# 2018

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**OF**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS**



**Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Council**

## *Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez*

## Jeanette joined the SCPRC in July 2014, Jeanette is very excited about serving on the SCPRC in that she would like to make a difference for not only the resident in her home but also for residents living in other Connecticut nursing homes. Jeanette comes to us sharing her valuable skills as a secretary, teacher and assistant office manager. In addition to her interest in advocating for others, Jeanette is an avid reader and enjoys doing jigsaw puzzles.

## *Laurie Nason*

## My name is Laurie Jean Nason. I am a resident at The Summit at Plantsville, Health Care and Rehabilitation Center. I have been living at the Summit for 3 years. Prior to that, I was employed at Kmart as a debt manager for fifteen years. I am an artist and my room is filled with my art work, art supplies and found painting a great joy. I also write about my daily life and hopeful about writing a book someday. I enjoy gardening, crafts, and camping. I am an active member of SMILE which is a committee of resident volunteers; I attend many programs, art classes and enjoy spending time outside as nature is integrally important to me.

In the years that I have been a resident at The Summit I have noticed younger people living here. Our needs are different. Although we enjoy music and programs provided for the older population we also enjoy age specific programs and entertainment, educational classes, and the opportunity to plan age suitable events. To me empowerment and self-advocacy are very important. Although I am always happy to advocate for fellow residents (I am proud to be a voice for those who have none). I firmly believe that teaching people to speak for themselves is vital. This is especially true for younger residents or residents that will age in place.

## *Anne Nichols*

## Anne Nichols was born in Columbus, Ohio. She is the President of the resident council in Sheriden Woods in, Bristol. She has two daughters. She has a degree in English Literature from St. Mary’s College. She also studied the Montessori Method of Education where she found her passion. She was employed for 25 years at Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now agency in Norwalk, Connecticut. She was the Educational Coordinator and then became the Executive Director for the Child Development Program. In this role, she expanded the early childhood programs from three to five and renovated a school to accommodate before and after school programs. At age 4, she developed a

## passion for reading. As a result of this passion, she read to her own children and to thousands of students that she hopefully inspired. During her career, she addressed the Connecticut General Assembly for funding about the importance of Early Childhood Education programs. At Sheriden Woods she implemented a audio book program for resident’s that are unable to pick up or read a book. In July 2016, she joined the Executive Board for the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Council after being inspired by a former Eboard member, Brian Capshaw, at a Voices Forum she attended. He advocated for the personal needs allowance and staffing increase which are also important to her. She feels that she’s an asset to the Board because she stands up for what she believes. She wants to continue to advocate for Long Term Care issues that impact her and statewide residents.

*Brad Parkhurst*

## Brad was born and raised in Norwich. Brad graduated from Norwich Free Academy and began working in construction, specifically home construction and remodeling.

## Brad was elected Resident Council President at his former Home, Harbor Village South, two months after becoming a resident there. This came as an honor and a surprise because he wasn’t trying to run for a Council position. Brad became Resident Council President and an Executive Board member to help residents get better care in nursing homes.

## Harbor Village South closed in December 2017. Brad was the last resident to leave the home and this was done at his own choosing. Brad wanted to be at the Home as long as possible to support other residents as they left the building.

## Brad happens to be the first Executive Board Member to transition to his own apartment under the Money Follows the Person program. It wasn’t easy for Brad to be in his own place at first after being surrounded by other people all the time. However, it has gotten easier over time and he enjoys having the freedom to come and go when he wants. Having his own care team at home makes it easier to maintain his health and so far he is happy with the services he receives.

## Brad recently added two kittens to his family and they have been a great comfort and support to Brad when he has difficult days.

***Carol Runlett***

**Carol is the resident council president at Branford Hills Health Care Center and has been the council leader since 2013.Carol was born in New Haven, grew up in Milford, got married at 19, has two boys and two girls, and at 39 years old she was faced with the challenge of being a single mother. She returned to the workforce and held administrative support positions at Yale and moonlighted at Dunkin Donuts to pay the bills. When her children were growing up she was actively involved in their organizations - like PTA, Girl/Boy Scouts, softball, baseball, theater and arts programs. She felt it was important for her children to be involved and feel supported in as many activities as possible. After a worrisome eye appointment, she was sent to get an MRI and was then diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Her doctor believed she had M.S. for the last 10-15**

**years. This life changing event was a “kick in the ass” per Carol. Carol felt that quickly, her life fell apart, as to what it could have been. Three years after receiving her diagnosis, she had to sell her condo, and moved into Assisted Living and then into Long Term Care. The loss of independence was devastating to her. Carol found having to rely on anyone else was extremely frustrating. She was able to find a continued purpose through advocating for her peers and becoming an active member in the M.S. Society. She helps head multiple fundraising activities, (M.S. Society, Alzheimer’s Ass.) and recently helped co- found a new group called SHARP (Sincerely Happy Association of Retired Persons), for active residents in her community with a goal to raise money to give back to the community. This summer they funded 50 small boxes of school supplies that were donated to a local public school in Branford. She is extremely honored to accept this position as a member of the executive board, and looks forward to the opportunity to make a positive change for all residents in Long Term Care. We are delighted that Carol is now an Executive Board Member!**

## *Dave Thomson*

## David Thomson was born in Holyoke MA in January 1939 nine months before Hitler marched into Poland. His mother and father were performers in the WPA and in that capacity his family moved to Michigan, Tucson and eventually Hollywood. His father went back to New York where he was seen in a play by members of the Holyoke draft board. He was subsequently drafted and sent to the Far East, where he was on General Macarthur’s staff during the duration of the war. Mr. Thomson and his brother were sent to a boarding school in Palmdale California for five years. His parents divorced during this time and his mother remarried and moved back to New York. Mr. Thomson and his brother joined his mother in New York. Mr. Thomson dropped out of high school and went back to California to pursue an acting career. After one year of not succeeding he joined the Army and spent the next five years in Germany. Upon returning to New York Mr. Thomson worked in the advertising industry where he became a film producer. He joined universal pictures and became a writer and produced a classroom of motion pictures. He met and married his wife in 1986 and they moved to Connecticut where he worked with his brother in the formation of an incentive travel company. He has five grown male children. His hobbies include watching movies on his IPad, participating as President of Resident Council at Candlewood Valley Health and Rehabilitation Center, reading books, and watching television. He came to Candlewood Valley Health and Rehabilitation Center two years ago after breaking his hip. He can often be found in the physical therapy room.

## *Gregory Brooks*

## My name is Gregory Brooks and I am a resident at Quinnipiac Valley Center in Wallingford.  I am the Resident Council President, and beginning my fourth term. Like the Allman Brothers song, I was born a rambling man I suppose. After graduating high school I enlisted in the Army, and served as a first sergeant in a parachute infantry regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. After I left the service I traveled the country.

## I've walked remote logging roads in northern Maine, rode air boats in the everglades in Florida, dipped my feet in the headwaters of the Mississippi, and netted shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico. I have swam in both oceans, rode dirt bikes in Death Valley and the Baja, camped in the bottom of the Grand Canyon and hiked sections of the Appalachian trail solo. I've witnessed two space shuttle launches close-up, and visited national Battlefields from Gettysburg, to the Little Big Horn. I've ridden my motorcycle to major rallies in Daytona, Laconia N.H., and Sturgis S.D. to name a few. I attended trade and vocational schools in Conn. and Florida. I was a metalsmith, welder and fabricator. I owned three different shops over the years, specializing in custom motorcycles and hot rods. I was also a Health and Safety director at a major hot tub manufacturer. I love the outdoors, and am a little bit of an artist I’m told. I was involved in a motorcycle vs. car accident, and am confined to a wheelchair as a result. But I never give up and I want to be an advocate for the residents here and elsewhere in the state while I’m still able to physically and mentally. I am a quick learner, and look forward to working on the Eboard and perhaps bringing some fresh ideas and different approaches to achieve our common goals.