

In this Issue

[Letter from Richard K. Giffen,
ITNAmerica Board of Directors](#)

[Interview with former U.S.
Secretary of Transportation
Norman Mineta](#)

[Meet ITNBluegrass, Our New
Affiliate](#)

[Where in the World is Katherine
Freund?](#)

[The Liberty Mutual and ITNAmerica
Partnership](#)

[News from the Research
Department](#)

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Letter from Richard K. Giffen, ITNAmerica Board of Directors

What Goes Around

The first time I saw the "What Goes Around" advertisement I was impressed. In fact, as one might expect from a clergyperson, I immediately thought how it might be used in a sermon or class as a model for human behavior. This was before I knew ITN was involved. But I emailed the company for a CD copy of the ad. You know what I am talking about, I presume, it is the advertisement you've seen recently...

- Which first shows a lady on a street corner halting a man about to step into a pickup's path;
- Who is noticed by a person at lunch who later assists a mother with a baby buggy;
- Who is observed by a man waiting for a bus who later helps to lift a heavy pan;
- Who is seen by a fellow worker who stops a kid's ball from dribbling into a busy street...

What goes around comes around as the chain of good deeds is linked several times over and we hear the punch line: "When it's people that do the right thing, they call it being responsible; when it's an insurance company they call it [Liberty Mutual](#)." No wonder the advertisement has received awards.

Aren't we proud that Liberty Mutual is ITNAmerica's first national partner! Katherine Freund is right, this is a company with class. And now we are able to say, when it's people that do the right transportation thing for seniors, they call it ITN.

Phil, an ITN volunteer driver for [ITNCharlestonTrident](#), drove our first rider back on November 15, 2006. Recently he won our "ITN Big Wheel" award for being the volunteer driver with the most rides. Phil is a retired airline pilot and he recently recruited two other local retired pilots interested in being trained as ITN volunteer drivers. They call it being responsible.

[South Carolina Aging in Place](#) (SCAIP) is a network of people working to assist Lowcountry older adults to age in place, rather than be forced to move to an institution. Last year SCAIP took on the challenge of recruiting enough ITN volunteer drivers to provide 500 ITN rides in one year. They are more than half way there. They call it being responsible.

Barbara, another ITN volunteer driver, drove 26 rides between December 22 and New Year's Eve (seven rides on December 27!) when most other volunteers were tied up with family commitments. She also gave older adult and vision impaired riders a chance to get out and enjoy the season (and other volunteers a break from driving). They call it being responsible.

Gale Reece from Lexington, Kentucky, telephoned more than a year ago to ask about ITNCharlestonTrident. She had seen the national news about ITN and was impressed. Eventually Gale visited Charleston and saw firsthand the early formation of an ITN affiliate. The result of the word getting around is [ITNBluegrass](#), one of five new ITN affiliates.

What goes around comes around. Let's celebrate the good news of ITN as we hear and tell stories of people doing the right thing. We call it being responsible.

Sincerely,
Rev. Richard K. Giffen
Volunteer and Trustee with ITNCharlestonTrident
Member of ITNAmerica Board of Directors
Founder and former Executive Director of ITNCharlestonTrident



Interview with former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta

*Mr. Mineta shares familiar experience of aging
parents and transportation*

[Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta](#), recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom and a member of ITNAmerica's Council of Advisors, knows first-hand the difficulties of helping a loved one retire from driving.

Secretary Mineta's father stopped driving at the age of 80. His family was lucky that his sister was a school teacher who was able help with tasks that required driving in the afternoons. Many families don't have that option, and as a result eldercare is a primary cause of employee absenteeism.

Secretary Mineta said that it would be easier to have the talk about giving up the keys with a parent if there were alternatives to offer. In urban areas, public and private alternatives might include public transit, paratransit, and taxis, but there are so many areas across the country where these options do not exist.

In the case of Mr. Mineta's 84 year old mother-in-law, "We tried to convince her when she moved from California to Maryland to give up her car." Shipping her car to Maryland cost \$3800. "I said to her, 'Mother, your car isn't worth that much. Sell your car.'" It was worth about \$800. Mr. Mineta questioned whether she would even be able to get a license in Maryland.

But like millions of people, his mother-in-law loves her car. She insisted on shipping her 1995 Mercury Marquis across the country, paying three times what it was worth. When his mother-in-law went to the Department of Motor Vehicles for her license, Mr. Mineta thought "Maybe this will be the show stopper."

Instead, the clerk asked "Do you have a California license?" When she responded "Yes," he told her to stand on the line, took her photo, and handed her a new Maryland license.

"She's been here two years, and I bet she hasn't put 500 miles on that car," Mr. Mineta said. The senior residence where she lives has buses to go to the shopping center and other popular places. The car "sits out there. When she looks out the window, she says, 'My poor baby is out there in the hot sun.'"

So despite the availability of alternative transportation and the cost of maintenance and insurance, Mr. Mineta's mother-in-law prefers to keep her car. She represents the majority of people who fear that they will lose mobility and independence to go when and where they want to go.

Which is exactly why ITN offers transportation 24/7, for any purpose within the service area. People need the reassurance that they can pick up and go. It is seldom that people need a ride at 2 a.m., but because ITN tries to replicate the experience of private car ownership, it is imperative that members know they can go whenever they need to, not just during set hours. It's that reassurance that empowers members to give up their cars. And when people are no longer able to drive safely, this is an important contribution to public health.

When he was in Congress, Mr. Mineta helped write the transportation section of the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#). In the process, he addressed the public policy side of the issue and how public transportation could not fulfill all needs, whether from a financial perspective or in terms of providing the service, and so, "There is a need for a public/private partnership to try and round out, or be a total provider of services," he said.

Mr. Mineta cited ITN as a good example of a private sector service that fills a void. "The public and the private sectors should be able to work together without crowding each other out. There isn't one template or answer to fit all situations, and so the flexibility of a nonprofit private sector approach can really compliment services provided by a public transit agency. There are lots of service needs [a public transit agency] might not be able to provide as efficiently. The ultimate goal is to provide a service ... and so the private sector nonprofit agency might be able to provide some service more efficiently at a lesser cost and provide the kind of service that the traveling public is in need of."

Mr. Mineta also praised the system of incentives that ITN uses for its volunteers: the ability to save credits for their own future transportation needs (Transportation Social Security™), or leverage their volunteer time by donating their earned mileage credits to others in need – so a volunteer helps when they are driving, and helps again when they donate their credits back to the system. Or, an adult child might volunteer and donate their credits to a parent who lives across the country in any community with an ITN affiliate.

"Everyone is going to be facing this issue," Mineta said. "We have an aging population. Instead of thinking about it when you are facing your own mobility issue, it should be part of how to take care of your real estate, execution of your will, health planning, and life insurance. Transportation should be included."



Meet ITN*Bluegrass*, Our New Affiliate

The advent of *ITNBluegrass*[™] can be described with words that start with "g": grassroots, guts, grins, Generations, generosity, and "girls with grit." Or perhaps more precisely on the last one: female Baby Boomers with vision and persistence!

In mid-2006, Executive Director Gale Reece came out of a cave – literally. She was newly retired from an underground document and media storage business that she started and ran for 20 years (in a natural limestone cave!). Looking for a challenging project and with a long-standing interest in aging issues, Gale sought advice from Dr. Robynn Pease, who at the time was program administrator for Lexington-Fayette County's Office of Aging Services. Initially focused on elder housing, Gale said, "I soon realized that one of the most pressing issues facing older adults is the need for reliable and affordable transportation." With that, the two did some research and found out about *ITNAmerica*.

Dr. Pease prepared the application, and once it was accepted, Gale was off to raise the funds necessary to start a *Bluegrass* affiliate. Quickly realizing that raising money is far more enjoyable if you're working with someone else, she hired a small consulting firm in late 2006 to help. This is how she met Laura Dake – now *ITNBluegrass*' deputy director – who wrote grants and letters, ran meetings, approached businesses for donations, managed events and most importantly, recognized the necessity and value of the sustainable, community-supported ITN approach.

One of the more difficult things Gale and Laura dealt with initially was that almost no one in their area had heard much about the Independent Transportation Network. However, their first fundraiser, the "Generations Tea and Style Show" in February 2006, not only raised money but community awareness as well with some great TV, radio and newspaper coverage.

The tea was a lively and lovely Valentine-themed event with wonderful food and music and 120 guests. Laura emceed the style show, featuring local male and female celebrities of different generations (ages 8-77) modeling clothing from several area boutiques. This year's tea on February 10 featured models from ages 3-83!

By July 2007, "Friends of ITN in the *Bluegrass*" had raised almost \$140,000 and became *ITNBluegrass* in September 2007. *ITNBluegrass* is truly a grassroots effort – none of its start-up money came from taxpayer sources. Gale and Laura appreciate the encouragement and generosity of individuals and businesses in the *Bluegrass* as well as three foundations – the Knight and Great Bay Foundations and The Retirement Research Foundation in Chicago (which awarded the affiliate \$50,000).

And now a final "g:" government. In order to begin service, Gale and Laura are seeking an exemption to a Kentucky statute (KRS 281.605) which regulates vehicles for hire. The current law – which was brought to their attention after they had raised their startup money – requires that drivers for hire use vehicles owned and insured by the organization or "certificate holder." This creates an impossible situation: volunteer drivers could not drive their own vehicles, which would not allow the *Bluegrass* affiliate to reach economic sustainability.

It has been quite a journey over the past eight months, and at the moment, the mood is hopeful! The bill (HB204), sponsored by Rep. Susan Westrom (D-Lexington), passed the Kentucky House 95-0 on February 7 and is currently in the Senate Transportation Committee. With any luck, the bill will be voted on favorably in committee and sent to the Senate floor by the end of March. In anticipation, Gale and Laura are meeting with senators and encouraging interested citizens to write letters

supporting the exemption.

If the exemption is granted, ITN*Bluegrass* looks forward to offering rides in July 2008. To find out how you can support the nonprofit service by becoming a charter member, volunteering, donating a vehicle or money or being a voice for change, please call Gale or Laura at (859) 252-8665 or send an email to info@ITNBluegrass.org.



Where in the World is Katherine Freund?

On the way to ITN*America's* first "on-location" board meeting hosted by ITN*Orlando*, Katherine stopped to speak with a group of community leaders interested in ITN affiliation in Sarasota, Florida. Sarasota is a popular retirement community with the largest percentage of older adults in the nation. More than 30% of their population is over 65, with over 45% of all households including someone over 65.

Another characteristic of Sarasota County that would contribute to a vibrant ITN affiliate is its strong spirit of volunteerism. "People are already calling to sign up and drive," said Stewart Stearns, President of [The Community Foundation of Sarasota County](#), noting the strong desire people have to make a meaningful impact on the lives of their older neighbors.

"Seniors fear losing their independence. Giving up mobility changes their lives," said Stearns. "I've seen it so many times. Dear friends go from bad to worse when they can't get around. [ITN] is a way of reviving their mobility."

One of the early players in establishing an ITN affiliate has been the nonprofit [SCOPE](#). SCOPE has acted as a catalyst, convening people around the alternative transportation discussion. Associate Director Suzanne Gregory said, "We've heard over and over again that transportation is a concern. People are fearful that they will lose connections to things and people they care about, and that will have an effect on their physical and mental health."

With strong community involvement assured, SCOPE looked for leadership interest from foundations and nonprofits. "We applied for and received a \$1000 jump-start grant from [Partners for Livable Communities](#) to bring leadership together to have a conversation about how to create an alternative system, and what would it look like." Gregory said. The group explored many other options, "and nothing compared to what ITN had to offer," said Gregory.

Local public transportation also has been supportive of the ITN initiative. "They see this as a piece in the continuum, not competition," said Gregory. Like most areas, Sarasota is auto dependent. Public transportation can't increase service enough, and though paratransit service exists, not everyone qualifies for it.

At the meeting with community leaders, Katherine shared the critical thinking that went into the creation of the ITN model and her vision going forward, including how public policy fits and why reliance on government funding doesn't work.

"ITN is not a social services solution with only limited dollars to do it. This is a market solution. That shifts how you think about it. There is a fee for service and creative ways to underwrite the rest," Gregory said. "The Doubting Thomases came out of the room wanting to be on a steering committee." Everyone understood that ITN is a unique model geared toward bringing community into the solution.

The organizers in Sarasota are currently working on their affiliation agreement. The Community Foundation's role includes funding and forming a steering committee and developing a broad base of support, while the [Jewish Family & Children's Service](#) will step into the lead, as the convening organization, SCOPE, steps back. "We have enough talent to shepherd this through," Gregory said. "It's been a great collaborative process."





ITNAmerica is excited to announce a new major partnership with [Liberty Mutual](#), one of the nation's leading auto, home and life insurers. As the national insurance partner to ITNAmerica and our affiliate communities through 2010, Liberty Mutual will help us create widespread awareness of the mobility issues facing us all as we age.

"ITNAmerica is proud to partner with Liberty Mutual, one of the nation's most respected insurance companies. Liberty brings a deep commitment to safety and responsibility to our focus on dignity and mobility. It is a perfect partnership, and we look forward to working together to bring the ITN model to communities across the nation," said ITNAmerica Founder and President, Katherine Freund.

The main component of our three-year agreement will be Liberty Mutual's community awareness and education efforts to support both the opening of new ITNAmerica affiliates and the work already underway in existing affiliate communities.

"We embrace ITNAmerica's mission to provide a safe and responsible community-based solution to senior mobility issues," said Greg Gordon, Liberty Mutual vice president of Consumer Marketing. "We are excited to help bring ITN affiliates to many more communities over the next three years."

At the core of ITNAmerica's partnership with Liberty Mutual is a shared belief that doing the right thing through responsible acts – no matter how difficult – is something to be celebrated. When it comes to dignified mobility for older people, responsibility takes many forms, for many people. For families, it may mean having a necessary talk with an aging parent about driving; for older people, it may mean moving from the driver's seat to the passenger seat; and for civic minded community members, it may mean signing up as a volunteer to give rides to seniors who wish to maintain their independence and sense of community.

Together, ITNAmerica and Liberty Mutual will advocate responsibility by promoting a sustainable, community-based transportation solution for our nation's seniors.

For more information about our new national insurance partner, please visit www.libertymutual.com.



News from the Research Department

Another Way Physicians Can Save Lives

ITNAmerica recently completed a pilot study sponsored in part by the Silver Century Foundation in collaboration with the Maine Medical Center, the American Medical Association, and Dr. Germaine Odenheimer, a member of the [ITNAmerica Research Group](#)

The study was designed to measure the impact of a training workshop on the knowledge, attitudes and practice behavior of health care practitioners regarding their elderly patients who drive. The research was conducted in Portland, Maine, so we could learn how knowledge about the availability of alternative transportation, such as ITN, impacts the practitioner's willingness to address driving issues with older patients.

Results were promising. Three months after the training workshop, nearly seven in 10 health care practitioners surveyed said they had changed the way they addressed driving issues with their older patients, increased the frequency they discussed driving cessation, and increased the frequency they discussed alternative transportation, such as ITN.

As part of this research project, ITNAmerica created a brochure specifically for physicians because of the important role they play in addressing driving safety with their patients. Changes that often come with age—vision and hearing loss, slower reaction times, chronic illness and medication—can affect driving ability. The problem is that patients might not know this.

The brochure encourages physicians to have the driving talk with their older patients before there is a crisis. It provides some questions to get the conversation started and offers information about easy ways seniors can participate in ITN programs, including Healthy Miles™, in which healthcare providers help to pay for their patients' rides, and CarTrade™, in which older people may trade their cars for rides.

ITN is a practical and dignified transportation solution for older adults who need to stop or limit their driving. Mobility is a critical quality of life issue for America's aging population and it is essential for maintaining independence, community participation, and social relationships.

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