

# Peace of Mind for the Long Term



Agent Phyllis Shelton with Vernon Duckett  
Inset: Helen Duckett

**W**hen Vernon Duckett first heard about long-term care insurance he wasn't enthusiastic, but his wife, Helen, talked him into it. Recently retired from the oil business in Chattanooga, Tenn., Vernon, then 65, was healthy and vigorous, as was Helen, 66. But Helen did not want to be a burden on their son, Jeff, or anyone else.

Working with insurance agent Phyllis Shelton of LTC Consultants in Hendersonville, Tenn., they bought policies that would help pay what was then the going rate for care at a nursing home. Later, when policies with better features became available, Phyllis contacted the Ducketts and helped them upgrade their coverage. The new policies offered excellent coverage for home care, and had inflation riders that increased their coverage by five percent annually to help keep pace with the rising cost of care.

When Helen was in her mid-70s, she began having difficulty with everyday household chores, such as using the microwave oven. A visit to the doctor confirmed that these were symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Vernon cared for

Helen at home, and the policy gave him the freedom to drop her off at an adult daycare center for five or six hours a day. After Vernon suffered his second heart attack in five years and could no longer handle her care, he placed her at one of the nicest private nursing homes in the area, where she stayed until her death at age 82.

Today, Vernon is 84 and healthy enough to play golf twice a week. He calls long-term care insurance a "blessing" because it allowed him to afford the best care possible for his childhood sweetheart, to whom he was married for more than 60 years. "This LTC policy has given me peace of mind, security and independence," he says. ■

## LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE FAQs

### WHAT IS LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

Insurance that will help pay for assistance with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing, eating, dressing, etc.) if you're no longer able to care for yourself due to a disability or chronic medical condition, such as Alzheimer's.

### WHO NEEDS LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

Most people because the cost of long-term care services can quickly deplete your life's savings. For instance, eight hours per day of home health care can cost \$55,000 annually and full-time nursing home care now averages close to \$75,000 per year.<sup>1</sup>

### WHAT ARE THE ODDS I'LL NEED LONG-TERM CARE?

There's about a 70 percent chance you'll need some type of long-term care after age 65.<sup>2</sup>

### CAN I AFFORD LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

Most people can, especially if they buy when they're younger and in good health.

### HOW CAN I KEEP MY PREMIUM COSTS DOWN?

Buying when you're younger is one way. More limited coverage, such as a longer elimination period or shorter benefit period, will also reduce your premiums.