

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.

WRINGING YOUR HANDS OVER RINGING IN YOUR EARS – COPING WITH TINNITUS

By Lawrence Cardano, Au.D., Doctor of Audiology

(This article provides general information and is not intended to provide medical advice.)

For about the last year of his life, my father suffered from tinnitus. He was a fun-loving, outgoing person, but tinnitus made him anxious, nervous and depressed. I knew a lot about tinnitus from my training as an audiologist, but seeing my dad suffering motivated me to take the potentially debilitating condition more seriously. The following is basic information about tinnitus that I think everyone should know.

What is tinnitus? The word tinnitus refers to a sound that is heard by an individual but is not present in the environment. It can sound like many different things – ringing, etc. I have even had patients who describe their tinnitus as sounding like music. In some cases they say they can identify the song! In most cases, tinnitus is not a symptom of any dangerous condition.

Who experiences tinnitus? Tinnitus can affect anyone. However, it is more common among the elderly. An estimated 30 million people in the U.S. have tinnitus, and the incidence is estimated to be as high as 26.7% for people ages 65 to 84. Although the majority of people with tinnitus having hearing loss, many do not.

Causes of tinnitus Although the exact physiological cause of tinnitus is still debated among researchers, there are a number of known contributing factors. These include exposure to loud noise, head trauma,

and medical conditions such as ear infections, brain tumors and hypertension. Medications that can contribute to the development of tinnitus include loop diuretics, antidepressants, non-steroid anti-inflammatories and platinum-based chemotherapy drugs.

The impact of tinnitus Tinnitus can interfere with concentration, job performance and sleep. In some cases it can lead to depression and anxiety disorders.

Tinnitus treatment options Before considering any treatment, a tinnitus sufferer should have a thorough medical evaluation to rule out any medical condition that might be related to the tinnitus.

In spite of advertisements you might have seen, there is no known “cure” for tinnitus. The goal of treatment is to reduce how much one is aware of it and to reduce its effects on quality of life.

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A Message From Supervisor Jon Kaiman



Dear Friends:

It's time to mark your calendars for the second regional Aging in Place in Suburbia conference – Wednesday, August 21, 2013, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the North Hempstead Yes We Can Community Center in Westbury.

The topic will be **Living Well with Technology** – an exploration of tech advances in medicine, health care, transportation, home construction, fitness and other areas of particular concern to suburban seniors who want to age in place.

Those of you who were among the 800 attendees at the first conference held at Hofstra University in 2011: **Aging in Place in Suburbia – Strategies for Success**, will remember an extraordinary, standing- room-only event.

Once again we are partnering with Hofstra, North Shore/LIJ Health System and other collaborators. And once again we expect almost 100 exhibitors on hand to demonstrate and answer questions about their products and programs. Not-for-profit agencies will have wonderful information about how to access benefits and services. Health care providers will display the very latest in technological advances in the medical field. Companies marketing products ranging from assistive and accessibility devices to the most sophisticated monitoring and personal safety equipment will want to show you their wares.



Shown from left to right, signing a poster for the first Project Independence Aging in Place in Suburbia conference are Lawrence Levy, Executive Dean, National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University; Jon Kaiman, Supervisor, Town of North Hempstead; Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator; Michael Dowling, President and CEO, North Shore/LIJ Health System and Stuart Rabinowitz, President, Hofstra University.

Attendance and lunch are once again free. Transportation will be available from many central locations around the Town of North Hempstead. And a compelling roster of speakers is being organized now.

Please reserve your spot quickly. Call 311 or 869-6311 to register. We'll see you on August 21st, if not before. Good health to all!



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



HI-TECH OR HIGH ANXIETY?

By Project Independence member Bob Cannella with Lorraine Trapp

I just finished reading a 500-page book about iPhones 4 and 5 with the Siri voice activated application. It also talked about iPads, iPods, tablets, etc. It is mind boggling to learn what these devices can do. However, they become obsolete very quickly. In fact, today, technology changes so rapidly that your equipment is obsolete almost before the warranty runs out!

Take digital cameras. In 2006 they had two to five megapixels. Today, digital cameras have up to 64 megapixels and are so complex that most owners just use the automatic function. Computers with huge hard drives became popular in the mid-to-late 1990's, and they were very expensive. Their random access memory (RAM) was measured in kilobytes and if you were lucky, you had 512 kilobytes. They were very slow and relied on telephone connections (modems, etc.). Today, desktop computers (which are getting scarce) hold at least one terabit, equal to about 1000 gigabytes or more.

Compare these advances with the typewriter, which lasted more than 100 years before becoming obsolete. The vinyl record turntable lasted about 50 years. Audio and video cassette tapes lasted about 20 years. Even the 8-track tapes lasted only a few years before becoming obsolete. And the new stuff becomes dauntingly complex to use. Today's smart phone or android has GPS locating, internet access, still and video cameras, and credit card and banking applications, all accessible via the phone anywhere in the world. And technology is only going to get more astonishing and complicated. There are already smart cars, planes and trains that drive themselves, robots replacing workers, telemedicine and more.

We are fascinated by this stuff but there are lots of attendant problems. As new devices with multiple applications are snapped up, the older models languish on store shelves, companies struggle and people lose jobs. In addition, our privacy is severely compromised. If you have a smart phone with the GPS turned on, you are traceable anywhere in the world. Information about you is being compiled with every click of your keyboard or mouse. Further, too many people become addicted to their phones, developing the dangerous habits of using them while driving or even walking in traffic.

Today's kids start texting at age five or younger. Teenagers and young adults are on the phones up to 12 hours or more a day! Our society is losing its ability to communicate verbally and to write literately. Years ago, you would meet socially at a dance or club. Now you meet on the internet instead.

Technology generally makes things easier and quicker. But for those of us who didn't grow up in the digital age, these devices are complex and difficult to master. Being a senior, I have a computer and a pay-as-you-go cell phone. Many of us still prefer snail mail, regular phones and visiting in person with friends and family. If you want technology, by all means, get what you can afford and use easily. And, if you need advice, ask the grandchildren!

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

**You can also visit the LIU-Post website, wcwp.org, to hear the program live,
or catch up with past shows at tonhprojectindependence.net.**



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Treatment options include:

- **Medical treatment** – Certain anti-anxiety drugs, antidepressants and antihistamines are sometimes prescribed.
- **Alternative therapy** – Suggested alternative therapies may include Ginkgo Biloba or B vitamins. However, there is no proof that these are effective.
- **Sound therapy** – Specially designed sounds can help make tinnitus less noticeable. These sounds can be generated by wearable devices, including some hearing aids, or non-wearable devices like table-top sound generators.
- **Counseling** – Counseling can help by teaching coping strategies and making it clear that tinnitus is not dangerous. Removing the association of tinnitus with danger can reduce the anxiety it causes.
- **Hearing Aids** – Many studies show that tinnitus sufferers with hearing loss often find the use of hearing aids very helpful because they help people hear sounds in the environment. These environmental sounds can “drown out” the tinnitus.

Correspondence and questions can be addressed to DrCardano@HearingCenterofLI.com

SENIOR SCAMS AND SCHEMES: AT THE ATM

Bernard Hardy* is a retired New York City police detective-turned security consultant who instructs as he entertains senior groups at our centers, and on our radio show, about scams and schemes aimed at separating us from our money. Awareness and alertness is your best protection. This is the second of a three-part series.

Choose a Safe Time for Your ATM Visit: Try to do your ATM banking during daylight hours in well-lit, well- trafficked spots.

Be Observant: The most important key to using your ATM card safely is to be observant and look around for any suspicious persons or activity near the ATM machine. If you see anything that looks suspicious, go to another machine or return later.

Have Your Card in Hand: It is a good idea to have your ATM card in your hand and ready to use as you approach the ATM machine so that you do not have to spend extra time at the machine taking the card out of your wallet or purse.

Shield Your Transaction: Use your body, hand or an object to shield the ATM keyboard when you enter your PIN. Do not give someone else the opportunity to see the number that you are entering.

Don't Leave Your Receipt: Be sure to take your receipt or transaction record with you when you leave.

Put Away Your Cash: Put your cash away immediately in your pocket, wallet or purse. Do not display or count it at the machine. You can always count it later.

- Learn more or schedule a presentation to your group at www.interstateincorporated.com or (516) 338-2840



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CARING CORNER

With this issue, the PIONEER begins a new feature called "Caring Corner" where we will present brief, actual case histories using fictitious names, drawn from the files of our PI nurses and social workers. Read Caring Corner to learn more about the services offered by PI. Then call 311 or 869-6311 if you need to access those services.

A WIDOW'S TRANSITION

Mrs. R. reached out to Project Independence one month after the death of her husband and a home visit by our social worker was arranged. Expressing feelings of sadness, loneliness and isolation, Mrs. R. explained that she had been married for 56 years to a wonderful man and doubted that she would ever find another significant relationship. She felt abandoned and hopeless about the future. She didn't have any children or relatives in the community and had disconnected from her temple and friends after her husband's death. A retired school teacher who spoke

lovingly about her career, Mrs. R. had traveled extensively. Sharing her worldly adventures triggered a light in her eyes. Mrs. R. and the PI social worker implemented a plan which involved counseling and concrete services.

Supportive and adjustment counseling led to an understanding of the changes she was experiencing and assisted Mrs. R. through her transition. Before long, with the help of PI staff, she was volunteering at the community library and adult learning center, and teaching to intergenerational age groups. Encouraged by the PI social worker to join a memoir writing class, Mrs. R. is enthusiastically writing about her life and world travels. She has rejoined her local temple. In addition, Mrs. R. was connected to concrete services like the PI food and medical transportation programs. An entitlement review by PI staff resulted in her contacting the VA for services provided to surviving spouses of veterans.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am a senior citizen! I just picked up your Newsletter Vol. 7 Number 1 and after reading the article on the back page, "E-Mail After 50," I'm writing you to please support the United States Post Office, their employees etc. I don't have E-mail, nor am I computer literate and still use my tape cassette recorder! By choice! I think there are plenty of others like myself. I do enjoy writing my letters using suitable stationery and appropriate stamps plus calling my family, friends and business acquaintances person to person!! I think it's wonderful to offer instruction and classes to those who really want to do it and have the time to do it and to update their lives, from Project Independence and other services. It truly is a wonderful and different world we are living in, but some of us are either too stubborn to change or really don't care to!!

Sincerely,
"Old Fashioned" Merle Gutterman Holstein

The editor also received a telephone call via 311 from a reader who thanked us for the article about scams and schemes in Vol. 7, No. 1. As she was reading it, she received a phone call from a salesperson urging her to give her credit card information on the phone to purchase a personal safety device. "If I hadn't just read the article, I might have agreed because the caller seemed so sweet," she said.

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



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



Bits and Pieces

Walking and Pedestrian Safety Update

The June 2012 issue of the PIONEER featured an article about pedestrian safety by Carol Steiner. Jerry Peretsman, PI member from Great Neck, advises that the Will Rogers Institute has published a brochure called Walking for Better Health at Any Age which is available by calling (877) 957-7575 or through www.wrinstance.org. You'll find worthwhile tips on how to get started, either on your own or with a group, walking for better health. Important pedestrian safety tips are also included. Jerry reminds us that when walking around Town, wear bright or reflective colors to heighten your visibility. The sunshine beckons – get started today. Remember – SITTING IS THE NEW SMOKING!

Big Bands and Swing

The radio station that broadcasts our PI radio show, Project Independence and You (every Friday morning from 10:00 a.m. to Noon), – WCWP.org or 88.1 FM – now features the music we grew up with. The sounds of the big bands and swing time can be heard from 7:00 a.m. to noon on Monday mornings and from 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. Tuesdays through Fridays. Senior Talk Radio programming follows from 10:00 a.m. to noon, Tuesdays through Fridays. Tune in every weekday morning to WCWP.org or 88.1 FM for a bit of nostalgia, some really fascinating talk and information, and on the PI show – a half hour segment of old time radio classics every Friday.

Help at Home – Smoke Alarms

PI's popular Help at Home program can assist you with changing the batteries in your smoke alarms. The Help at Home program is a partnership with The Rehabilitation Institute (TRI) of Westbury where people with developmental and other disabilities are trained for jobs in the community. If a PI member needs assistance with minor home repairs, yard work, moving heavy objects or other tasks like smoke alarm maintenance, a team of TRI trainees with their supervisor will come and do the job. The first step is a call to 311 or 869-6311 to schedule a visit from PI to assess the job and make sure it's appropriate for the Help at Home program. Then the work is scheduled – usually within a matter of days. So make sure those smoke alarms are in good working order for the coming season. Help is just a 311 call away.

Volunteer Vignette by Fran Berger

In 2008, I first visited Cathy as a volunteer for Project Independence. She was 93 years old, frail with poor eyesight and failing health. She was also upbeat, pleasant and confident living in her own home, knowing she had the services of Project Independence available to her. Every week I'd visit and we shared our thoughts on current happenings, politics, religion etc. We laughed, exchanged memories and just enjoyed each other's company like old friends do. I came to love her, and I think the feeling was mutual. Over the last five years, my life was greatly enriched having her as a friend, and we created a very special bond, one which I will never forget now that she is gone. *Volunteer one hour of your time, each week, for the Project Independence Friendly Visitor Program by calling 311 or 869-6311.*



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Yes We Can “CarFit” You!

The PI CarFit program is now available at Project Independence locations around the Town of North Hempstead – in Westbury at the Yes We Can Community Center on Garden St., in Great Neck at the Great Neck Social Center on Grace Ave., in Port Washington at the TONH Community Center on Manorhaven Blvd., in Roslyn at the DOSA Headquarters on Old Westbury Road, and in New Hyde Park at Clinton G. Martin Park on Marcus Avenue. CarFit was developed by the American Society on Aging in collaboration with AARP, The American Occupational Therapy Assn. and AAA. Our Project Independence senior Mobility Manager has been trained to provide a quick, comprehensive review of how well you and your vehicle work together. The entire process takes only about 20 minutes and covers your comfort behind the wheel, your line of sight, the position of your mirrors, your access to gas and brake pedals, the positioning of your seat belt and other checklist items. Then she will assist you to readjust and, if necessary, recommend adaptive devices that can help insure your comfort and safety behind the wheel. Call 311 or 869-6311 to make an appointment for your CarFit review today.

We Need Your Advice

Join the Project Independence Advisory Committee in your community to share your ideas with the staff of the Department of Services for the Aging. What services are needed to facilitate aging in place? How are current programs and services working? How can they be improved? In every community in the Town, PI has an advisory committee which meets once a month at a convenient location. Committee members include local seniors, representatives of faith-based organizations, members of community organizations and others with an interest in our



Supervisor Kaiman (center) confers with members of the Great Neck Project Independence Advisory Committee which meets every month at the Great Neck Social Center on Grace Avenue.

program. Call 311 or 869-6311 to find out when the next meeting in your area will be. Then come, sit in and listen. If you decide you want to sign on to the committee, so much the better.

Stop Throwing Out Pollutants

Town of North Hempstead residents can dispose of household hazardous waste in an environmentally friendly way through the town’s STOP (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) Program. Many people don’t realize that ordinary household products like aerosols and cleaners can be corrosive, explosive or toxic if mixed with some regular household garbage. Check labels for warnings. You can bring pollutants to the North Hempstead Beach Park North Lot at 175 West Shore Road in Port Washington on Saturday, June 8th to dispose of them safely. Pollutants which are accepted include electronic waste, bleach, drain cleaners, fertilizers, photography chemicals, swimming pool chemicals and others. You can also bring any amount of paper for shredding. Call 311 or 869-6311 for more information, or to get the STOP schedule for the year.



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DON'T MISS THESE PROJECT INDEPENDENCE MAIN EVENTS

HEALTH FAIR – Friday, June 7, 2013 – 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Port Washington Community Center, 80 Manorhaven Blvd., Port Washington

- Co-sponsored with North Shore/LIJ Health System, featuring information from many providers of health-related services
 - Complimentary light lunch; homemade baked goods and crafts for sale
-

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR – Friday, July 19, 2013– 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Great Neck Social Center, 80 Grace Avenue, Great Neck

- Information about senior resources from many local service providers
 - Complimentary light kosher lunch.
-

SECOND REGIONAL AGING IN PLACE IN SUBURBIA CONFERENCE AND EXPO: Living Better with Technology – Wednesday, August 21, 2013 – 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Yes We Can Community Center, 141 Garden Street, Westbury

- Expo featuring close to 100 vendors of products and services for seniors
 - Outstanding roster of speakers and panelists
 - Complimentary lunch and some transportation

For more information about these and other events, or to register, call 311 or 869-6311.

LIVE AND LEARN

Topics for PI community education programs include how to purchase and use a cell phone, saving money on energy bills, heart health, brain training, improving balance and preventing falls, writing your autobiography, and many others. PI offers these “Health Chats” and other informational seminars all over town. Join your friends and fellow PI members in warm, pleasant, welcoming surroundings. Call 311 or 869-6311 to check the schedule or visit our website at www.tonhprojectindependence.net.



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