



the PIONEER

brought to you by **NORTH HEMPSTEAD PROJECT INDEPENDENCE**

Project Independence is a program designed to support residents 60 and over to continue to enjoy good health and a rewarding quality of life in their own homes and communities.

NEWSLETTER VOL. 10 NO. 3

PIONEER-10 Year Celebration Issue

A MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR BOSWORTH

Happy 10th anniversary Project Independence! Congratulations on celebrating 10 years of serving North Hempstead's seniors. What began as a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community back in 2006 has transformed into a national model for aging-in-place programs that covers all corners of the Town: Great Neck, Manhasset, Port Washington, Westbury/Carle Place, Mineola/Williston Park, New Hyde Park and Roslyn. We now have more than 10,000 members who are served by Project Independence (P.I.) programs. You name it, and P.I.'s got it! Everything from taxi rides, educational lectures, exercise classes, social work, nursing services and even its own radio show, "Project Independence and You," featuring topics important to our senior residents. In October, Project Independence celebrated a milestone of 100,000 taxi round-trips for its members. These taxi trips have allowed our senior residents to take advantage of discounted rides to medical visits and free transportation for food shopping. This aging-in-place initiative has given thousands of seniors a sense of well-being, made them more confident and allowed them to remain in their own homes. As 2016 winds down, we look forward to having you as part of the Project Independence family and invite you to enjoy all the services that P.I. has to offer.



Warm Regards,

Judi Bosworth

Judi Bosworth
North Hempstead Town Supervisor



Now and Then: 10 Years of Project Independence and the Pioneer Newsletter

Interview with Paula Uhl, LCSW, Deputy Commissioner at the Town of North Hempstead Department of Services for the Aging, and JoAnne Tricarico, RN, Northwell Health/Project Independence Nurse.

Tell us a little about your background.

JT: From a very young age I volunteered to do community service in my neighborhood. At that time I found myself drawn to nursing care for the elderly. I think I always knew I'd have a career in community nursing with seniors. I've been a registered nurse since 1982.

PU: I was fascinated with psychology and understanding how people think and feel. During my college internships, I worked with children in a safe home for domestic violence families and in a nursing home. While working at the nursing home, I soon realized there were many elders who were lonely and in need of human connection. I graduated knowing for sure my passion was to be a geriatric social worker.

How did you get involved with the PI Program?

PU: I was PTA President and met someone who worked at FECS-Human Service agency (now closed). She told me of a "dream job" starting up a NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) program in New Hyde Park. Having never heard of a NORC I immediately went home and began my research. I interviewed, and FECS hired me as the Director of PI, along with JoAnne the NORC's community nurse. We grew to about 300 clients. It's amazing to think back, now that we have over 10,000 members. Before the expansion of PI going Town-wide, the wonderful Madge Kaplan hired me to take on the role of Director of Senior Citizen Affairs for the Town.

JT: I was working with LIJ Homecare as a per diem Homecare Coordinator, when I heard a nurse was needed to implement a NORC program, I interviewed and was hired!

What was Day 1 on the job like?

JT: Everything was so new and exciting. The sense of community involvement was always strong, and New Hyde Park was very open to being involved with this program. They helped to create and drive the program to where we are today, 10 years later.

PU: It was exciting and also chaotic. We were creating something that no road map had yet established. I was handed a copy of grant commitment, and we were on our way! I fondly remember meeting Otto and Bernadette Lohse, one of our first PI members and today they are still very involved with the program, and are even featured on the PI Brochure.

Why do you think PI is so successful compared to other aging in place programs?

PU: The people and teamwork. The strong leadership, starting with the Town Supervisor; the Dept. of Services for the Aging staff; and especially the "Mothers" of PI, Madge Kaplan and Evelyn Roth. Without all the aforementioned, PI could not be so successful. "No" was never an answer; priority was to make connections in the community with agencies, organizations, senior and civic groups and much more. Most of these connections opened the door to long term partnerships. The outreach and support from the Town has really helped to spread the word.

JT: I agree. The combination of human services, healthcare and government support makes this program special. The regional advisory committees are a huge part too. The members are the driving force behind all PI services, programs, etc.

PU and JT: The 311 call center makes this program accessible and efficient! It is a "one stop shop" allowing all Town seniors access to all PI programs.

What are some challenges/trends you have seen for aging residents?

PU: Transportation was a challenge. However, PI has alleviated a lot of this through the PI transportation program to food shopping and medical appointments.

JT: Navigating the healthcare system. A huge role of the PI nurses is to help coordinate and assist residents through this system.

PU: Housing and finances are ongoing challenges. All housing realms are of concern, whether maintaining a home, affordability or finding affordable housing. PI social workers assist residents on a case by case basis.

PU: Finding the homebound isolated seniors is a big challenge.

JT: Seniors are living longer, many of my clients are in their 90's and 100's. They need more care! What is so wonderful is that PI offers many programs promoting health and for those who are able to get out; social groups, health chats, exercise and more. The Northwell House Call Doctor program is extremely helpful too.



Aging in Place

by Otto Lohse, PI Member

Many of us really don't like to think about aging, but since we have no choice and it does have some benefits, we try to make the best of our good fortune in getting there.

One of the things that helps make the aging process easier to handle is the ability to accept help when it's beneficial. This is often easier said than done. We all have a streak of independence in us and prefer not to take help unless the choice is gone. The fallacy in this is that by taking help or guidance along life's trail we might avoid problems that will take away all of our independence.

Project Independence should be looked upon as a very important partner in providing support along the way, just like your health care team, to minimize your need to end up in a nursing home. The primary goal of Project Independence is to provide guidance and support that might enable you to age in your own home.

From my perspective, and personal experience over the last 10 years, Project Independence has been a wonderful support system to assist me while aging in my own home. In preparing this article I reflected on the many experiences provided by Project Independence and the list is long. Some of this is through knowledge gained at health chats or personal experience. To name just a few: blood pressure screening, medication management,

Medicare updates, advanced directives, fall prevention, health care management, emergency preparedness, audiology and the need to develop a circle of support. I haven't had the need but it's good to know PI provides major support with transportation for shopping and medical visits. In addition to these types of efforts, PI also provides opportunity for socializing – as much as you want.

There are an endless number of opportunities for social and recreational activities all of which enhance your capability to age in place. There are also many volunteer opportunities. We all have life experience and that's all you need to be a positive contributor to the program. My personal involvement is with the advisory committee in New Hyde Park along with some contributions to the newsletter and radio program. My wife is a friendly visitor to people who have difficulty leaving their home. Believe me no super skills are required, just a desire to get involved and contribute what you can.

Project Independence is managed by a great Team, with strong support from our Town Of North Hempstead leadership. Being involved with the program, or using the support and guidance provided, will definitely assist you in aging in place.

Interview continued

What is your most memorable moment since the beginning of PI?

JT: It was so exciting when PI expanded Town wide, the Town was so supportive. My personal favorite moments are when I am able to build trust with a senior and they open up to share experiences, leading into best practices for the aging in place process.

Interviewer: Just to quote, the first issue of the PIONEER, JoAnne, you are PI's "Florence Nightingale"

JT: What I love about what we do, is the freedom. In hospital settings, you have more restrictions and guidelines. Within PI, you are able to really form ongoing bonds with seniors that last. You are able to provide a holistic approach to nursing and that's what it's all about.

PU: My favorite memories, are working with the MSW interns over the years, some have been hired to work with the program too! You are able to really change someone's life for the better in this program. A minor change can greatly improve the quality of life. I also love the advisory committees and hearing directly from the seniors.

What are your hopes for the next 10 years?

PU & JT: Our hope is for the program to continue to grow with the support of the Town, our partners and our incredible senior population!



PROJECT INDEPENDENCE THROUGH

JANUARY 2006

Project Independence (PI) Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) Program begins in New Hyde Park

APRIL 2006

First community-based advisory meeting



SUMMER 2006

First issue of the PIONEER

MARCH 2009

PI expands to Great Neck area



MARCH 2009

The Department of Services for the Aging officially becomes a new department within the Town

DECEMBER 2009

PI expands to the Port Washington Area

JUNE 2010

PI expands to remaining New Hyde Park area

JANUARY

DOSA receive \$854,342 grant from New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NYMTC) via the Dept. of Transportation & Federal Transit Administration

FEBRUARY

PI expands to...

OCTOBER 2010

TRI Help at Home Program is launched

JULY 2009

The Town's Dept. of Services for the Aging (DOSA) receives a \$333,000 Expansion Grant from the Admin. on Aging and a \$59,046 "SHARP" Grant from NYSOFA

AUGUST 2011

PI's 1st Regional Aging in Place in Suburbia: Strategies for Success Conference & Expo



THROUGH THE YEARS: A TIMELINE

MAY 2011

PI receives a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Council via the NYS Transportation Transit Admin.

FEBRUARY 2011

PI expands to Roslyn

APRIL 2012

PI provides its 25,000 Taxi Ride

AUGUST 2012

PI expands to Westbury/Carle Place area

AUGUST 2013

PI's 2nd Regional Aging in Place in Suburbia: Living Better with Technology Conference & Expo

JUNE 2015

PI welcomes its 10,000 member!

NOVEMBER 2015

Town appoints a Veterans Caseworker for all North Hempstead veterans

OCT. 2016

PI's Transportation Program provides 100,000 trips!



FEBRUARY 2012

PI expands to Mineola and Williston Park



JANUARY 2014

Town partners with the AARP and World Health Organization (WHO) to be a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

SEPTEMBER 2011

First episode of PI's radio show, *Project Independence and You*, airs across Town

SEPTEMBER 2015

PI creates the Circle of Support Initiative, hosts its 3rd Regional Aging in Place in Suburbia: Living Better Today, Planning for Tomorrow Conference & Expo, and receives \$1 million in federal funding for the PI Transportation Program



JANUARY 2016

PI Social Workers and Nurses provided 32,537 units of service (health education, assessments, blood pressure screenings, fall prevention, medication mgmt., bereavement, caregiver support, counseling, entitlement assistance, and more)



The Joy of Giving Back

by Chari Biton, Project Independence Senior Mobility Manager

At Project Independence we experience true gratification in serving the seniors of North Hempstead! From simple conversation with our residents to providing services and programs that help our PI members age in place, safely in their own homes. Truly, nothing is better than hearing we've made a difference in the lives of our Town seniors.

We are ready and able to help our senior residents when issues and concerns arise, to make the aging in place process successful. It can be as simple as making someone aware of an up and coming computer class or sending a nurse to the home of senior who has difficulty getting out. We get calls from children, spouses, neighbors, who want to help their loved ones. Dad isn't getting out socially... I don't drive anymore and don't know how to get places... My spouse is being discharged from rehab and the home isn't accessible, where do I start?...We can't afford private ambulette, Medicaid recipients travel at no cost, do I meet the criteria?... In each case a team member(s) serves with compassion, experience and always follows up.

The impact of the Project Independence transportation program, for many residents, affords them the ability to live in their own home, especially those who never drove, or no longer can drive. Taxis are used for medical appointments and food shopping. Town buses can take a senior within the Town to designated senior and social centers, nutrition sites and an assortment of summer programs other activities Town-wide. All one has to do is call 311 to access any/all PI services. Your call will be returned efficiently with compassion from a dedicated PI staff member. From the entire staff at Project Independence, we wish all our Project Independence members and their families a warm, happy and healthy holiday season.

"Project Independence. What can I say? It is the proverbial home run of North Hempstead. I live in New Hyde Park and Project Independence has been a source of infinite help and knowledge to me. I have gone to them when I needed furniture moved, curtain rods hung and gutters cleaned. Their one day seminars are very informative and weekly programs like line dancing, invigorating. PI truly provides a wealth of information on so many topics and this is the best part, it's all free. Maintaining one's independence is so important. It brings a sense of self-worth. Project Independence provides that one intangible quality of life. Oh and did I mention the staff! They are courteous and attentive."

by Loretta Riccio, PI Member

A special thank you to our partners, Northwell Health, JASA (Jewish Association for Services to the Aged), NuHealth, The Rehabilitation Institute (TRI), Rebuilding Together/LI, Winthrop University Hospital, St. Francis Hospital, North Shore Child and Family Guidance, EAC Network, Hofstra University, Adelphi University, LIU Post, Delux Transportation, Taxi Hispano Express, All Island Transportation and others!





Nurse Joanne Tricarico checks the blood pressure of Fran Berger at the Tully Park Physical Activities Center in New Hyde Park.



Project Independence Programs and Services

Nursing Services

- Blood pressure screening and monitoring of other chronic conditions
- Health information and/or education
- In-home assessment
- Medication management counseling and information
- Referral to home healthcare services
- Healthcare coordination
- Fall prevention screenings and education
- Telehealth program

Social Work Services

- Individual, family and group counseling
- In-home assessment
- Case management
- Bereavement support
- Caregiver assistance
- Advance directive education
- Entitlements/benefits assessments and assistance (food stamps, home heating, low-income programs)
- Disability resource information
- Financial counseling (referrals)
- Food and nutrition support (Meals on Wheels, Food Pantries) (referrals)
- Medicare, Medicaid or other health insurance information
- Mental health referrals
- Respite care (referrals)
- Transition assistance from hospital to home or rehabilitation
- Support groups
- Veterans assistance
- Circle of Support (Life planning tool)

Transportation

- Food Shopping Taxi Program (no charge for rides)
 - Provided 2 days a week in the various regions between 10am - 2pm
 - If rider has an aide, the aide may ride for free.
 - Taxi driver will put collapsible wheel chair or other assistive device in the trunk of the cab.
- Medical, dental or treatment appointments, non-emergency (steeply discounted rates)
 - Rides available 7 days a week
 - Medicaid rate is used although this is NOT a Medicaid program
- Rider pays half of the already discounted Medicaid rate at the time of the ride.
 - If rider has an aide, the aide may ride for free.
- Town Bus Transportation provided to social centers within the Town (*LIMITED)

Mobility Management

- Serves as a liaison for all available transportation options
- CarFit – an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles “fit” them.
- Pedestrian Safety Committee

Social and Recreational

- Exercise classes
Tai Chi, yoga, fitness, zumba, line dancing
- ROMEO men’s social group



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Project Independence Programs and Services Continued

Social and Recreational continued

- Senior Talk Group
- Blankets of Love
- Men’s Social Group
- Social Discussion Group
- Seasonal Town-sponsored events
- Programs at various centers within the Town

Home Maintenance

- Help at Home Program
 Floor care - mopping or sweeping, replace batteries, window cleaning (1st Floor), moving heavy objects, light yard work, gutter cleaning
- Referrals to volunteer agencies for accessibility improvements

Educational

- Community educational chats

Communications/Outreach

- Project Independence Radio Show - Fridays from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. on 88.1FM or WCWP.org
- Previous episodes on Project Independence website
- Pioneer Newsletter- mailed out three times a year newsletter
- Project Independence Email Newsletter emailed out monthly.

Other Programs and Services (PI partners)

- North Shore Child and Family Guidance Project GRASP (Grandparent Respite and Support Project) – grandparents who are responsible for the care of their grandchildren, whether they have custody of the children or not, participate in groups for grand parenting skills, socialization and respite provided by a partnering agency via contract with PI.
- Rebuilding Together LI – volunteer group provides minor home improvements like ramps, grab bars, railings, to improve accessibility and safety in the home. PI pays for the equipment used.
- St. Francis Cardiac Health Screening Van – outreach bus provides free health screening, including a brief cardiac history, blood pressure, simple blood test for cholesterol, and diabetes screenings with appropriate patient education and referrals as needed, limited dates available.

**Locations of Project Independence Offices
 Come in and visit the PI Social Worker or Nurse for you region!**

Clinton G. Martin Park
 1601 Marcus Ave.
 New Hyde Park, NY 11040

Great Neck Social Center
 80 Grace Ave.
 Great Neck, NY 11020

Port Washington Senior Center
 80 Manorhaven Blvd.
 Port Washington, NY 11050

Roslyn Community Center
 53 Orchard St.
 Roslyn Heights, NY 11577

North Hempstead “Yes We Can” Community Center
 141 Garden St.
 Westbury, NY 11590



Town Supervisor
Judi Bosworth



Council Member,
 Dist. 1
Viviana Russell



Council Member,
 Dist. 2
Peter J. Zuckerman



Council Member,
 Dist. 3
Angelo P. Ferrara



Council Member,
 Dist. 4
Anna M. Kaplan



Council Member,
 Dist. 5
Lee R. Seeman



Council Member,
 Dist. 6
Dina M. De Giorgio



Town Clerk
Wayne H. Wink, Jr.



Receiver of Taxes
Charles Berman

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