

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

October 3-9, 2010, is National Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Week, a time to acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices many long-term care residents have made to better our community. This year's theme – *Defining Dining: It's About Me* -, was selected to call attention to the fact that residents should have choices about food and dining; and residents should be part of decision-making in long-term care facilities.

By listening to their voices, residents will be treated with dignity and respect of their full individuality; staff and residents will enjoy relationships that enhance their day to day lives; and the long-term care facility will operate more effectively with its day to day activities being based on and developed with consumer involvement. Many people care about residents - family members, citizen advocates, ombudsmen, facility staff, etc. This care can be truly individualized and focused on each person's needs and preferences.

Celebrate and acknowledge these rights through participating in Residents' Rights Week events and calling on your elected officials and local facilities to show their support by attending or organizing activities.

<INSERT DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS' RIGHTS WEEK EVENT - BE SURE TO NOTE ANY PROCLAMATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.>

During Residents' Rights Week, we recognize our local long-term care ombudsman program staff and volunteers who work daily to promote residents' rights, assist residents with complaints and provide information to those who need to find a long-term care facility. In this area, the ombudsman program serves <INSERT DETAILS ABOUT THE SIZE OF THE REGION, THE NUMBER OF FACILITIES, AND HOW TO CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN>

Our community is also served by a citizen advocacy group <INSERT NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION> that advocates for improved quality of care and quality of life for those who live in long-term care facilities.

As <INSERT NAME OF LOCALITY> celebrates Residents' Rights, I encourage community members to visit someone they know in a long-term care facility, volunteer in a facility, participate in Residents' Rights Week events, or inquire about becoming a volunteer long-term care ombudsman. Your assistance and attention helps to ensure that the voices of long-term care residents do not go unheard and demonstrates to residents that they have not been forgotten.

**** NOTE:** All letters to the editor must include a signature, address, and phone number so that the paper may contact you with any questions. You may also include your affiliation with an organization if you wish. Your phone number and address will not be printed.