



Project Independence (P.I.) 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. Call 311 or (516) 869-6311 for more information.

Mineola/Williston Park PI Office Open For Business!



Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman announced the opening of the Mineola/Williston Park Project Independence office at a standing-room-only gathering of community leaders at the Mineola Public Library on January 19. The new office, co-located at 158 Third Street in Mineola with the large senior services agency, JASA, opened in early February. North Shore/LIJ nurse Lisa Quick and JASA social worker Rebecca DeBono will staff the office; respond to 311 calls from seniors in the area; conduct home visits; do blood pressure screenings, group and individual counseling; organize educational “health chats” and provide information and referral services. They can be reached by calling 311 or (516) 869-6311.

Mineola/Williston Park residents have already accessed the range of Project Independence services including the taxi transportation program for food shopping and medical visits, to the tune of more than 2000 rides between May and December of 2011. The local office makes access to services even more convenient for local seniors. Project Independence now staffs neighborhood offices in five communities throughout North Hempstead.

Don't Bequeath the Clutter

By Jackie Shenkman

I spent weeks going through a small studio apartment of a beloved aunt after she died in her late eighties. She lived alone and had no children. She was meticulous and threw out the garbage three times a day. It was a pleasure to visit her neat, clean and orderly home. Yet when I opened the closets, the

cupboards and the medicine cabinet, I knew I would be giving up the precious time usually spent with my family to deal with hundreds of cookbooks and handwritten recipes; dozens of partially full spice jars; boxes of plastic bags; piles of sheets, pillowcases and blankets; rolls and rolls of gauze; *Continued on page 2*



Jon Kaiman
Supervisor



Viviana Russell
Councilwoman
Dist. 1



Thomas K. Dwyer
Councilman
Dist. 2



Angelo P. Ferrara
Councilman
Dist. 3



Anna M. Kaplan
Councilwoman
Dist. 4



Lee R. Seeman
Councilwoman
Dist. 5



Dina De Giorgio
Councilwoman
Dist. 6



Leslie Gross
Town Clerk



Charles Berman
Receiver of Taxes

Don't Bequeath the Clutter

By Jackie Shenkman

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and papers, papers, papers. And I wasn't coping with a large house filled with the stuff accumulated over years by a family. Then and there, I vowed to spare my own kids that daunting, overwhelming and emotionally draining task.

It can be very cathartic and liberating to de-clutter your home before it becomes a family responsibility. If you haven't used the item in one year, let it go, and forget excuses like:

- I may need it in the future
- It was a great deal or it was so expensive.
- It was given to me or made for me by someone I love.
- If I discard this, I'll regret it.

De-cluttering experts suggest starting small with one area, drawer or cupboard. Empty the entire contents. Make three piles, bags or boxes labeled **KEEP** (I love it, I need it, I use it), **DONATE** (someone else can use/enjoy it), **DISCARD** (toss it out this instant). Avoid a **MAYBE** pile; it usually ends up transferred from one spot to another. **If in doubt, throw it out.** Get rid of the donate and discard items as quickly as possible to avoid second thoughts. Ask your children or grandchildren if they want the items you are saving for them. If so, give them away now!

Collections, mementos, treasures – keep the best, toss the rest. Take a picture of your granddaughter with the artwork she gave you or your grandson with the seashells he gathered for you. Save the picture, not the “stuff.” Keep only a few of the very special

cards, letters and gifts from your children. Display one or two of your unique items to enjoy. Give yourself permission to get rid of things you once may have cherished.

Maintain the de-cluttered home – STOP bringing anything home that you don't need or don't have a place for. Pass up those great deals and BOGO (buy one, get one free) offers. For every item you bring home, discard two!

“Clutter blind?” The term is used by psychologist Dr. Randy Frost, a clutter and hoarding expert, who notes that some people don't see what the rest of us do when looking at the same pile of stuff. The risk of falling, a leading cause of hospitalization for seniors, increases if paths and spaces are not clear. Expired medicines and old food are also safety hazards.

Enjoy the community! Stop wasting time and accumulating, storing, searching for and rearranging stuff that's not needed. Join Project Independence health chats, social groups, informational seminars and volunteer opportunities. For more info on how to say goodbye to all that stuff, call 311 or (516) 869-6311.

More Resources on De-cluttering:

*National groups like **Clutterers Anonymous** and **NAPO (National Organization of Professional Organizers)**

***The Hoarder in You: How to Live a Happier, Healthier, Uncluttered Life** by Dr. Robin Zaslo

***Seven Layers of Organization: De-Clutter Your Home** by Christopher Lowell

*Any book or article on the subject by **Dr. Randy Frost**, Smith College, Northampton Mass. rfrost@smith.edu

***What Are We Going to Do With All the Stuff We've Saved?** By Hazel M. Pachtman, Project Independence PIONEER, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2010

*To donate books in good condition, call (516) 353-3141 for **free** pick-up.

Visit our website: www.tonhprojectindependence.net.
Email us at: projectindependence@northhempsteadny.gov.

A Message From Supervisor Jon Kaiman and the Town Council



Dear Friends:

Earlier in the year, I was proud to deliver my ninth State of the Town message, and I want to share with PIONEER readers some of that information, because you have made Project Independence one of the Town's greatest achievements.

Our population has grown to 227,000, of which we estimate 50,000 are age 60 or older. In population, we are the seventh largest municipality in New York State, out of approximately 1500 towns, cities and villages. We have been recognized as being one of the top 100 best places to live in America, and the second of the top 25 healthiest places to retire. Based on the Town's conservative fiscal management practices, Moody's upgraded our bond rating to Aa1, the highest credit rating in our history. Strong management practices also led to an upgrade by Standard and Poor's.

Like all towns, cities and villages in New York State and across America, North Hempstead remains concerned about the economy and its impact on our municipal finances as well as our residents' pocketbooks. We continue to budget conservatively and cautiously, while at the same time realizing that we must maintain our infrastructure, provide essential services, meet the needs of our local residents and invest dollars to solve community problems and make long-term improvements.

The State of the Town message noted our award-winning advances in the area of recycling and environmental protection; our success in obtaining millions of dollars in state and federal grants; our park improvements which have led to millions in revenues; our improved security and emergency management operations; our infrastructure maintenance and enhancements; and many other reasons to be proud of our Town.

But I always come back to Project Independence and the extraordinary partnership with our Town seniors. Last year, we reached a new high, with almost 25,000 calls into Project Independence via 311. Our seniors are better able to age in place through an ever-expanding network of visiting nurses and social workers, home improvement assistance, and an exciting public-private partnership that provides medical and shopping transportation for our older residents. We now have local offices in five of the seven PI regions, having opened the Mineola/Williston Park office in February. Six vibrant, enthusiastic advisory committees meet each month with Project Independence staff to offer ideas for improving existing services and starting new and needed ones. Any senior can join a local advisory committee by calling 311 or (516) 869-6311. Thank you for your participation, and keep those 311 calls coming!



Good health to all!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Kaiman".

Roslyn Harbor Senior Wins PI Poster Contest

Donata Stern of Roslyn Harbor was the winner of the Project Independence poster contest with her multi-media depiction of PI services. A panel of local artists and PI members served as judges. Runners up were Nelly Mizrahi, Edith Karlin and Beverly Sternlieb of Great Neck; Alicia McCarvill, Regina Finch, Albert Chen, Keli Panos and Barbara Silbert of Port Washington; and Tootly Ulanoff of Roslyn. Winners were announced at the fabulous PI Holiday Party in December. Posters will be reproduced and displayed at PI locations around Town. Thanks to all the wonderful artists and judges!



(L to R) Town Clerk, Leslie Gross; Project Independence Poster Contest winner, Donata Stern and Receiver of Taxes, Charles Berman.

Tipping, Please!

To all residents using the Project Independence taxi service for food shopping and medical visits: tipping your driver is,



of course, up to you, but it is very much appreciated by the drivers. If you do decide to tip, when considering the amount, please calculate it based upon what the ride would actually cost if you were not using the PI service. Thanks!

Do You Do Snow Removal?

Snow removal is a major challenge for our older residents. Project Independence is developing a referral list of businesses and individuals throughout the Town who do snow removal. If you want to be

on that list, please call 311 or (516) 869-6311, or send your information to Project Independence, Department of Services for the Aging, Town of North Hempstead, 470 Old Westbury Road, Roslyn Heights 11577. Please include the following details:

- 1) Your contact information
- 2) The area you serve (i.e. Roslyn, Great Neck, Westbury, etc)
- 3) Your rates
- 4) How much notice you need for same day service, second day service, etc.



Donate Your Books

Call (516) 353-3141 to donate your books to a variety of helping agencies. Books – in good condition only, please – will be picked up at your home.



Great Neck Vets Club

Mel Sachs, coordinator of the Veteran's Club at the Great Neck Senior Center at 80 Grace Avenue, wants all local veterans of WW II and the Korean War, their family members and friends, to join the Club. The group meets at the Center on the second Friday of each month at 2 p.m. The club features interesting and entertaining guest speakers and refreshments. Call (516) 487-0025, or 311, for more information.

Visit our website: www.tonhprojectindependence.net.
Email us at: projectindependence@northhempsteadny.gov.

d Pieces

Resource Room Open at PI HQ

Hundreds of documents, brochures and government publications on issues of interest to the Town's older residents are now available in the Resource Room at Project Independence Headquarters at 470 Old Westbury Road, Roslyn Heights. Information on health and mental health services, home care, elder law, estate planning, residential programs and more is on display. Two computers with internet access are also available, as well as a CCTV/magnifier for folks with low vision. The Resource Room is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on holidays. Call 311 or (516) 869-6311 to be sure, or if you want to volunteer to help staff the Resource Room. Special thanks to committee members Carol Parker, Bernadette Lohse and Joan Linden.

**The Project Independence
Pioneer newsletter is issued four
times a year, in March, June,
September and December.
Send your releases and
announcements to:**

**Pioneer Editor
Project Independence
470 Old Westbury Road
Roslyn Heights NY 11577**

Trapped Behind a Wall of Silence

By Otto Lohse

There are many people who are trapped behind a wall of silence, unable to express their knowledge or emotions. Recently, I saw a segment on *60 Minutes* that opened my eyes to the problem, but also to possible solutions.

A tablet computer like the iPad is being used to help children with autism communicate their wants and needs. The happy expressions on



their faces were priceless. The benefits apply to people with Cerebral Palsy, Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) and other conditions that impair our ability to communicate. My thoughts immediately turned to how this technology can be utilized by seniors who have communication difficulties because of strokes, Parkinson's disease, etc.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

(AAC) is a field focused on achieving the most effective communication possible for individuals coping with communication difficulties and related needs. You don't have to be a technical guru to benefit from AAC and to gain enhanced social interaction, improved feelings of self-worth and better quality of life for yourself or a loved one. One of the developments is an electronic picture board, which in some cases has the option to output speech. Many other options are available, based on the capability and needs of the individual and those of attending family members and/or caregivers.

Each display contains symbols for the people, places, objects, feelings, actions and other relevant vocabulary items for a specific activity or routine. There are many variables that can be customized based upon needs. When the symbol on the first screen is touched, another screen of related pictures appears to refine the request.

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Get Your Mobility Management Guide



Thanks to a grant from the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council New Freedom Program, administered by the New York State Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration, Project Independence has produced the *Transportation Resource Guide for Seniors: How to Get Around the Town of North Hempstead*. The 100 page guide includes all the details

about the PI taxi transportation program and how to use it; LIRR large-type station maps and other MTA information; tips on driving for seniors in all kinds of weather; applications for Reduced Fare Metro Cards, Able-Ride, Non-Driver ID cards and much more. For your copy, or to reserve copies for your organization, call 311 or (516) 869-6311.



The Children's Plea for Peace: A New Home for Historic "Stuff"

By Hazel M. Pachtman

In 1961, American school children were interrupted during class to practice hiding under their desks in case of a nuclear attack. Alarming rhetoric in the media only exacerbated the situation, confusing parents and children. My friend Fran Wunderlich and I decided to compose a petition for children's signatures, asking President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev to make peace, not war. Thousands of signatures from students in New Hyde Park and Great Neck High Schools were collected. Word quickly spread, and students from around the U.S., Japan, Great Britain and India signed our petitions, which we delivered to Dr. Ralph Bunche at the United Nations Plaza. Our children marched with us, with homemade placards begging our leaders to make peace, not war.



All the material (petitions, pictures, articles, letters, and photos) that I collected and saved from the Children's Plea for Peace 50 years ago was recently on display at the Great Neck Library and will now be archived there and made available to the public.

**Tune in every Friday morning from 10 a.m.
to noon for the Project Independence
Radio Show on WCWP 88.1 FM!**

Visit our website: www.tonhprojectindependence.net.
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Town Council Has Two New Members and a Majority of Women!

Project Independence welcomes newly elected Town Council Members Dina M. De Giorgio (Dist. 6) and Anna M. Kaplan (Dist. 4). They join Viviana Russell (Dist. 1) and Lee Seeman (Dist. 5) to form a female majority for the first time in the Council's history. The male members are Thomas K. Dwyer (Dist. 2) and Angelo P. Ferrara (Dist. 3).



Councilwoman De Giorgio's Port Washington District includes the villages of Baxter Estates, Manorhaven, Port Washington North and Sands Point, as well as Flower Hill, Plandome, Plandome Heights and Plandome Manor. A resident of the Town of North Hempstead for 15 years, she and her husband, Joe D'Alonzo, have two children.

Councilwoman De Giorgio is a graduate of Fordham University, summa cum laude, and Fordham Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1993. She has dedicated the last 16 years to raising her family, while also developing her Port Washington law practice, where she specializes in family law and real estate. She is a member of the Legal Resource Network, where she serves as a pro bono attorney for the Nassau County

Coalition Against Domestic Violence. In connection with this work, she was featured in an article on the New York State Bar Association website in December, 2010 (<http://nysbar.com/blogs/TheGoodWeDo/2010/12/dinasstoryprobonoservicet.html>), Councilwoman De Giorgio is a member of the New York State Bar Association and the Nassau County Women's Bar Association. "I believe in government being accessible and accountable to the people we are here to serve," She told the PIONEER. "To that end, I plan to focus on making government more accessible to seniors through the use of technology and better distribution of information."



Councilwoman Anna M. Kaplan's district includes portions of Great Neck and Manhasset. She is a 21-year resident of Great Neck and currently resides in Kensington with her husband Darren and daughters Sarah and Taylor. In 2007, she was elected trustee of the Great Neck Public Library District, where she served as both vice-president of the Board and chairperson of the Policy and Bylaws Committee. She played a key role in the acquisition and renovation of space for the library's new Station Branch. She has also served on the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals and has been active with the Great Neck Public Schools PTA for the last decade. She has been honored for

her service to the community by the Nassau County Legislature, the Nassau County Comptroller's Office and the Town of North Hempstead. Councilwoman Kaplan was born in Iran. When the Islamic Revolution took place in 1979, though only 12 years old, she was sent to the U. S. as part of an international effort to help the Jewish children of Iran leave the country. She lived temporarily with a foster family in Chicago while waiting for her family to be reunited. She is a graduate of the Stern College for Women at Yeshiva University and the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law. "I sought election to the Council as a way to give back to the community which has given me so much," Councilwoman Kaplan told the PIONEER. "I am proud to work hard and give my constituents a strong and independent voice in Town governance."

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Town of North Hempstead
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A Message From the Editor

Dear Readers:

Although I retired in February as the Commissioner of the Department of Services for the Aging (DOSA), I continue as PIONEER editor, a job I've done and loved since our first issue in 2006. I want to thank all our readers and PI members for your enthusiastic encouragement and involvement with our programs. I want to acknowledge the fabulous staff at DOSA, especially Acting Commissioner Paula Uhl, whose compassion and professionalism set the standard for all of us. I am grateful as well to the Town Council members who have unanimously supported our initiatives. And most of all, thanks to Supervisor Jon Kaiman, who gave me the opportunity to be a part of this extraordinary venture we call Project Independence – for his vision, leadership and dedication.

Evelyn Roth

Trapped Behind a Wall of Silence

By Otto Lohse

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As noted, voice output can be an option. Symbols may be organized by category, groups, people, places, feelings, foods, drinks and action words.

The devices vary greatly in size, capability and costs, but you don't have to be computer-literate to use these tools.

How do you get started on improving communications and tearing down the wall of silence?

- Evaluation of an individual's abilities, limitations and communication needs is necessary in order to select the right AAC technique. This may be done by a speech pathologist, but could involve other team members.
- Funding: VA pays for some devices and some insurance companies pay. Medicare may pay 80%; Medicaid, 100%. Organizations like United Cerebral Palsy may lend equipment to try out.
- You can learn more about getting started by going to <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/AAC/>

As always, for further information or assistance, call Project Independence at 311 or (516) 869-6311.

Town of North Hempstead

Project 
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