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Donate to ITNAmerica

Best wishes for health, happiness and peace for you and your family from our ITNAmerica affiliate family, now in 11 states and 15 communities, from coast to coast www.ITNAmerica.org.

As you think of family, community and charity this time of year, please remember ITNAmerica and the work we do to help older people and people with visual impairments stay safe, independent and mobile.

"I love ITN. It fills my needs. It helps me be independent and results in me feeling good about myself. My husband died 4 years ago. I really felt lost after he died. ITN stepped in and my friends could tell how great it was for me."
--Member, ITNCharlestonTrident™

[Donate online](#) or call us at 207 591-6926 to donate stock and learn about other ways of giving.



The Liberty Mutual and ITNAmerica Partnership.
ITNAmerica is excited to announce our 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, Liberty Mutual has embraced ITN's mission to support safe, senior mobility and developed resources for seniors and their families to make good, safe transportation decisions found at www.libertymutual.com/seniordriving.



ITN is underway in Las Vegas, Nevada!

As it turned out, one of ITNAmerica's latest affiliates, ITNLasVegasValley™, got started almost by accident. In December 2008, Nancy Sprague just happened to be perusing an AARP magazine article concerning the organization's [Inspire Awards](#). After having read the piece, she shared it with her business partner, Fran Smith, who was also attracted to the story about Katherine Freund, one of the AARP awardees, and founder of ITNAmerica.

Because of the large senior demographic in southern Nevada, they believed the service could be beneficial. They remembered the two tragic 2004 accidents involving senior couples that drove off the parking deck of the Golden Nugget garage, and were further motivated by the frequent news stories of accidents caused by senior drivers. They decided to research the issue and potential local community interest in this service.

After discussing the ITNAmerica concept with key members of the community in January 2009, Fran and Nancy met with key staff of the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) in mid-February. They were overwhelmed with the extremely positive response and encouragement to apply for the New Freedom grant which could support the launch of an ITN affiliate in Las Vegas.

Fortunately, Fran and Nancy have worked as a team for a number of years. They shared the leadership role at the Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada, later forming their own business partnership, Community Service Consultants. Fran possesses strong fundraising and non-profit management experience, with Nancy being an ace when it comes to marketing and communications for both business and non-profits.

Their visit to RTC really got them going. Once funding seemed a realistic prospect, they assembled a strong steering committee; garnered Easter Seals Southern Nevada as the fiscal sponsor; and received their first major donation from UnitedHealthcare.

Once the RTC grant was approved in July, they organized a start-up board of directors; signed the Affiliate Agreement and submitted their application for recognition of IRS non-profit status in August.

It was decided to launch ITNLasVegasValley in the City of Henderson, Nevada's second largest city, and an absolute mecca for seniors.

Because everything fell into place very quickly, it seemed that it was truly meant to be. Every time something occurred that could have delayed or terminated the program, it was then positively resolved. Also, the great ongoing support, guidance and resources from ITNAmerica were key to successfully organizing an affiliate in southern Nevada.

Fran and Nancy are now co-directors of ITNLasVegasValley. They hope to begin offering rides in the spring. In the meantime, anyone who would like to support the organization by volunteering, donating a car, or sending a donation, please [contact the office](#) or call (702) 315-0463.



Microsoft features ITNAmerica "Success Story"

For its innovative use of technology, ITNAmerica has been chosen as a Microsoft "Success Story." A [case study and video](#) featured on the Microsoft website shows how ITNAmerica used Microsoft products and a Software-plus-Services model to design the latest version of its ITNRides™ proprietary software.

State of the art technology is needed for an ITN affiliate to deliver rides to the countless seniors who go anywhere from life-saving dialysis to a casual lunch date. Efficiencies are essential to keep the number of unoccupied miles low; to assure the lowest gas consumption with the most expedient routes; to use volunteer time wisely, and to keep track of dozens of other variables. For example: Can Frank fit a wheelchair in his hatchback? Does Mrs. Smith have dementia? Is Paula available for a 5 a.m. ride to the airport?

According to Founder and President of ITNAmerica Katherine Freund, "We've married a grassroots model to a very high-tech support system. We used technology to create efficiency, and we took the unusual step of building it ourselves, instead of purchasing off-the-shelf technology, so that it would be affordable to small organizations and communities."

All ITN affiliates have access to the software and store their information at our secure data center. The collected data is used for a variety of purposes, including social research to better understand senior mobility and its effects on society.

Freund said the Independent Transportation Network® model, "looks like a scarecrow on the outside, but on the inside, it has a very sophisticated technology system and a carefully thought out business model that uses resources at peak efficiency. It runs like a Swiss watch on the inside, where it counts the most!"

The technology unites every ITN affiliate community into one centralized national network and manages the logistics of the senior transportation service, including member and volunteer management, routing and dispatch, marketing and fundraising, finance and billing and ride scheduling.

The Software-plus-Services option is able to operate with any kind of existing hardware and software an ITN affiliate may have, and can easily be set up as long as the affiliate has access to a web browser and broadband connection. One of the other critical features of ITNAmerica's latest software is its scalability: its ability to allow for a growing number of affiliates. ITNAmerica can expand anywhere, nationally and internationally.

We are grateful to Microsoft for helping us build an application that simplifies operations for all our affiliates. Microsoft tools and support have allowed a small development team at ITNAmerica to build a mission critical enterprise software application.

With 15 affiliates in 11 states and dozens more planned, Microsoft technology is critical to our growth and replication, allowing small organizations to serve more and more older Americans and individuals with visual impairments through the efficient use of resources and funds.

Deaconess Associations Foundation helps launch ITNGreaterCincinnati™



From left, Pat Ward of Deaconess Associations Foundation, John Mitchell of Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Amy Scrivner of Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation, Robin Ursalis of Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Don Holmes of Cincinnati Eye Institute.

[Deaconess Associations Foundation](#), in partnership with the Vision Coalition, has recently helped establish the 14th affiliate of the Independent Transportation Network® to supplement existing transportation systems in Greater Cincinnati.

"Deaconess has long been associated with services for the older adult," says Pat Ward, Executive Director of the Deaconess Associations Foundation. "Deaconess focus groups indicated that transportation ranks as the number one issue for older adults. They want to remain active without inconveniencing relatives and friends. Studies pointed to ITNAmerica as a solution. Coincidentally, members of the Vision Coalition were also studying ITN, and it made sense to work together to offer this service to Cincinnati."

Deaconess Associations Foundation is a member of Deaconess Associations, a multifaceted healthcare corporation which owns and operates one acute care hospital, 23 long term care facilities and The Heimlich Institute.

The concept of ITNGreaterCincinnati was presented at a Deaconess Vital Signs Forum on December 9. The breakfast was held at the Kingsgate Marriott in Cincinnati. Attendees included representatives from long term care corporations, senior centers, large church groups, partner organizations serving adults with visual impairments, as well as community agencies who serve seniors.

Katherine Freund was the keynote speaker at the breakfast and described ITNAmerica -- how it was formed and how it can provide tremendous benefits for a community. For the panel discussion, Katherine was joined by representatives from key organizations whose research also indicated a need for another transportation option in Cincinnati.

Executive Director of ITN*Bluegrass*™ Gale Reece made the trip to Cincinnati for the breakfast, arriving with her husband Merrill and volunteer Jim Tinchler, who added a volunteer's viewpoint to the panel. Gale has provided ongoing support for the new Cincinnati affiliate.

ITN*GreaterCincinnati*, the only affiliate in Ohio, was met with much enthusiasm, and efforts are underway to structure a Speaker's Bureau to help enlist volunteers from the community as the countdown begins leading up to the actual launch in 2010.

For more information or to help support ITN*GreaterCincinnati*, please call (513) 559-2200 or [contact the office](#).

2009 Max & Helen Israelite Volunteer of the Year Award



Terry Brown (on the left) receiving the national Max & Helen Israelite Volunteer of the Year Award, with Alan Fried, ITN*America* Chief Operating Officer, and Katherine Freund, Founder and Executive Director of ITN*America*.

Terry Brown, volunteer driver, grant writer and Chair of the Board of Directors for ITN*CharlestonTrident*, was honored recently in Portland, Maine, with the national Max & Helen Israelite Volunteer of the Year Award. Presented at a gathering of affiliates from across the country, the award is named for Max Israelite, a founding member of the original Independent Transportation Network® board of directors.

Terry's involvement with [ITN*CharlestonTrident*](#) reaches back to the very beginning of the organization in 2005. As a dedicated supporter of senior programs in his capacity as Vice President for Senior Services with the Trident United Way, Terry saw the opportunity for senior transportation through ITN affiliation as a solution to a significant problem faced by older adults in the Greater Charleston area.

Serving as a champion for the development of an ITN*CharlestonTrident* affiliate, Terry secured seed funding from the United Way that helped set the stage for successful partnerships with other major funders in the area. Working with other key leaders and with exceptional community support, ITN*CharlestonTrident* provided its much anticipated "First Ride" on November 15, 2006. Terry continued to serve as an active advisor to the Board of Directors until 2008 when he retired from the United Way and was almost immediately elected to serve as the Chair of the Board for ITN*CharlestonTrident*.

Redefining "retirement," Terry brings to ITN*CharlestonTrident* his considerable experience in directing other non-profit organizations, combined with his outstanding leadership and organizational skills honed in the U.S. Marine Corps where he advanced to the rank of colonel. Terry has guided the ITN affiliate through a period of significant growth in membership and rides while successfully weathering the impact of the economic downturn.

As a volunteer driver, Terry exhibits a caring attitude and a passion for helping member riders remain independent, healthy and socially engaged. Terry has been an active volunteer driver from the first day of the organization and continues to average approximately 25 rides a month. When stumped to find a driver for a ride, the dispatchers often turn to Terry and he usually finds a way to accept the ride despite his workload.

Terry's service as a volunteer grant writer may very well be his greatest legacy to ITN*CharlestonTrident*. Terry has put in hundreds of hours writing over 50 grants which have resulted in nearly \$500,000 in funding over the last three years. Going a step further, Terry has taken the extra time to attend numerous meetings, make phone calls, write letters and visit prospective and current donors to help insure ITN*CharlestonTrident* will have the financial support necessary to maintain and expand the dignified transportation program now and into the future.



Plan ahead to keep on moving

Like most adults, you probably use your car for about 90 percent of your travel, and like most adults you have not given much thought to your future transportation

needs when you are no longer able to drive. Just think for a moment about the last ten places you drove. Now try to imagine how you would get to those places if you were not able to drive. It would not be simple. And it certainly is no easy task for the majority of older people living in rural and suburban areas that lack the density for traditional mass transit.

Although it has been estimated that older adults will outlive their capacity to drive, and will therefore be dependent on alternative sources of transportation for an average of six to ten years¹, very few people plan ahead for their transition from driving. The transition from driver to non-driver is usually dreaded and postponed as long as possible by older adults. Studies consistently show that older adults consider alternatives to driving only when they are forced by the circumstances. Many self-regulate or reduce their driving with age by traveling shorter distances and driving when conditions are safest.² Yet after a long period of gradual reduction, older drivers strongly resist a total cessation of driving and many often drive much longer than they should. It is usually a triggering event, such as an illness, injury, crash or death of a spouse that leads to the complete cessation of driving.³

The reluctance to give up the keys is not surprising. Driving is critical to maintaining mobility, independence and quality of life. It provides freedom and a sense of personal control. Losing the ability to drive is often a major life transition involving grief and loss. In focus groups, older adults have said that they mourned the loss of driving, the license, and the car and have described feelings of loss almost like losing someone close to them. Physicians also dread having the driving discussion because it can be one of the most difficult conversations they have with older patients and their families. The subject of driving cessation evokes more anger and can be more difficult to broach than giving a dreaded diagnosis such as cancer or Alzheimer's disease. It is not unusual for patients to exclaim that they would "rather be dead" than give up driving.

We should be able to help older drivers anticipate and accept the possibility of no longer driving long before a triggering event occurs. The process of planning for the complete cessation of driving can begin even when that may seem like a distant possibility. A critical first step in that process is to raise community awareness about this mobility problem. Let's begin by having a conversation with friends and family about the issue, before there is a crisis.

For tips on how to start the conversation, please visit the [Liberty Mutual senior driving site](#).

¹Foley, D.J, Heimovitz, H.K., Guralnik, J.M., & Brock, D.B. (2002). Driving life expectancy of persons aged 70 years and older in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92, 1284-1289.

²Hakamies-Blomquist L. (1999). Safety of older persons in traffic in Transportation in an Aging Society: A Decade of Experience. Technical Papers and Reports from a Conference: Bethesda, MD; Nov. 7-9, 1999, 22-35. Washington, DC, Transportation Research Board, 2004.

³Kostyniuk, L. P., & Shope, J. T. (1998). Reduction and cessation of driving among older drivers: Focus groups (Rep. No. UMTRI-98-26). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.

Welcome new board members

ITNAmerica would like to welcome two members to our national [Board of Directors](#), Greg Gordon and Roger Parry.



Gordon, who lives in Massachusetts, is senior vice-president of Marketing for [Liberty Mutual's](#) Personal Insurance business unit, and has played a major role in increasing the investment in and impact of the marketing and advertising department at Liberty Mutual. With a BA from Brown and an MBA from Duke, Gordon also serves as a board member of the Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and lives in Boston with his wife and two children.



Parry, who lives in Kentucky, is the Chair of [ITNBluegrass](#) Board of Directors. He has been a licensed nursing home administrator for 35 years, and has spent much of his professional life working in senior services. In 1969, Roger opened and operated Mayfair Manor, a 98-bed skilled nursing facility in Lexington, KY, and in 1985, opened and managed Mayfair Village, a retirement apartment community in the same city. Parry has held director positions at continuing care retirement communities in North Carolina and Virginia, and until recently has served as interim administrator of Cambridge Place Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Lexington.

Gordon and Parry have diverse backgrounds invaluable to ITNAmerica. Gordon describes his career as "having a focus on the marketing of services and helping consumers see the value in things that are intangible." He brings this unique perspective to ITN® in hopes that he can continue to increase awareness of the issues surrounding senior driving and the dignified alternatives available.

Parry also serves as Chair of the Affiliate Community Advisory Board (ACAB), a committee that offers the national board assistance on policies, research, development of bylaws and other matters. ACAB also attempts to build a sense of community among ITN Affiliate Boards of Directors, providing a forum for support and information for the good of the whole national effort. Parry plans to use his dual positions to

effectively represent all affiliates during Executive Board meetings,
serving as the bridge between affiliates and the board of directors.

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