



**NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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Contact: Jenni Lewis, Community Outreach

F32-URG PO Box 500

Rio Grande, OH 45674

Phone: 1.800.582.7277, ext. 224

E-Mail: [jlewis@aaa7.org](mailto:jlewis@aaa7.org)

Website: [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org)

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**Appreciation and Volunteering**

**Nina R. Keller, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7**

**August 2020 Column**



This time each year, the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) hosts our annual Appreciation Brunch which provides us with the opportunity to recognize individuals and groups for their contributions to the community and the programs and services through our Agency. Due to the continued pandemic, our Agency has canceled this year's event and look forward to hopefully having the opportunity to bring the event back next year. We certainly enjoy the opportunity to publicly recognize and celebrate those who help us achieve our Agency mission and vision.

One of the groups we always recognize during the event are Volunteer Ombudsmen through our Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The AAA7's Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (RLTCOP) helps residents at nursing homes and assisted living facilities feel less isolated and lonely. They are committed to protecting the rights of long-term care consumers and provide this support for nursing home and assisted living residents by helping them resolve problems and advocating for their rights. The overall goal is to enhance the quality of life and care for all long-term care consumers in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or other home and community-based settings.

Volunteer Ombudsmen help to lessen the isolation and loneliness many residents experience. Volunteers also provide an essential voice for residents, providing advocacy and assistance for those who have concerns about their care. AAA7 Volunteer Ombudsmen cover the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

At this current time, volunteering with the RLTCOP would consist of phone calls to a designated nursing/assisted living facility and/or a resident's family contacts and no in-person visiting would be taking place. Additional volunteer assistance can also be provided over the phone to RLTCOP staff with other needs that may arise.

Those who are interested in this volunteer opportunity would just need to contact our office at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). Volunteers should feel comfortable knowing that their safety is always a top priority and during this time, volunteering will be taking place in the safety of their own homes through use of the telephone. Those who are interested will need to complete mandatory training, which will take place through an online format. The goal of the entire process is to keep residents and volunteers safe while maintaining contact.

We at the Area Agency on Aging District 7 are certainly proud of the opportunities we have had to provide services, supports and resources to older adults year-round. The services and programs we can provide give us the opportunity to promote happy and productive lives for seniors and those with disabilities, allowing them to remain safe and independent in their homes and communities. If you'd like to learn more about resources that are available for you or your loved one, please call our Resource Center toll-free at 1-800-582-7277.

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