

# AIRCRAFT NOiSE



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## OVER NORTH HEMPSTEAD

SPRING 2016

A PUBLICATION BY THE TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD AIRCRAFT NOISE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### A MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR JUDI BOSWORTH



**A**s your neighbor in the Town of North Hempstead, I understand that residents choose to live in our Town to enjoy an exceptional quality of life. The council members and I work hard to maintain and improve this high quality of life enjoyed by North Hempstead residents. However, from time to time the Town encounters a challenge that it cannot solve through local legislation. I am talking of course, about aircraft noise over North Hempstead.

The FAA is in the process of implementing a new GPS based tracking system called NextGen. This allows planes to fly closer together safely. The result has been a significant increase in the number of planes flying over our Town. The airspace

over the Town has been redesigned by the FAA to accommodate this new technology and this seems to have exacerbated the problem. The FAA has asserted that these changes are necessary to improve safety and increase capacity of our nearby airports but the detriment to our quality of life is unacceptable.

Many residents have noticed the change in flight patterns and have become frustrated by the inability of local officials to affect change. I also share in this frustration. Aircraft flight patterns fall under federal jurisdiction and are controlled by the FAA. Accordingly, the Town of North Hempstead and other municipalities are unable to affect changes through legislation or by executive order. But

this does not mean we are powerless. As knowledge is power, you are encouraged to keep abreast of airspace activities by sharing this newsletter with your friends and checking ongoing information on [PlaneSense4LI.org](http://PlaneSense4LI.org), [QuietSkies.net](http://QuietSkies.net), and [QueensQuietSkies.net](http://QueensQuietSkies.net).

Thanks to the combined efforts of elected officials and affected citizens, the State has directed the Port Authority of NY and NJ to create an advisory panel, called Roundtable, and to perform a "Part 150 Study" to measure aircraft noise in areas around the airports, including North Hempstead. The Town has also created a Public Education and Outreach Committee, which has created this newsletter. It is our hope that this publication will encourage more public participation on this issue.

If it was within our power to fix the issue of airplane noise, we would. Whatever we have achieved to date and whatever we will achieve has been and will be the combined result of

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**Aircraft flight patterns fall under federal jurisdiction and are controlled by the FAA. But this does not mean we are powerless.**

efforts made by federal, state and local elected officials and citizen advocates, like you. I will continue this collaborative work and hope that you will join us.

*Judi Bosworth*

# AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER NORTH HEMPSTEAD

## WHY THIS NEWSLETTER? by Fran Gould



On the behalf of the **Aircraft Noise Public Education and Outreach Committee**, we are pleased to present this first edition of our newsletter, which is sponsored by the Town of North Hempstead. Over the years, airplane noise has increasingly interfered with quality of life of residents in North Hempstead, as well as the rest of Nassau County. To accommodate large jumbo jets, the FAA/PA have been slowly acclimating residents to the escalating noise and pollution.

The heavy air traffic has been producing a continuous and intensifying cacophony of airplane noise. Daily, it impinges on the quality of life of individuals and families in both our community and other affected areas. Articles prepared by members of the committee will shed light on issues surrounding this problem in our airspace. **You need to know what is happening in the skies and what you can do about it.**

As Jana Goldenberg will explain, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) have concentrated most inbound airplanes into a single flight path to JFK. Elaine Miller in “The Pursuit of Happiness” provides a vivid narrative about how her quality of life has diminished to the point that living in her home which was once joyful, has now become “a nightmare” due to the noise. As you will read in “Your Quality of Life”, Natalie Mansbach discusses the mental and physical effects that may be associated with aircraft noise. After all, protecting our environment is an essential human right, as I explain in a later article, “Our Healthy Environment is a Human Right”.

With the advent of the FAA’s Nextgen program, the need for environmental protection is greater than ever. **Our human rights to a healthy environment must be respected; citizens must have access to information and participate in decision-making.** However, there is good news. The efforts of local anti-aircraft noise and pollution organizations, such as “Plane Sense 4 LI” ([planesense4li.org](http://planesense4li.org)), work diligently and collaboratively with similar organizations around the country to reduce the air traffic noise and pollution that is harming our communities. In addition, supportive federal legislation has begun with the establishment of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus composed of members of the House of Representatives, as well as successful protests by individual legislators.

The PANYNJ has received noise complaints by concerned residents who share in our plight as well; in fact, from June 2014 to June 2015, there were 61,739 complaints reported to the agency. In addition to citing the total number of complaints, Sid Krinsky in his article also noted that in just one month, June 2015, the Port Authority reported that there were 1,932 noise complaints related to the flight paths to JFK. You are not alone if you believe the airplane noise issue is a disconcerting one.

**Members of the Outreach Committee encourage you to enlist the help of locally elected representatives.** They are the unified voice for our community. Many thanks to [PlaneSense4LI.org](http://PlaneSense4LI.org), [QuietSkies.net](http://QuietSkies.net), and [QueensQuietSkies.net](http://QueensQuietSkies.net), as well as our diligent and dedicated staff who made this edition possible: *Elaine Miller - Malverne; Jana Goldenberg - East Hills; Jeffrey Starin - Brooklyn; Natalie Mansbach - East Hills; and Sid Krinsky - West Hempstead.*

As the saying goes, knowledge is power. Having you aware of pervasive aircraft noise above our skies is important to encourage your thoughts and your activism. Thank you.

*Fran Gould - East Williston*  
*Aircraft Noise Public Education and Outreach Committee*

# AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER NORTH HEMPSTEAD

## NOISE COMPLAINTS

by Sid Krimsky

Each month, Port Authority of NY and NJ (PANYNJ) receives calls from residents complaining about excessive aircraft noise. Complaints from residents living near JFK, LGA, Newark, and Stewart, and airports as far away as twenty miles, have poured into the agency for about twenty years.

The data is collected, reviewed, analyzed and mapped on a monthly basis. **From June 2014 to June 2015, the total number of complaints received by the PANYNJ was 61,739, which may include emails plus telephone calls.**

This is 4,749 complaints per month, a staggering number! In June 2015, the complaints from New York City residents are as follows: JFK: 1,942, LGA: 1,796. The complaints are correlated with residents living under or nearby the arriving or departing flight paths.



In recent years and in unprecedented numbers, incoming airplanes into John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK) are swelling the skies over our Town and other parts of both Western Long Island and Queens. The new flight path is the result of the FAA and PANYNJ implementing a new satellite GPS system, "NextGen" to improve both their navigational safety and cost-effectiveness. Prior to the plan, these agencies did not conduct the normally required pre-impact or environmental studies for a new flight path. As a result, residents from the town, and those of other affected areas were not informed about the breadth of harmful effects that can occur from being under the crowded flight path because no such study was conducted regarding the new flight plan.

Another important factor is the FAA's lack of compliance with the Tracon Tower Bill of 2000, in which it pledged to curtail all flights over JFK Runway 22L from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. As for the environmental impact, this issue is completely ignored by the FAA by its constant use of the Categorical Exception (CATEX). That, coupled with the recent expansion of the runways at the airport to accommodate large jumbo jets is how those agencies have introduced the escalating and afflictive air traffic noise that has replaced the once quiet airspace above us.

There are many factors contributing to annoyance from unwanted sound such as intensity, frequency and repetition. A community measure used by the FAA is called the DNL or Day-Night Level in decibels averaged over a month. The FAA collects data from monitors on the ground in residential areas. For JFK (105 monitors), DNL data from 34% of the monitors showed numbers between 65-75 decibels. For LGA (52 monitors), DNL data from 25% of the monitors showed numbers between 65-75 decibels. All data is from Jan-June 2015. There are plenty of studies that show that repeated exposure to noise above 65 decibels is annoying and unhealthy.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTACT LOCAL  
OFFICIALS ABOUT EXCESSIVE AIRPLANE NOISE:**

**CALL 311** (North Hempstead's Call Center)

Mon-Fri: 7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.; Sat: 10 a.m - 6 p.m.; Sun: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

# AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER NORTH HEMPSTEAD

## THE INFLUX OF AIRPLANE NOISE AND ITS POSSIBLE REMEDIES by Jana Goldenberg

### WHY ARE WE EXPERIENCING AIRPLANE NOISE OVER OUR HOMES?

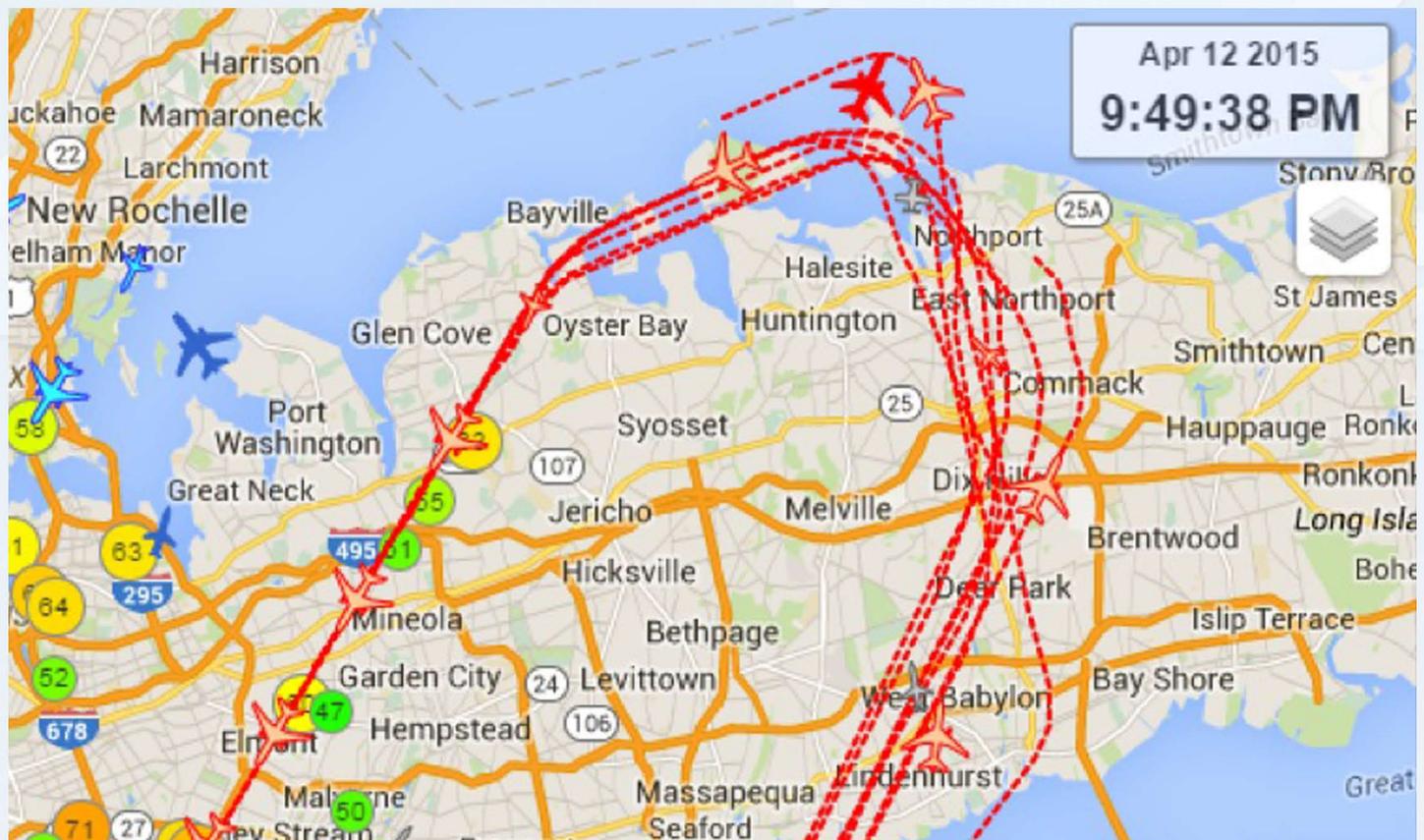
The runways at JFK are located conveniently on the water but JFK is using the shortest runway (22L used 80%) for arrivals at all hours of the day and night. Instead of flying directly into JFK from the water approach, they form a loop flying as far east as towns and villages in Suffolk County only to return to JFK on the shortest runway.

### WHY HAVE THERE BEEN PERIODS OF QUIET FROM PLANES?

Runway expansion construction on several runways at JFK to accommodate larger aircraft has been taking place, resulting in runway closures. The first phase of construction was completed in December and new construction on two more runways, including Runway 22L (the flight path over our homes) will start in 2017.

### HOW CAN WE FIX THE CONTINUOUS AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER OUR COMMUNITIES?

The FAA should abide by the JFK Tracon Tower Agreement of 2000, whereby the FAA agreed not to use JFK's runway 22L (our flight path) between the hours of 11 PM and 7 AM. JFK has eight runways but are constantly using the same runway to fly over the most densely populated communities in Nassau County. We are asking for fair and equal traffic distribution. That means to use all those runways at JFK instead of the repeated use of runway 22L.



### Arc of Doom: Approach paths for aircraft landing on Runway 22L at JFK International Airport

The outlined planes are arriving and the solid planes are departing. Red planes represent those affiliated with JFK, blue planes are affiliated with LGA. Yellow and green circles represent decimal levels caused by airline noise. See next page for a larger map, which includes JFK.

## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

by Elaine Miller

**T**he first roar of a jet plane over my home occurred in October of 2011. At first, I did not think much of it but I did think to myself that these planes were awfully low. We had never experienced anything quite like this. The planes continued to come hour after hour, 2-3 minutes apart. The noise was incessant. I thought that it was just an anomaly, but the next day it happened again. Day after day the planes kept coming. I had to find out what was taking place. Through my research I found that the FAA decided to make flight path changes called the Airspace Redesign System and to use a new technology called *NextGen*.

I started to attend meetings with both the Federal Aviation Administration and Port Authority of NY/NJ. We were told at the meetings that the changes were for safety concerns and that planes are flown based on weather conditions and prevailing winds. As far as our complaints, they were dutifully dismissed. It appeared that we were viewed as rag tail citizens who had no chance in changing the decisions of the FAA.

I was determined to find the truth, so I started to collect data that would support our accusations. I logged every plane that flew over my home for a one-year period. What I found was astonishing. It did not matter whether it was winter, spring, summer or fall; which way the winds were blowing or the weather conditions, it was all the same. Hundreds of flights were directed above my house at very low altitudes approximately 1500-2000 feet. I could not understand this since my community is approximately six miles from the airport. The planes, departures from JFK, fly from the early morning hours into the late hours of the evening. Whereas these planes flew only to JFK, they now fly over my house to LGA due to the FAA concept of Metroplex - the sharing of airspace when two airports are close to another. On many occasions, the flights would begin on the a.m. of one day and continue in the a.m. of the next day. Our community could receive flights anywhere from 100-300 planes a day. On September 16, 2014, on a clear and sunny day, 236 planes flew over our homes. The period of April 5-April 10, 2015, we were subjected to 1029 flights; all low and oppressively **loud**. *My life was stolen from me on a beautiful October day.*

I am no longer happy living in my home because it has become a nightmare. The FAA stripped us of our basic rights and they feel confident they will win this war since they are a bureaucratic agency that is completely autonomous; an agency that holds us in contempt. We must work together to find a solution to maintain the human rights that belong to us. Yes, there will be a number of people who will remain indifferent; however, there will be a group who will be inspired to address the harmful policies by the agency. After all, aren't we entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? If your answer is yes, then join with us!

## OUR HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT IS A HUMAN RIGHT

by Fran Gould

Every year for the last 66 years on December 10th, 192 United Nations member states throughout the world celebrate the observance of a UN charter that provides for the support and protection of human rights. The charter is called, "The Declaration of Human Rights".

Human rights are rights inherent in all human beings whatever their nationality, place of residence / religion or any other status. We are entitled to these rights be they civil, political, cultural or economic. The idea of the environment as a human right has long been discussed, but tabled by the UN. However, with the rise of environmental awareness, comes the realization that environmental human rights, which guarantee breathable air, safety from toxic exposure and a voice in decision making, are crucial to our survival.

**A few of the 29 articles in the document state that we have the right to life, liberty and security of person (Article 3), that no one be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family or home (Article 12), and that everyone has the right to rest and leisure (Article 24). A healthy environment is another human right.**

# AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER NORTH HEMPSTEAD

## YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

by Natalie Mansbach

**W**e all strive for quality of life or well-being. Our well-being includes all phases of life, from comfort and happiness to security, safety and health. For those of us in Nassau County, our well-being has been threatened due to a continuous change of aircraft flying patterns in the skies. Residents, for the past several years, have been experiencing an invasion of low flying jets over their homes. These jets continuously fly in parallel patterns on a twenty-four hour schedule, either landing at or departing from JFK and LaGuardia airports. The aircraft noise has negatively interfered with our quality of life.

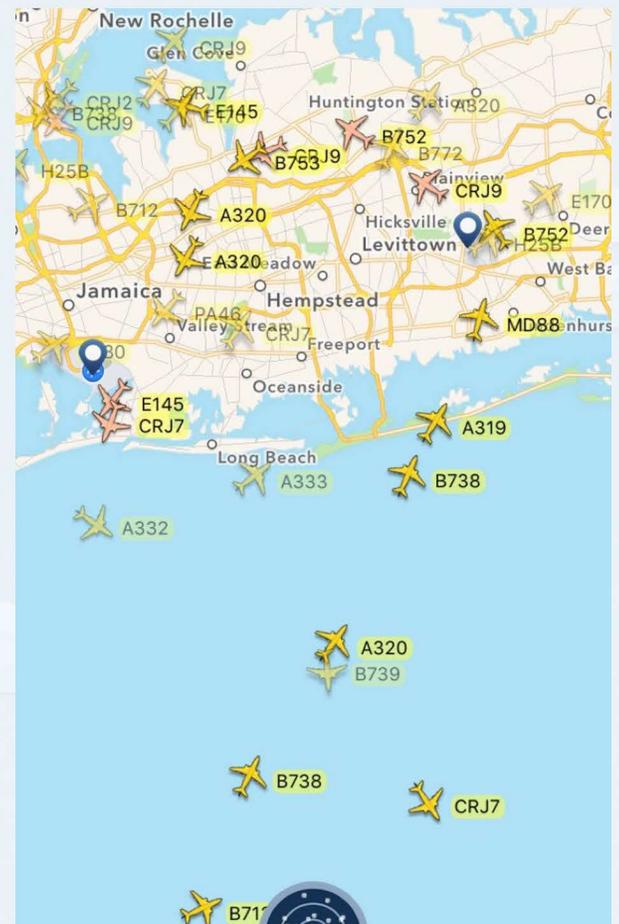
The new flight paths are unsettling due to the harmful effects they may have on our well-being. The damaging effects of aircraft noise are not unfounded. The intersection between sound and health has been exhaustively documented in variety of medical studies. It is well known that sound that is both loud and long lasting can produce damaging effects on the body. When such noise reaches harmful levels, the body releases stress hormones. The excessive amounts of the hormones coursing through the body can result in hypertension, stress, circulatory problems, cardiac diseases, peptic ulcers and neurosensory and motor impairment. There are notable adverse mental effects that may result too. This includes social isolation resulting from the inability to receive and give information, disruption of work productivity (children as well as adults), decrease of cognitive functioning in school-related issues and sleep disturbances.

Moreover, jet noise can reach harmful levels that produce a negative impact on our bodies. The increasing noise traffic above our skies occur day and night. Aircraft noise has been known to exceed the threshold of what is considered safe sound. And so, as the sounds above our homes last longer and gain intensity, our hearing can become damaged.

**The best way to prevent hearing loss, health, and learning-related consequences is to limit cumulative exposure to noise.** Noise-induced hearing loss is unnatural and can be prevented. Quiet environments have been shown to have a positive impact on the quality of life. It can restore the damage to health-related intrusions from aircraft noise as well as prevent further injury.

*Quality of life also includes a standard of living.* Hardworking families and individuals would not appreciate the loss of property value to their homes because of jet noise. There are many studies that indicate an inverse relationship between jet noise and the price of homes. For instance, in 1994 the FAA commissioned a study that found that the price of an average home raises 1.33% of added quiet per decibel. That is, sound is measured in decibels, and so the lower the sound decibel (increasing quietness) the higher the price for the home. Working to improve the quiet environment in our community benefits our standard of living and is essential to ensuring well being. Decreasing the jet noise constantly over our homes seems to meet that end.

**In sum, advocating to lessen aircraft noise is essential to ensure that all facets to our well-being are protected from undue harm.** For our quality of life encompasses not just physical and mental health but also the other areas in our lives that we value, such as our standard of living. When we each secure these dimensions in each of our lives, we preserve a better and stronger community.



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"I am grateful for the work that the committee has been doing in conjunction with the Town to find ways to help lessen the impact of airplane noise on our residents."

- Council Member Viviana Russell  
(District 1)



"This is an issue that has been going on for years. Our residents deserve to have the quality of life they expected when moving here and certainly deserve."

- Council Member Angelo Ferrara  
(District 3)

"Noise impacts us all. It's a true quality of life issue. Let's work hard to remediate it."

- Council Member Lee Seeman (District 5)



"Our Town residents expect and deserve a certain quality of life. As the Council Member for North Hempstead's 4th District, I will continue to stand with our constituents and work with all levels of government to mitigate the impact of aircraft noise on our constituents."

- Council Member Anna Kaplan (District 4)



"Airplane noise is a major quality of life issue that impacts the residents of the Town of North Hempstead. As a resident of the Village of East Hills, I know the effects of airplane noise personally. I want you to know that you have an ally in the quest for reform in Supervisor Judi Bosworth and myself. We will continue to make sure your voices are heard with our federal representatives. I hope this newsletter will help you better understand what is happening in our skies and urge you to become actively involved in returning a sense of tranquility to our lovely communities."

It would be great to say that the Town of North Hempstead could alleviate this issue on our own. Unfortunately, we cannot. We have, however, made progress. But that progress has been made working with officials on the Federal, state, and village level, as well as working with the great activists in our community. I look forward to working with you, as we continue working to improve the quality of life for our residents."

- Council Member Peter Zuckerman (District 2)



"Aircraft noise pollution is a serious issue for residents of my council district and the entire Town of North Hempstead. It is a problem that is not only a nuisance, but affects our very quality of life on daily basis. I thank the volunteers on the committee for their continued efforts on finding a solution to this problem."

- Council Member Dina De Giorgio  
(District 6)



Supervisor  
Judi  
Bosworth



Councilwoman,  
Dist. 1  
Viviana L.  
Russell



Councilman,  
Dist. 2  
Peter J.  
Zuckerman



Councilman,  
Dist. 3  
Angelo P.  
Ferrara



Councilwoman,  
Dist. 4  
Anna M.  
Kaplan



Councilwoman,  
Dist. 5  
Lee R.  
Seeman



Councilwoman,  
Dist. 6  
Dina M.  
De Giorgio



Town Clerk  
Wayne H.  
Wink, Jr.



Receiver of  
Taxes  
Charles  
Berman