



The ORANJ TREE

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Farewell My Friends

— by Gary Baldwin

Having served on the ORANJ Executive Committee and as your president for the past four years has been a distinct pleasure for me. It has given me far more satisfaction than one could imagine. As I move away from my direct role within ORANJ, I wish to remind our membership that I will always be available to assist you in any way that I can in the years to come. I have tremendous respect for the Executive Committee members with whom I have spent numerous hours in consultation as we worked together to make ORANJ the strong entity it has become. My sincere thanks to those who have agreed to again place their names in nomination for another term serving the membership of this fine organization. For those members of the Executive Committee who are stepping down following their service, I join the membership at large in thanking them for willingly giving their time and talent to help improve the quality of life for seniors residing in our member communities. If you see **Ann Cooper, John Cook** or **Charles Germany** at a meeting or in your community, please take a minute to thank them personally for their years of service to ORANJ.

At this writing, 24 of the 26 CCRCs in New Jersey have signed on as member communities in ORANJ. I am pleased that during my tenure, we added one new member and I regret that I have not been successful in getting the interest of the two remaining communities chartered as CCRCs. I will leave that as a challenge to my successor and a goal for the future.



Of paramount note was the successful passage recently of the state law requiring resident membership on the directing boards of CCRCs. My sincere thanks to those of you who participated in the effort through meetings with, and letters to, legislators and by appearing at or before legislative committees to demonstrate our collective support of this right-minded endeavor. Another important achievement was the publication of a "Guidebook on CCRC Finances" by the Finance Committee of ORANJ. This compilation presents a wealth of essential information to assist community residents in achieving a basic understanding of their CCRC's financial position and performance. ORANJ, through its guiding body as the Executive Committee, serves only to provide leadership for resident-driven suggestions and ideas that create positive benefits for all seniors living in CCRCs across the state. We have seen how members of ORANJ can produce significant gain by putting their collective heads together and sharing our best practices. Many

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Officers

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John Cook, Applewood Estates,
Vice President, Central Region
Jerry Chanon, The Evergreens,
Vice President, Southwest Region
Wink Livengood, Fellowship Village,
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Applewood Estates, Freehold
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Cadbury, Cherry Hill
Cedar Crest, Pompton Plains
Crane's Mill, West Caldwell
Crestwood Manor, Whiting
The Evergreens, Moorestown
Fellowship Village, Basking Ridge
The Fountains at Cedar Parke, Atco
Franciscan Oaks, Denville
Fritz Reuter Altenheim,
North Bergen
Harrogate, Lakewood
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Hackettstown
Lions Gate, Voorhees
Meadow Lakes, Hightstown
Medford Leas, Medford
Monroe Village, Monroe Township
Navesink House, Red Bank
The Pines at Whiting, Whiting
Seabrook, Tinton Falls
Stonebridge at Montgomery,
Skillman
Wiley Mission, Marlton
Winchester Gardens, Maplewood

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Mel Williams

Chair, Finance Committee



As a CPA Mel spent his working career first as a partner in a small accounting firm and then as chief financial officer of a large construction company. A family man with a wife and two children, Mel still found time for volunteer work. For many of his 20 years with the New York Botanical Gardens he gave more than 300 volunteer hours per year. He also volunteered for 15 years as a Cornell University Master Gardener.

In 2004 Mel and his wife, Lillian, moved to **Cedar Crest**, where he soon found his way to the Finance Committee of the Residents Association Council (RAC). In that position he used both his knowledge of construction and real estate and the skills in communication that he had developed as a docent. Mel is a Garden Club member and a scrambler with the "Ramblers and Scramblers." He takes part in discussion groups, the Eureka Society and the History Club.

Mel served a three-year term on the Cedar Crest RAC and was chair at different times on the Marketing, General Services and Finance Committees. He began serving on the ORANJ Finance Committee in 2008 and was appointed its chair this year.

Gary's Farewell *(continued)*

excellent surveys were conducted and distributed to the membership in an effort to be more transparent in our quest to share information between communities. A first-class website and quarterly newsletter have emerged to give strength to the ORANJ stated mission that communication among communities is key to our success. Our nominal dues have been held in check and provide revenue for us to support the mission of ORANJ. On October 21, a new group will be elected to lead ORANJ for the next two years. I would personally like to thank each of the candidates for stepping forward and tossing their hats into the ring, whether they are first-time volunteers or have been serving for many years. I look forward to working with each of you in the coming years as your past-president. My final thought is to ask each of you to reach out and offer your help to those with whom you live whether it be within your community or through an organization like ORANJ.

You can make a difference!

Expanded Service for Independent Residents

In response to the needs of an increasingly older independent living resident population, some CCRCs have expanded services in a variety of ways. For instance, at **Monroe Village**, the ESP (Expanded Service Program) is designed for residents who need structured, supportive programs but not skilled nursing. The following services are offered for a flat fee as an addition to the basic services provided in the resident's contract and handbook:

- Up to one hour or more of personal care services, including AM and PM care
- Personal escorts for meals, beauty parlor, mailboxes, fitness center or elsewhere in the building
- Three meals a day with staff support at mealtime
- Personal laundry service
- Wellness checks throughout the day and the evening. The center is staffed 24 hours a day
- Medication assistance including the services of an LPN for delivery of oral medications and re-order of meds
- Activities including exercise classes, walks, socials, manicures, arts, and discussion groups scheduled throughout the day and including weekends.

At Monroe Village a monthly fee of \$2848 includes all the above. Additional services, including the Incontinence Program, cost extra. The services can be provided on a permanent or temporary basis. In some other CCRCs the cost of expanded services varies depending on individual factors, such as the amount of personal care service that a resident requires

Efficiency Improvement and Cost Savings at CCRCs

Earlier in the year ORANJ conducted an informal and brief survey of the efficiency improvement and cost reduction steps taken by the various CCRCs. This was done because of the serious concerns voiced by residents about the country's financial crisis, and the realization that sharing such information would be very valuable. Fourteen CCRCs responded and most of the replies centered on one of the following:

- energy related items, such as conducting audits, reducing lighting, installing solar panels, and renegotiating contracts
- general matters, such as reducing holiday decorations, lowering outside entertainment costs, and consolidating bus trips
- issues relating to staff levels, such as combining duties, freezing hiring and salaries, and eliminating overtime pay
- improving operations, through such steps as installing a bar code and computer system in the dining room, working with other CCRCs to do group purchasing of food, supplies and services, and converting cooking oil to biodiesel fuel.

Many of the above items resulted in significant savings. It is hoped that residents association presidents will discuss these ideas with their respective managements.

Wii Bowling Competitions at Cedar Crest

During the last couple of years the Nintendo Wii game of virtual bowling has become quite popular with seniors. Cedar Crest, in Pompton Plains, has made one available for residents to use in each of its three clubhouses. A team was formed, called the "Cedar Crest Crushers," which has been successful in competitions with two other Erickson communities. They have defeated both Seabrook in New Jersey and Ann's Choice in Pennsylvania in the best of three games.

There are eight members on the team who travel to the opponent's community for the first game and are hosts to the opponent for the second game. So far no third game has been necessary.

The Crushers would like to extend a challenge to all of the ORANJ communities that have a Wii bowling team. Teams wishing to accept the challenge should contact Tony di Filippo, team captain, at tonydf@verizon.net or 973-835-8420, for more information and to arrange a match.

Helen Vukasin Representative to NaCCRA



At **Medford Leas** Helen has served on the Residents Association Council twice. She has been active on several committees and initiated several programs sparked by presentations at the national meetings of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA).

Helen became involved with ORANJ as the delegate representing ORANJ at the national meetings of AAHSA and the National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA). She expects to continue in that role and in support of the programs of ORANJ.

Before finally retiring to a CCRC, Medford Leas, Helen had lived through several careers: First as a researcher for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, next as a modern dancer. Then, moving into arts administration, she became director of a county arts council in NY State. She then took up economics in the field of community development abroad. She worked for 12 years out of NY City and then for 6 years in Africa. When she finally settled back home she became director of an organic farm in NY State for five years.

What is ORANJ?

ORANJ stands for Organization of Residents Associations of New Jersey. It was founded in 1991 to represent the interests of about 10,000 people like us, residents of the 26 certified CCRCs in New Jersey.

What has ORANJ accomplished? In 2007, following years of legislative action by ORANJ, the New Jersey legislature finally passed a bill that, among other requirements, calls for one or more residents in each CCRC to serve on its Board of Trustees. It lobbied for and achieved the exemption of CCRCs from a bed tax provision.

How does ORANJ work? The real work of ORANJ is done through its committees and its regional vice presidents. For example the Legislative Committee is concerned with legislation, like the items listed above.

The Finance Committee is concerned with issues affecting the financial health of the CCRCs. To help the finance committees of each CCRC, the committee has produced a comprehensive "Finance Guide," which is available on the ORANJ website at oranjccrc.org. The five regional vice presidents provide guidance for CCRC residents associations in their areas.

Biannual meetings for representatives of all CCRCs provide interesting information as well as an opportunity for residents to become acquainted with those from other CCRCs. Summaries of the plenary meetings are available on the website under "Meetings." For an interesting example, see the spring 2006 meeting presentation by Dennis Koza, CEO of Medford Leas, on "The Five Truths of Responsive Leadership."

October 21 – Fall Plenary Meeting a Must!

Please mark your calendars for the ORANJ Fall Meeting on October 21, 2009, at Cedar Crest in Pompton Plains. I hope that many of you will be able to attend this important and exciting meeting. Our program will again provide an opportunity for attendees to gain first-hand knowledge on subjects of interest to seniors in the state. We have had a very exciting year in ORANJ and we are anxious to share our successes and frustrations with the membership. Two excellent speakers have been invited for the meeting. Mr. Rick Grindrod, President and CEO of Erickson Retirement Communities, will provide a broad-brush assessment of the impact of the financial recession on continuing care retirement communities across the nation, both near term and in the future.

Rick directs the operation of 19 CCRCs in ten states. Our afternoon speaker is Mr. Doug Pace, Chairman of the Long-Term Care Solution Campaign for the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA). Doug will report on where the industry is going regarding long-term care and healthcare reform. He will discuss why the long-term care system is strained to accomplish tasks for which it was never designed under stifling financial and regulatory constraints. A portion of our program at this meeting will be devoted to the election of officers for the next two years and a presentation of the financial statement and the FY2010 Budget.

Gary Baldwin

Interested in the Meeting?

Ask your Residents Association President for all the info: registration deadline, cost, agenda, registration form, and driving directions to Cedar Crest.