

RESIDENT COUNCILS OF WASHINGTON

Elders in Action having fun and making a difference

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

OUR MISSION:

The Resident Councils of Washington seeks to empower residents to live life to the fullest

What is RCW?

Resident Councils of Washington (RCW) is a partnership of people living in long-term care facilities, family members and friends, healthcare professionals and educators who recognize that disability and/or chronic illness does not mean inability.

RCW is the only independent consumer based statewide resident council in the United States.

Why does RCW exist?

Our purpose is:

- To create a community in which we are all respected for what we *can* contribute to our *own quality of life*
- To be the eyes, ears and voice of our friends, roommates and families
- To influence laws and regulations that affect our lives and living environment
- To provide opportunities for persons residing in long term care facilities to live at their highest level of physical, social and spiritual well-being

Why are we unique?

RCW is the only consumer-based statewide resident council in the United States. We influence positive change in nursing homes and assisted living facilities as well as in public opinion and state and national legislation.

We represent residents residing in assisted living and nursing homes and their family members. RCW networks and educates staff, advocates, family members and government officials.

People don't stop living when they move into a nursing home, assisted living facility or adult family home. Resident Councils of Washington continues to advocate for residents in all long-term care facilities. We have impacted this year through the local resident councils, 30,000 residents in the different adult facilities. Residents have made a difference. We look forward to an exciting next 25 years as we celebrated our 25th anniversary in October of 2009. We, as residents, are learning that the rewards that truly have value are the ones we give our best.

- RCW places resident empowerment through active participation on the front burner
- RCW will remind society over and over that our residents may need physical care but they have not lost the ability to participate and make a difference in society
- RCW will give residents the opportunity to utilize to the fullest that which they carry with them for life... their beliefs, skills, education, passions and experience
- RCW will be a leader for other states or regional councils providing the ground swell of resident advocates that speak for themselves and protect their friends that cannot.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

RCW is a non-profit independent, consumer-based organization dedicated to assist residents to live life to the fullest through:

Resident Empowerment Conferences

- Regional resident-centered conferences and forums
- Annual recognition luncheons

Resident Council Activities

- Leadership opportunities
- Participation in decisions making that affects resident lives and living environments
- Continual updating of tools and strategies to help develop and refresh existing resident councils
- Assistance with keeping facilities accountable to residents and their families

Community Involvement

- Policy development and legislative activities: local, state and national
- Community-based social events

Education

- Seminars and courses targeted to enabling social services, activities and other residential- care professionals to meet resident needs and interests
- In-service programs designed to meet individual facility needs

Resources

- Resident Voice Newsletter
- Resident Council Handbook and other publications
- Resident Council website www.residentcouncil.org
- Resident Council Store website www.residentcouncilstore.org
- Consultation services
- Speakers Bureau

OUR VISION:

The Resident Councils of Washington will be a national leader in assisting residents to obtain opportunities, education and resources to live life to the fullest.

OUR GOALS:

- Residents will have the support, tools and strategies to exercise their rights and pursue personal choices
- Residents will be able to participate in decisions that affect their lives
- Residents will help guarantee the continual improvement of services and hold facilities accountable to residents and their families.

RCW YEARLY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Resident Councils of Washington monitors its progress through its strategic plan evaluated each year by each committee. Our strategic planning identifies where we are going and how we are going to get there. RCW has based its success over the last few years on the direction it is given by our strategic plan.

The Strategic Plan is available in detail. Each committee contributes through its attention to detail, goals and objectives determined by each group.

Following the evaluation the RCW Board and Advisory Board narrowed its overall 2009 – 2010 goals to:

- Increase RCW visibility with the public, resident and family members
- Increase funding base for future health of organization
- Diligently follow our strategic plan



HIGHLIGHTS:

In 2009, the Resident Councils of Washington continued to strive to become an organization for and by residents in residential care communities. RCW continues to empower residents to live life to the fullest and to practice its philosophy as so eloquently stated in the RCW 70.129.020 ***“the resident has a right to a dignified existence, self-determination, and communication with and access to persons and services inside and outside the facility.”*** Our residents strive to live the dignified life, determine their own daily commitments with rights given to them as citizens with the ability to be involved with their facility and their community. Physical or environment limitations should not be a deterrent from living life to the fullest.

We continued the upbeat and positive image improved each year, living our slogan, **“Elders in Action . . . Having fun and making a difference.”** Our strategy emphasizes a more visible; **resident centered controlled and educated** organization. Our residents are leaders in the community, testifying in Olympia, sitting at the table with all stakeholders affected by local, state and national regulations and legislation. Our residents participate in focus groups, seminars, meetings and conferences in which they are the facilitators, the steering committee, the movers and shakers.

With limited transportation and access and the increasing frailty of many of our members RCW continues to update information available to the residents’ home in form of Internet web site capabilities. Due to the number of our members who are confined to their living quarters it has become increasingly important for RCW to bring its knowledge and information to the residence through its website, speakers bureau, Resident Handbook and community resources.

RCW continues to expand its resources to include tools on its website for residents, staff, volunteers and the public accessible to all who have access to a computer. This has stimulated dialogue nationally and internationally. It is our belief we have much to share, a story to tell others around the country and will continue to be a vital resource to others. The web site offers the opportunity for residents to communicate and learn from their peers and others.

This year, RCW improved its second website, its' resident council store. This tool allows potential customers to buy products, services and register for seminars. Aware of the limited computers in residential care facilities the need to market our Resident Council Handbook as resource book is a priority. The Resident Council Handbook, completed in December of 2001, offers help to create or restructure resident councils in health care facilities. The Resident Council handbook is a valuable how-to manual, offering hands-on guidelines to developing a resident council in a senior, nursing or healthcare facility. The goal of the project was simple and singular: to create opportunities for residents to make and execute meaningful decisions. The handbook has been marketed through word of mouth, agency newsletters, conferences and several publishing companies. The handbook has become a significant training tool for Ombudsman Programs nationally and has increased in popularity with residents. RCW printed 500 more manuals in 2009 and hopes to develop other resources in future publications.

Resident Councils of Washington (RCW) is a statewide organization dedicated to educating and empowering residents of long-term care facilities. RCW believes that empowerment is not something that can be taught...it must include hands-on experience. In 2009, RCW continued its resident centered conferences started 10 years ago. We have continued to build on what have become annual events in Everett, Spokane, Centralia, Sequim, Tri-Cities, King County, and Vancouver. These conferences entitled "Partners in Progress" continued a dialogue among 800 residents, facility staff, ombudsmen, policy makers and family members started as a pilot project in 2000. In particular, residents took the stage to share thoughts on what is important to their life in the context of living in a long-term care facility. With the help of the in-kind assistance from the Washington Long-term Care Ombudsmen program, Providence Mt. St. Vincent of Seattle, Merrill Gardens of Mill Creek, Moran Senior Living Community of Spokane Living, United Methodist church of Sequim and the Unitarian church of Port Townsend, Sharon Care Center of Centralia, The Quarry at Columbia Tech Center and Hawthorne Court of Kennewick residents were given tools from which they could make an impact within their own facility, the community, the state, the Veterans network and through national legislation. Each community designed their own conference to meet specific needs of the residents. Steering committees met 2 – 6 times to organize each of the 7 events.

The residents' voice, which is often not heard at long-term care meetings and conferences, was loud and clear. ***It was empowerment in action.*** A critical component of promoting resident empowerment and leadership is for members of RCW (residents) to plan conferences specifically to address issues that affect their daily lives from social security to resident council development in long-term care facilities and to add fun as well. This year two of our conferences centered around the need for humor and laughter. ***Resident empowerment means the***

opportunity to create, express teach and learn from each other skills one carries for life. This type of empowerment includes open dialogue in a setting that feels comfortable for everyone. The ultimate benefit of such expression is a stronger person and a long-term care facility that has greater awareness of resident needs and preferences. It is our intent to repeat these conferences each year in various regions within Washington until all residents have the opportunity to participate. The excitement of the conferences funded with help from the local communities, ombudsman programs and facilities brought hope and excitement for residents and drew the attention to residents as active participating citizens in their respective communities.

RCW continues updating its members through its bimonthly Resident News Brief summarizing activities and accomplishments of RCW committees ranging from education and legislation to finance and fund development. We continue to gather articles written by residents and others to include in a future publication “Empowerment Tools that Work”.



WA State Representative gets pinned with resident rights button during Resident Rights Week

Resident Councils of Washington **LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

OUR MISSION:

The Resident Councils of WA empowers residents to live life to the fullest. Residents *shall* receive care according to their needs in appropriate long term care *residential* settings with the goal to restore or maintain their highest practicable level of physical, psychosocial and spiritual well being and with the assurance that the rights of all residents are respected, recognized and enforced.

This also means that residents need to have full access to the community at large which includes settings which support their religious beliefs, recreational and socialization needs.

WE BELIEVE:

- Residents are to be listened to and be heard as to their care needs.
- All residents are entitled to self-determination wherever they live.
- Each resident can and does make a difference.
- Residents receiving long term care, regardless of their financial circumstances, shall receive the highest quality of care.
- Continuity of hands-on caregivers is an essential component for delivering quality long term care.
- Adequate and ongoing training of all caregivers is essential for maintaining quality.
- A living wage and benefits for hands-on caregivers is an essential component in maintaining continuity and quality.

LEGISLATIVE GOALS:

Therefore, the Resident Councils of WA strongly supports legislation and regulations that will necessitate and enhance our goals for improving the quality of life for all residents living in long term care settings such as adult family homes, boarding homes, assisted living and nursing homes. State long term care policy and payment mechanisms shall reflect these principles, shall develop permanent long-term funding solutions and shall avoid budget cuts which reduce opportunities to leverage matching funds.

We, further, encourage collaborative problem solving among providers, consumers, legislators and regulators.

ACTIVITIES: We:

- Became informed on how to communicate with our Legislators
- Participated in monthly Senior Lobby Meetings in Lacey
- Held 10 RCW Legislative/Advocacy Committee Meetings
- Participated on the board and as speakers at the NCCNHR, National Citizen Coalition
- Developed guidelines for conducting activities to highlight Resident Rights Week in October

Our state regulators, also, recognize the importance of the resident voice. Residents have been invited to forums and focus groups to share their opinions and needs for residential improvement in nursing homes, assisted living (boarding homes) and adult family homes.

Education for staff as well as residents remains a priority of RCW. RCW continued its sponsorship of the Modular Education, 180 hours of course work matched with 180 hours of supervised practicum hands-on work designed to help activity directors meet requirements for certification. The Social Services Basics providing 16 hours of continuing education for social workers successfully concluded its eighth year and is planned to return in 2010.. One additional one-day seminar was held in western Washington for activity directors & residents to learn the residents response to culture change and what is meant by meaningful activities.



Resident Councils of Washington provides services to residents, family and community councils to help empower them to take responsibility for their future, ensure their rights, and advocate for their peers. RCW provided in-services to 50 facilities and training in the form of all day and 4-day courses for 800 participants in 2009, an additional 300 were trained through other association seminars and conferences. RCW maintains consulting contracts with 6 facilities. RCW encourages other associations to invite RCW leaders as speakers, panel members and seminar hosts.

What is the outcome for our goals? We hope more residents become engaged in their community, feel more competent to participate in issues that affect their lives, lessen social isolation, and affect legislation that impacts their quality of life and others. It is our intent to be a resource for activity directors, social workers and ombudsmen as well, providing up to date training to better their ability to empower all residents in long-term care.

Our strategic plan included ambitious goals of broadening our financial base and increasing our budget forecast for 2010. With sound fiscal management and a few risks RCW is still accomplishing its goals although 2009 met us with fiscal challenges. RCW is proud that it can boast no financial liabilities. Residents in the finance committee are taking ownership for resident sponsored fund raising efforts and the marketing committee continues its process of evaluation of our marketing tools, website, membership brochures and DVD.

Residents have developed their own plan and commitment to raise money for their organization through candy bars and resident council handbooks. This year for the fourth time the Resident Councils of Washington sponsored their fourth signature event, Putting on the Ritz, an auction fundraiser that although it was work for our committee members it proved to be a win win for everyone. We were able to network and educate community members and families as to the benefits of the organization, nurture new volunteers and hopefully lifetime enthusiasts for the organization and boost the pride of residents involved in planning a program with such positive outcomes.

Our fifteenth annual luncheon was held at the Museum of Flight where our residents were honored for their work and dedication to the organization, a new board was installed as we roared past 25 years of service. Our luncheon committee, dedicated and organized, for the raised enough funds to adequately fund a classy luncheon. An advisory board along with numerous committees continues to help provide technical assistance and consultation and a deep commitment to the success of this growing organization

RCW continues to advocate for its peers through resident council development, legislative and educational forums. Residents collaborated on a position paper that outlines their biggest concerns: inadequate staff, poor wages and limited transportation opportunities. Our membership continues to diversify, seminar attendance maintained and RCW visibility blossomed. 25 volunteers contributed over 1500 hours of service. Belief, trust, confidence, persistence and raw energy proved to be the ingredients this organization needed to thrive.

Contributors

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OUR CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS DURING OUR FISCAL YEAR
JANUARY 1, 2009 – DECEMBER 31, 2009**

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\$1,000 - \$4,999

WA LTC Ombudsmen Program

Presidents Club

\$500-\$999

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Moran Vista Senior Living

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Supporters \$75 and above

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Alderwood Manor
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The Hearthstone
Heartwood Extended Care
Heritage Rehab
High Point Village
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Colonial Vista
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Forest View
Forks Community Hospital
Foundation House of Federal Way
Franke Tobey Jones
Garden Terrace
Good Samaritan Health Care
Evergreen Inn
Parkside Care Center
Pierce Co. Human Services LTC
Ombudsmen
Prestige Assisted Living

Providence Marionwood
Providence Mt. St. Vincent
Richmond Beach Health & Spec. Ctr.
Riverside Nursing & Rehab.

Highline Care Center
Ida Culver - Broadview
Judson Park Retirement Community
Kah Tai Care Center
KCAA LTCOP
The Kenney
Kin On
Lakewood Health Care Center
Leon Sullivan
Life Care of Kirkland
Life Care Center of Bothell
Life Care Center Mt. Vernon
Life Care Center of Puyallup
Life Care of Burien
Life Care Center of Ritzville
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Maplewood Gardens
Marysville H.C.
Mercer Island Health Care
Merry Haven Care Center
Messenger House
Mission Health Care Bellevue
Moran Vista Senior Living Community
Mt. Si Traditional Care
Nisqually Valley Care Center
Odessa Memorial
Olympic AAA LTCOP
Olympic Place Retirement
Rainier Vista Care Center
Regency at Auburn
Regency at Puyallup
Regency at Renton Rehab Center

Riverview Care Center
Rosewood Court and Memory Care
Royal Vista Nursing and Rehab
Saint Anne Nursing and Rehab
San Juan Rehab
Sea Mar Community Center
St. Andrews Place
St. Josephs Hospital and LTCU
Stafford H.C.
Stafford Suites
Stonebridge Memory Care
Sunrise View
Sunshine Gardens
Tacoma Lutheran
The Gardens at Issaquah
The Gardens at Juanita Bay
The Gardens on University
Vancouver Health and Rehab
Vashon Island Community Care Ctr.
Warm Beach Senior Community
Van Vista Assisted Living
Washington Care Center
Washington Veterans Home
Wesley Homes Health Care
Woodland Assisted Living
Woodland Care Center
Waterford at Fairway Village

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