 letters of support, provided expert witnesses on three bills and submitted amendment bill language for four bills. Of the 28 bills CLTCOA supported, 13 bills were signed into law!

These laws fell primarily into three categories, education, financial consequences, and clarification or specification of current regulatory language.

During the legislative process it became clear that legislators equated better trained administrators and staff with providing better care to long-term care residents. With the passage of this year's RCFE reform package, administrators and direct care staff's training hours have been doubled. Core knowledge requirements are expanded with greater emphasis for providing dementia care and sensitivity training for at-risk groups.

Laws are now on the books allowing for more consistent financial recourse for residents who experience harm due to negligent acts or failure to act by the licensee or employees. A one hundred-fold increase in the RCFE civil penalties from \$150 to \$15,000 for violations of serious bodily injury or the death of a resident will be in place July 2015.

Loopholes were closed for known perpetrators, preventing them from opening new facilities or continuing to operate under new licenses. RCFE facilities' new admissions will be prohibited until citations are corrected. And stronger language will be in effect, requiring the Department of Social Services to better communicate with the Office of the State LTC Ombudsman.

With the passage of these laws, California residents of long-term care facilities can look forward to receiving better care. There will be more money available to remedy the harms committed and more teeth in the regulatory laws to protect residents from future harms.

CLTCOA is already focused on next year and looking for your support. We are identifying stakeholders and decision makers who are interested in joining a grass roots coalition. A coalition made up of many stakeholder's voices working together to urge the legislature to focus on establishing a cohesive aging and long-term care system. Systems need to focus on policy content rather than just budgetary concerns, with an overriding goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of tomorrow's seniors. If this idea resonates within you, please reach out to CLTCOA, lend your voice, talents and resources. We would be delighted if you joined our team. To contact me please email lcoleman@cltcoa.org

Acknowledgements

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc wishes to thank the following donors who contributed from July 1, 2014 to January 6, 2015. If there are any omissions or errors, we sincerely apologize and ask that you contact us.

\$25,000 and over

County of San Mateo
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\$10,001-24,000

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Robert & Amy Chin
Tippy Irwin
Nicki & Joe Manske
Gail Ruxton
Ann Smithcors

In Memory of Richard Rampton: Tracy A. Rampton

In Appreciation of Sandra Piccini: Ada S Cayabyab

Volunteer of the Quarter

Sandra Piccini

Sandra came to OSSMC in the Fall of 2012 after a long and distinguished career in human resources, serving as Assistant Vice President of Human Resources for a local college and hospital, as well as cofounding a food program for the elderly. Yet, as she looked to life after a professional career she knew that she wanted to give back to the community and volunteer her time in a meaningful way. Sandra remembered her friends Lisa and Michele, both long serving and distinguished Field Ombudsman, telling her how much they enjoyed working with OSSMC, and she decided to apply.



In the two years since she came to OSSMC, Sandra has given more than 600 hours to the residents of long-term care in San Mateo County, and is known for her quick response to complaints. Sandra can often be found at her assigned facilities in the evenings and on weekends, and is always eager to spend time listening to the concerns of a resident. When asked about her time with OSSMC, Sandra said, “My work with the residents brings me great joy and is very fulfilling. Their smile of welcome when I haven’t seen them for a while means so much”. She remarked that being a good ombudsman requires “compassion and a caring spirit”, character traits that Sandra has in spades.

When Sandra is not protecting the rights of residents in long-term care, she spends her time with her husband, their three children and seven grandchildren. She loves to cook and share meals with those that she loves.

Interested in protecting elders?

Ready to be volunteer like Sandra ?

If you are interested in becoming a Field Ombudsman, like Sandra, contact Nicole at nicolehowell@ossmc.org



OMBUDSMAN SERVICES
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711 Nevada Street
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Happy New Year

Welcome our New Board Member

Monika Lee joined the board of OSSMC in September. She first came to us in 2009, after she started practicing law in partnership with her husband in San Mateo, where she has lived since 1986.

Monika became interested in elder care after her mother-in-law suffered a stroke and needed to explore options for her rehabilitation and long-term care. Monika said that she realized that this was a subject of which she knew virtually nothing. Then she found out that the care that is available is rather inflexible and rarely seems to be optimal.

Monika said that she wanted to find out how our community provides for and protects our elders, and how she might make it a little better for at least some people so she volunteered as a Field Ombudsman for three years prior to joining the Board of Directors.

Monika has been an attorney for 30 years, primarily representing corporate clients in litigation; she currently works in private practice.

Monika grew up in Germany and came to the US in the early 1970s. After coming to the United States she completed a PhD in economics before attending law school. Monika and her husband have two daughters and enjoy spending time at their vineyard in Calaveras County where they work as farmers.

Join Our Board

Monika Lee



We're seeking additional members for our Board of Directors who can help increase our resources and connections in the community and to build stronger support for OSSMC. If you are interested contact Tippy Irwin at tippyirwin@ossmc.org