



SSSF

Steuben Senior Services Fund, Inc.
Building a Resource for Aging in Place



Dear Friend,

AGING IN PLACE IN PULTENEY

Many small rural communities in Steuben County are dying. Younger people have left the area or state for employment, and those who have stayed see the decline all around them. Conversations in local gathering spots often focus on the negative, the lack that is all around them. Not so in Pulteney!

At a recent gathering to honor the members of the Pulteney Aging in Place Advisory Group for their efforts over the past three years, there was a strong sense of hope, of building a future together. The members come from all walks of life. Some are older, some younger. Some are working full time, others are retired. They all became involved in the Aging in Place Project for different reasons, but the basis of it all was a deep love for their community and a desire to make a difference in the lives of the older residents living there.

Members of the Advisory Group include Alise Irwin, James and Banu Moore, Barbara Radigan, Liz Ryder, Larry Slater, and Barbara Welles. Listen to some of their reasons for involvement and for their belief in the accomplishments of the Pulteney Aging in Place Project. One member expressed a desire to age in place. Not wanting to go any further than a neighboring community as she ages and not wanting to be in a long-term-care facility was a strong motivation for her involvement. Another member saw this project as a great opportunity for seniors to be able to contribute to their communities—wisdom, money, energy, and time. She also commented that this project has woven “youngers and older” together—a great community builder. Commenting on the new luncheon program at the church, she noted that there are many who attend who wouldn't miss it for the world.

Others stated that there is a new sense of community, a way to get newcomers involved, that the project has helped to develop a cohesive community, that it has encouraged people to acknowledge the gifts of the community, that it has assisted in keeping people engaged and involved. Another noted that it has helped us help ourselves. Finally a local official noted that the Town wants people to see Pulteney as a great place to live and to age.

Thanks to the Pulteney Aging in Place Advisory Group and Coordinator for a job well done and for continuing to address the challenge of Aging in Place in Pulteney!

Pictured below are the members of the Pulteney AIP Advisory Group. Back row left to right: James Moore, Liz Ryder, Barbara Radigan, Kathy Burns. Front row left to right: Barb Welles, Banu Moore, and Alise Irwin. Not pictured: Larry Slater.



JOIN THE AGING IN PLACE MEMBERSHIP CLUB TODAY!

In an effort to broaden the level of interest in and support for SSSF and Aging in Place, the Board recently voted to create an Aging in Place Membership Club. The introductory materials have been developed and membership forms will be mailed with the upcoming issue of Second Season.

For a nominal fee of \$5 or more, members will receive an Aging in Place packet including a subscription to our Aging in Place newsletter and an Aging in Place checklist which features safety tips and other ideas to help you stay at home. Also included will be materials so that you can do your own long term care checkup, a File of Life or Sharing Your Wishes Health File, and an SSSF magnet.

By joining, you can also bring hope to older people by helping us provide ramps, meals, in-home care, and transportation through the Office for the Aging where needed.

For more information on the Aging in Place Membership Club, please contact me at lindat@co.steuben.ny.us or write to me at SSSF, 3 Pulteney East Square, Bath, NY 14810. You can also call me at 607-664-2298.

Thank you in advance for joining the Club and for becoming a part of a movement that helps seniors to achieve their dream of Aging in Place in Steuben County.



URBANA UPDATE

SSSF's newest Aging in Place project in the Town of Urbana is rolling along. Our Advisory group consisting of Bernie Ryan, Mary Jo Hanna, Diane Peacock, Christine Kolo, and Bruce White worked with Coordinator Kathy Burns to refine and send out an Aging in Place survey in late April. To date 100 completed surveys have been returned, a phenomenal 45% return rate, and the number is still climbing. This level of response clearly demonstrates the level of interest older Urbana residents and their families have in Aging in Place; continuing to live in their own homes and community. The top needs identified to date are: 1. Transportation, 2. General handyman, 3. Home health care/personal care aide, 4. House cleaning, and 5. Filling out health insurance forms. A complete report of this survey will be available for our next newsletter.

SSSF INVESTS IN RAMPS

The Board of Directors of Steuben Senior Services Fund (SSSF) recently approved a \$2000 donation to the Office for the Aging (OFA) to assist volunteer groups countywide* with the cost of materials needed to build ramps for individual seniors who need improved access to and from their homes. In past years, OFA received state and federal funds to assist with these costs, but those governmental resources have dried up in 2012.

As people age and frequently have mobility issues, many begin using walkers and wheelchairs, thus compromising their ability to get out of their home. Thanks to several volunteer groups, a ramp can be installed, allowing the person to go to doctors' appointments, to visit others, to go for a ride and so forth.

The good news is that, using mostly recycled material, the average cost of a ramp is under \$350. While some of the ramp recipients are able to pay for the materials, many are not. This is when the SSSF funds will be utilized.

If you would like to join us in our endeavor to ensure ramps for all seniors who need them, please send your gift to SSSF at 3 East Pulteney Square, Bath, NY 14810. Help us help others age in place through the installation of a ramp.

*The City of Corning does not permit volunteer groups to build ramps.

Editor's Note: At the same time that SSSF is Building a Resource for Aging in Place for Steuben County, a small, but steadily growing group of older citizens has created their own Aging in Place organization serving the Corning Area--CAAIP. SSSF is working cooperatively with this organization to further our individual, but complementary missions. Read how CAAIP is promoting the case for Aging in Place.

INTRODUCING CORNING AREA AGING IN PLACE -Contributed by Anne Darling, President CAAIP

Pictured Left to Right: Anne Darling,
President CAAIP, Linda M, Tetor,
SSSF, & Judy Garrett, VP CAAIP



CAAIP is a relatively new group in Corning. It began three years ago when Dix & Belle McDonald and Anne Darling saw a New York Times article about a group in Boston who had a new idea about aging. They wanted to remain in their own homes rather than move to a retirement community, assisted living, etc. as long as they could, but realized they probably would need some help along the way. The Boston group put it this way:

"They all wanted to remain at home, even after transportation and household chores became difficult or dangerous, the point at which many older people quit familiar surroundings. They also wanted to avoid dependence on adult children. They were unwilling to be herded by developers into cookie-cutter senior housing and told what to do and when to do it by social workers half their age. They had no intention of giving up the Brahms Requiem at St. Paul's Chapel for a singalong at the old folks' home, or high tea at the Ritz-Carlton for lukewarm decaf in the "country kitchens" that are ubiquitous in retirement communities."

The Boston group decided to band together, each paying dues, and using the money to hire a manager. Their manager would locate trusted, vetted helpers of all sorts (repairmen, household helpers, etc.) and arrange for the help they needed. Where it was suitable, they also volunteered to help each other. All of this led to social & educational opportunities, too.

We thought this was a great idea, but would it work in Corning as well as it did in Boston?

With Dix leading the way, we decided to find out. We consulted the Office for the Aging, Corning Community College & Corning Enterprises, for starters. We got encouragement everywhere; there are statistically enough families to support such an effort; the Office for the Aging was already working on some grants for such an effort; and Corning Enterprises thought it enough of a community benefit to support our effort, as did the Ti-Ger Foundation.

So we went to work. An initial core group of 10 families soon grew to 30. We studied, worked and planned how to do something which had never been tried in a semi-rural area like ours. After a summer of hard work, we succeeded in gaining 501(c)(3) non-profit status from the IRS, meaning donations to us are tax deductible. We also invited Jane Nyce, the Director of "Staying Put in New Canaan" to speak to us about how such an organization could work. Everyone who heard her was quickly convinced how valuable such an organization could be

Meanwhile, things are changing fast nationwide. There is growing realization that the number of retirees will soon double, once the "baby boomers" come of age, so to speak. Many new and attractive options for Aging in Place are appearing. We learned about co-housing; universal design; geriatric case managers; expanded social services & transportation options, to name a few. Many businesses are entering the "Aging in Place" field, as well. Even Medicare may soon play a part.

In 2011, we surveyed a selected list of 250 households to assess their interest in an "Aging in Place" organization. We received 50 positive responses. However, that number is not yet enough for us to become operational and self sustaining.

For the time being, we decided to become local advocates for Aging in Place; and to host a series of speakers on subjects of interest to retirees. These talks have been well attended and our list of interested households has grown. Please join us! We are a new, pioneering,

grass roots organization still in the making. We welcome new ideas, and hope to soon become operational.

“I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.”
Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to John Adams
August 1, 1816



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