



Preserving health and financial dignity through education and advocacy since 1973.

Summer 2007

THE ADVOCATE

Council on Aging's Pamala McGovern Retires Board Appoints Cheryl Meronk New CEO

For nearly twenty-two years, I have poured my heart, soul and often most of my waking moments into the Council on Aging. I don't know if there is ever a good time to call an end to a beloved career such as this but I have decided that the time has come. As I retire from this organization on June 30th I am humbled by the extraordinary accomplishments our volunteers and staff have achieved during my tenure. But I think I am most proud of the solid foundation we have set in place for serving disabled and older adults at risk in Orange County. The Council has flourished and will continue to do so in the years ahead. It's often said that it is the journey in life that matters, not the destination. My heartfelt gratitude is extended to all staff and volunteers for making this career endeavor such a pleasurable journey.

I am delighted that our new CEO, Cheryl Meronk, is a promotion from within. She brings new energy and ideas along with a strong passion for our mission. I know she will be instrumental in taking the Council on Aging to new heights.

Pamala McGovern

It is a privilege to be writing to you, our Advocate readers, as the new CEO of the Council on Aging - Orange County. I'm very proud to be taking over the leadership of such a wonderful organization. I started my own journey with the Council as a volunteer, first as an intern in the Communications department, then as a Medicare counselor in our Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program which I directed for the last five years.



I've had the pleasure of working closely with many of the staff and volunteers of the Council, and they are truly what makes our organization special. We are on the brink of a period of tremendous growth in our aging population, and with our wonderful team, the Council is poised to grow at an equal pace to meet the demand for services.

My priorities are to continue to serve older and disabled adults in our community, and to expand the capacity of our services to meet the coming demands. I am committed to improving the aging experience in Orange County, and I'm excited about the opportunities to engage with our readers, clients, partners, and friends. I look forward to bringing you updates about our activities and progress in future issues of the Advocate.

Cheryl Meronk

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Fundraising Luncheon

More Than 300 Attended

Our Second Annual Imagination Generation Luncheon

The Turnip Rose was crowded with supporters for the Council on Aging's May 17th annual fundraising and, while anticipating a delicious lunch ~ which was realized, when it was over our guests also left with a new understanding and greater appreciation of how our services impact the lives of older and disabled adults in our community and whom we serve.



Ombudsman Volunteer Coordinator, Bob Haddock; Retiring Executive Director, Pamala McGovern; Legal Counsel Julie Schoen; County Tax Collector, John Moorlach at COA's Imagination Generation Luncheon.

Bill Clayton and his family turned to the Council on Aging Ombudsman Program for help when their dad's health was rapidly declining in a nursing home, while his father's last wish to die at Bill's home was being denied. This wish was difficult to fulfill because of family conflicts but, with the help of our Ombudsman Program, Bill's dad was released from the long-term care facility. Bill said, "My dad spent his last week at home surrounded by family pictures with family members and friends visiting, and we showered him with love as he died in peace. That peaceful death is a comfort to all of us in our family and we are forever grateful to the Council on Aging for coming to our rescue."

residents of Orange County can escape with the help of the Council on Aging. They are truly a life saver for those who are in need."

Generous donors have contributed more than \$300,000 in cash and pledges in the last two years, but the demand for our services have increased by 25% in the past year alone. Your contribution today using our online donation page or the enclosed donation envelope will make it possible to continue to meet the demands of many new clients. If you have other ideas about how you might contribute, please call Penni McRoberts, Director of Development at (714) 479-0107, ext 223.

Linda Cooper O'Leary, a volunteer at the Council, spoke of the many problems she experienced trying to keep her mother, who had advanced Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, in long-term care facilities safely when there was no Ombudsman Program to help. Linda said, "The tragedies that my mom and I had to endure, the

Doubling Our Volunteer Corps To Serve The Huge Needs of Disabled and Older Adults at Risk in Orange County is Our Goal!

HOW CAN VOLUNTEERING ENRICH YOUR LIFE?



*Eleanor Troutt,
Ombudsman of the
Year 2007*

When I completed my training in September 2004, I really had no idea what I was getting into. But I thought I would give it one year, and then re-evaluate whether this was something I wanted to continue to do.

During that year, I learned on the job the valuable service that a Long-term Care Ombudsman performs for one of the most vulnerable segments of our population. And I realized that this was something that gave me a great deal of satisfaction. Just knowing that I was making a difference in someone's life was reward enough to convince me to continue serving as an Ombudsman.

Most of what I do is routine – visiting facilities and making sure the residents are being treated properly and with dignity. My unannounced, regular visits help to keep the caregivers on their toes. But, once in a while, things can get quite exciting, and I'm able to play a vital role in helping a senior and their family solve a desperate situation.

I enjoy the challenge of learning new things and, as an Ombudsman, I'm continually researching and learning new ways to help my residents. Help is always available from my supervisors and from other Ombudsmen. The more I learn, the more I feel adequate for this task. I know I'll never learn it all

but that's what keeps me interested and willing to keep on serving my fellow seniors as a Long-term Care Ombudsman.

With more than 1,000 long-term care facilities in Orange County and only 72 volunteers and part-time staff to serve them, there is an urgent need for more Ombudsmen. Call Bob Haddock at 714-479-0107, ext. 226 for information on this program.

Being A Friendly Visitor Can Be Challenging

Volunteer of the Year Gary Sarver finds visiting his friend presents a new challenge every week. Just imagine being in your 60's and living in a nursing home because of a severe stroke that left you paralyzed and unable to speak clearly. This is the situation for Gary's friend. But Gary and his friend have found common ground by playing games such as checkers and Parcheesi. And, while these visits are sometimes heartbreaking for Gary, he believes his friend enjoys their time together and Gary realizes that he himself would be disappointed if he was told not to visit anymore. Gary said, "Shortly after my third visit with my new friend I realized I could make these visits work – and make life a little better for him. When I get down because of health problems, all I do is think of my friend's situation and I realize I have no reason to continue the "pity party".

It's caring individuals like Gary Sarver that provide the human chain of individuals helping individuals in need.

Volunteer Luncheon

Volunteers of the Year



Orange County Supervisor Norby

Orange County Supervisor Norby presented a certificate recognizing the importance of our work for disabled and older adults at risk, while humorous stories from volunteers captured everyone's attention.

Each year the Council on Aging celebrates the more than 280 volunteers that allowed us to serve over 75,000 disabled and older adults at risk during the past year. This year the theme was the 1960's and many volunteers and staff dressed for the occasion and paraded to the music of the Beach Boys.



Friendly Visitor Sally Alexander with program manager Sandy Hester

This year's Volunteer of the Year Award went to SmileMakers Guild President Hedy Kirsh and when we asked her why she has chosen to volunteer at the Council, she had this to tell us:



Hedy Kirsh

"My 91 year old mother laments the fact that she can no longer work and wants desperately to volunteer to help. During his halcyon days, my father was a model of community involvement. With such strong role models, contributing to social causes has always been a natural and viable segment of my life, one which

brings me great satisfaction and sense of worth.

I find that through my participation with the Council on Aging-Orange County, not only am I able to support the recipients of our agency's services but, by opening the door to volunteer opportunities to friends, their lives are enriched as well.

The Council is a place, both physically and spiritually, which houses those who care about others. Through our work our community is stronger and our older and vulnerable citizens happier. The Council is a place where one can find purpose and find people who share a commitment and a dedicated concern for making lives better. It is a place where one cannot discern the paid staff from the volunteer staff. What our agency sells is free! No price tag could appropriately define the value of our products – both to those who give and to those who receive.

Many high profile individuals do and have done an amazing amount of good in the world, which most of us

watch and admire. While the world does not observe my every move, I do....and I know what I do indeed makes a difference. I care about making people comfortable and happy. As I drop the pebble of each deed into the pool that is my life experience, it is internally satisfying and rewarding to see the circles grow.

Thank you Council on Aging-Orange County for enriching my life by giving me the opportunity to serve, to interact with outstanding service providers, and for the supportive services we provide to our clients.”



Ombudsman Volunteers



HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) Volunteers



FAST (Financial Abuse Specialist Team) Volunteers



Friendly Visitor Volunteers

Mark Your Calendars

Just Imagine Tour

RSVP Now

Each month the Council offers a brief tour of our facilities and a one-hour story-telling orientation about our free programs and services demonstrating how the lives of our clients are impacted. While not everyone who attends these informative sessions will need our services, we know that everyone attending will eventually know someone who does.

The Council is the only agency in Orange County that serves seniors county-wide. We work closely with other regional agencies serving seniors and, if we don't have a program that fits the needs of older adults who face the challenges of aging, we can assist in identifying the resources available throughout Orange County that can help.



Just Imagine Tour schedule:

Wednesday, July 18th at 10:30 am

Wednesday, August 15th at 10:30 am

Wednesday, September 19th at 7:30 am

RSVP Sandy at (714) 479-0107, ext 227

We'll save a seat for you.

**For More Information about our Tours, go to www.coaoc.org
Then go to Calendar and Program Tours**

Your Help is Critical This Year

To Ensure Lonely and Isolated Adults Receive a Gift from Our SmileMakers Annual Holiday Gift Program

Each year our SmileMakers Guild Volunteers raise money, prepare Angel Trees for corporate gift donations, buy additional gifts, wrap them and see that the gifts are successfully delivered to disabled and older adults at risk in Orange County. Last year more than 2,100 gifts were distributed and this year the need could reach 3,000!

Here is how you can help!

- Call for a Volunteer information packet and lend your time and talent to this personally rewarding project. Ask for Sandy at (714) 479-0107, extension 227.
- Become a Corporate Sponsor and arrange for an Angel Tree in your work place.
- Support efforts for this project by making a donation



Thanks you so much for the sweatshirt and sweat pants. It sure put a big smile on my face!

Sunday Afternoon at the Irvine Improv

September 16th • 71 Fortune #841, Irvine, CA

11:30am Doors Open ~ 12:30pm Lunch ~ 1:30pm Showtime

Tickets are \$40 (18+ with proper ID) • Lunch is included in the ticket cost

Proceeds from this event benefit the SmileMakers 2007 Holiday Gift Program for disabled and older adults at risk!

Afternoon at the Improv Ticket Order Form

No. of Tickets	@ \$40.00	Subtotal	Method of Payment	
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Check	FAX Credit Card Orders to: 714-479-0234
Order total:	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa /Amount	
Name	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard/Amount	
Address	_____		Credit Card #	Exp. date
Phone	_____		Signature _____	

Please make checks payable and return along with this form to: Council On Aging-Orange County, 1971 East 4th Street, Suite 200 Santa Ana, CA 92705. Attention: Sandy Moody at (714) 479-0107 x227.

Tickets purchased after September 8, 2007 will be held at Will Call.

The Council is not responsible for the content of the show although our request is for funny, clean comedy.

Entertainment Books Available

By purchasing an Orange County Entertainment Book from the SmileMakers Guild for \$35, you can save money while dining out and support our Holiday Gift Program as well! Other county books are available at various prices.

Simply stop by our office and pick up a book or call Sandy at (714) 479-0107, ext 227 and we can mail it to you. There will be a \$5 shipping and handling fee.

Thank You to our Generous Donors in 2007

Life Preservers

GIFT OF DIGNITY - \$25,000

Richard and Vicki Craft
Madelyn Dudley
Bill and Sandy Gresher
Mike and Pam McGovern

GIFT OF HOPE - \$5,000

Dick and Mary Allen
Michael Bader, JD
Mary C. Blum
Robert R. Cardoza
Robert and Joan Curtin
Edna Davis
Stephanie Dufour
Rae Harper
Dale Johnson and Linda Humes
Hedy Kirsh

Ann Maness
Penni McRoberts
Jim and Cheryl Meronk
NUVIS
Wayne Pope
Ernestine Rands
Laurie Mirman Rogers
David Rushmore
William Shankle, MD and Junko Hara
George and Laura Smyth

Scott Smyth
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Bob and Shelley Woolery
Daryl and Deborah YeeLitt.

Annual Donors

PARTNER \$10,000 - \$19,999

Dave and Suzanne Chonette
Hoag Memorial Presbyterian Hospital

ASSOCIATE \$1,000 - \$9,999

Bryant Ranch Pharmacy
Cal Optima
Fremont Investment & Loan/Laguna Hills
National Council on Aging
Newman's Own Foundation
Pacific Life Insurance Company
Sergio Zarelli

ADVOCATE \$500 - \$999

AmeriMark
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Colonial Home Care Services, Inc.
Deckert Surgical and Homecare
Cindy Donohoe
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First Presbyterian Church Deacons
Fountain Gardens Guest Homes
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Ron and Patricia L'Heureux
Sara Rand
Lynne Ruedy
Ken and Gail Smith
Laural and Larry Traylor
Tustin Area Women's Club
Mark and Patty Vidovich
Jennifer A. Wein
Dillard and Kathy Williams
Diane Witherbee

FRIEND \$499

Paul and Sonia Abels
Carlos and Maryann Alcantara
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Sally Alexander
William and Megan Allen
API Financial Services, Inc.
Avondale Family Care Home
Martin and Norma Bader
Kim Bailey
Edna Barria
Donald and Yoshiko Bauer
Karolina Baumgardner
In Memory of Eva Wagner
Piero Berlonghi
James Brady
Donna Brantman
Patricia Bronn
Kate Bruce
James Burns
Michael and Kristeen Burns
Ray Busch
Monica Bush
Paulette Cabral
Virginia Camanyag

Carol A. Campbell-Gertz
Betty E. Carter
In Memory of Marilyn Diane Lozis
Castlegate Manor
Bonnie Castrey
Julie Champlin
Thomas and Lynn Clanin
Charlene Clark
Helen C Clary
In Memory of Eva Wagner
Billy Clayton
Kissie Clifton
Tiffany Cohen
John Cole
Bob and Betty Colley
Robert and Sylvia Connolly
Gary and Rebecca Cooper
Jeanne Cort
Susan Crockett
Waltraud Gertrud Crosby
In Memory of Eva Wagner
CRTA Harbor Beach Division #77
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Bonnie Curkin
In Memory of Bea Baumel
Eugene and Jayne Dahlgren
Muriel Dameron
Lynn Daucher
Carla Davies
Sharon Davis-Smith
Elaine DeaKyne
In Memory of Joyce DeaKyne
Michael and Muriel Deary
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Ann Dinh
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Julie Ditchik
Peggy Dougherty
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Ethel J. Dudzik
David Duner
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Loraine Dunn
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Lisa Feldon
Milt and Bea Felsenfeld
In Memory of Adelyn Wilson
Jim and Yolanda Fisher
Luis and Monica Florian
In Memory of Eva Wagner
Clarice Friedline
Fullerton Gardens, Inc.
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Robert Neiman
Naomi Nelson
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Kim-Chuyen Nguyen
Peter Nguyen

Gary and Teri Niebuhr
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Christine Nyholm
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Ralph and Penny Rodheim
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Jean Rouda
Patricia Sauter
Carol Schumaker
Harvey and Stephanie Schuster
Maxine Sharp
Elizabeth Sieker
In Memory of Eva Wagner
Dixie Shaw
In Memory of George Shaw
Janice Smith
Lahoma Snyder
Mary Earl Spencer
Barbara Stevens
Mary Jane Stevenson
Mike Stevenson
Joan Stewart
Sunflower Gardens
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Mary Tasker
In Memory of Adelyn Wilson
Tender Touch Elder Care
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Patricia Westerman
Bill Wewer
Jean White
Barbara Whitney and John Anderson
Shay Williams
Mark and Catherine Wolfson
Michelle Yerke
In Memory of Eva Wagner

Wish List Just Imagine how much more could be accomplished if Council on Aging had the following items:

Equipment

- Color Laser printer (with toner and maintenance)
- Plantronics cordless system head set for front desk phone
- Laminator and lamination sheets; colored paper
- 3-4 Cell phones w/paid service contracts for 2/3 years for field volunteers
- Hewlett Packard Laser Printer for individual workstation – Color/B & W

Office Space

- Use of large meeting room – 150 to 300 people
- 10,000 to 12,000 square feet of handicapped accessible office space
- Electronically opening door for disabled individuals

Premiums

- Volunteer appreciation gifts and tickets for plays, concerts, games, etc.
- Tickets for events and activities to enable caregivers to have a respite from caregiving
- Mentor lapel pins to attach to Volunteer ID Badges

Volunteers

- Volunteers: Friendly Visitors, Health Insurance Counselors, Nursing Home Resident Advocates, SmileMakers Guild Volunteers
- Bi-lingual Volunteers: Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese

**If you can fulfill any of these wishes, please contact Penni McRoberts,
Director of Development & Communications (714) 479-0107 ext 223**

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Board Members Reflect on Their Volunteerism



I joined the Council on Aging because I was personally facing the challenges of my aunt who lived alone and had macular degeneration and dementia. It was apparent she could no longer live safely alone and we had to manage a move into assisted living in a new area with new doctors. We also had to deal with a financial predator and a caregiver who used her credit card for over \$12,000 in charges. This experience gave us appreciation of some of the challenges of seniors especially those at risk and without family. **Mike Stieger, Board President**

Early in life I remember observing that the needs of older adults were often neglected. The realization that someone who lived an entire lifetime might experience distress simply by virtue of advanced age infuriated me. This contributed to my decision to pursue a life-path in advocacy for older adults and those who are challenged by health complexities. I made it my mission to promote happy, healthy and successful aging. I have gained so much from the many diverse people and communities that I serve which led me toward a great need to give something of significance in return. Council on Aging has had enormous impact on so many and I am privileged by the incredible opportunity to contribute to a vision that advances rights and dignity for all. **Laurie Traylor, Board Member**



Council on Aging Web Site offers Valuable Resources for Older Adults and their Families



*NEW on Council on Aging Web Site Memory Screen Assessment Tool**

If you ever wonder about your memory, you should know that memory loss may or may not be a normal part of the aging process. Memory screening can distinguish normal "age-related" memory loss from other forms of memory loss associated with an underlying medical condition

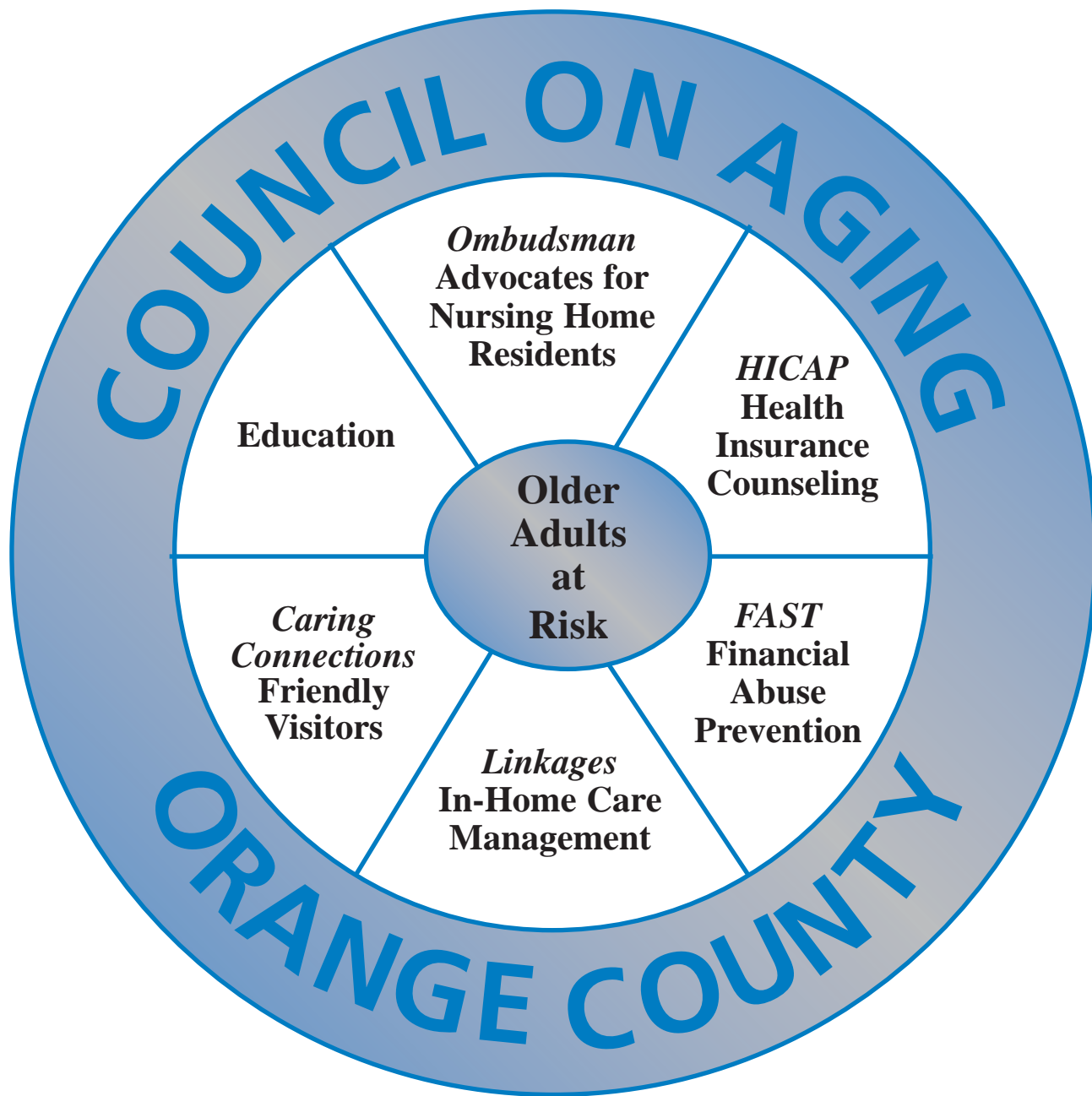
You may be needlessly concerned about your memory or the memory of a loved one, in which case the assessment tool can provide you peace of mind. If you have a medical condition that is impairing your memory, the Memory Screen can provide you the opportunity to seek early diagnosis and treatment. Early detection of most memory disorders improves treatment efficacy and can often reverse or delay progression of the underlying condition.

The Memory Screen is a non-invasive test that consists of a series of exercises designed to measure your memory and judgment. The screen is administered in English and takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be analyzed with a sophisticated scoring algorithm and compared to responses from individuals with similar demographic characteristics.

For more information on the Memory Screen go to www.coaoc.org and read more under News and Events on our home page.

*The Memory Screen was developed by Dr. William Shankle, MD. Dr. Shankle co-founded the Alzheimer's Clinic at the University of California, Irvine in 1987 and served as its medical director for 10 years. He currently runs the largest, private Alzheimer's Disease clinic in Orange County, CA. In 2001, Dr. Shankle received the Alzheimer's Association's most prestigious honor, the Zenith Fellows Award. His findings on human brain development were reported by The New York Times (January 4, 2000) to be one of the most important scientific discoveries of the 1990s. Dr. Shankle received his BS from Stanford University, MS in biostatistics from USC and his MD from Brown University.

*The Council preserves the financial dignity, independence,
health and safety of disabled and older adults at risk*



*Never doubt that a small group
of thoughtful committed citizens
can change the world;
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

~ Margaret Mead



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United Direct Marketing, Inc.



For more information visit our website www.coaac.org

Urgent Need for Volunteers:

- ***Advocates for Residents in Long-Term Care (Ombudsman)***
- ***Visitors for the Isolated and Lonely Older and Disabled Adults in our Community***

Please call (714) 479-0107 and ask for the Volunteer Coordinator