



SSSF

Steuben Senior Services Fund, Inc.

Building a Resource for Aging in Place



Dear Friend,

Expansion Into Woodhull

Thanks to the generosity of the J. M. McDonald Foundation, SSSF will be replicating our successful Pulteney and Urbana Aging in Place projects in the Woodhull area of Steuben County. This will include the towns of Jasper, Troupsburg, Cameron, and Woodhull. The SSSF Board announced that a \$10,000 grant was received from the McDonald Foundation which will allow SSSF to hire a part-time project coordinator to head up the effort. An advisory group of interested individuals from the area will be recruited, and a survey of older residents of the area will be mailed out to solicit input on services that will assist older people to safely age in place in their own homes and communities.

Keeping the Home Fires Burning

Childhood sweethearts, Frank and Mary Ann Losecco are still living together, after 62 years of marriage, in the comfort of their own home. Despite multiple health problems for each, they are committed to being together and to aging in place for as long as they possibly can. Sheer grit and determination, a move to a one-story home, the installation of a ramp, along with help from their children and services through the Office for the Aging and the VA, have helped them to meet this goal.



In a recent interview, Mary Ann related how they met as teens, living on the same street in Hornell. Although her family opposed their relationship, Mary Ann overcame their objections, and the couple married in 1951. They had four children, one of whom died in infancy, and they worked hard to provide for their family. Mary Ann stayed at home to raise the children while Frank worked at Stearns and Stearns and in the Erie Railroad shops. When the children reached their teen years, Mary Ann worked in the cafeteria at Alfred State College and then at Dewey's Bakery. Then for seventeen years she made lunches and baked goodies at Fran's Locker Room, which was owned by her son.

In 2005, Mary Ann lost a leg due to diabetes, but she has not allowed that to stop her from caring for her husband, who has Parkinson's Disease. She says that Frank has been a good husband, a very good husband, and she is committed to keeping him at home. Despite being in a wheelchair, Mary cooks their meals and helps Frank get around the house. She said they have a system for moving around their cozy home—he hangs on to the back of her wheelchair, she moves forward, and they slowly make their way from room to room.

Through the Office for the Aging and the VA, Home and Health Care provides caregivers who help them with their showers and who also do some of their house cleaning. Home and Health Care also provides respite so that Mary Ann can go out to doctors' and dentists' appointments, to family functions, or just out for a ride with one of her children.

Mary Ann says she cannot say enough good about the services she receives from Home and Health Care, the Office for the Aging and the VA. She said that they have been wonderful, that they have been right there for her. She added that these services help her and Frank to keep going at home.



Pulteney and Urbana Work Continues

Pulteney and Urbana Aging in Place Coordinator Kathy Burns reports on aging in place developments in those townships. In Urbana nearly 900 postcards were mailed to area residents identifying services available to assist them in their desire to age at home and in their own community. Packets of postcards were also distributed to 60 physicians' offices in Bath, Dundee, and Penn Yan. This mailing also included Arnot and Guthrie physicians who serve the Central Steuben Area.

Project CARE Spring Clean-Up Day was held in Hammondsport and Pulteney on May 18th. This endeavor involving Hammondsport students was led in Hammondsport by Lura Huckabone, retired Project CARE Coordinator. Their work included raking and window washing for homebound seniors. Kathy Burns led another group of students in Pulteney where they cleaned the community garden site and readied it for the construction of raised beds. They also raked and cleaned windows for a homebound senior.

The Pulteney Grapevine, a newsletter especially published by the Pulteney Library with funding from SSSF for area residents was sent out in early June.

A grant for Care Transitions was submitted to the Taylor Foundation in early June as well. If funded, this grant would assist Pulteney and Urbana seniors who are discharged from the hospital, lacking adequate family/community supports from being unnecessarily readmitted to the hospital with the same diagnosis within 30 days. Teams of volunteers would work with a care transitions coordinator to assist with follow-up doctors' visits, grocery shopping, obtaining prescriptions, etc.

General Aging In Place Safety Tips

To help ensure your safety at home follow these safety tips:

1. Have your vision checked once a year
2. Paint porches with grip
3. Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone
4. Use light bulbs of at least 60 watts
5. Avoid thick soled shoes and slippers
6. Get up slowly after sitting or lying down
7. Make sure porch railings and steps are in good repair
8. Exercise regularly--it improves balance, coordination and strength



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