

Senior Times, August-November, 2004

The Trauma Of Moving Can Be Made Easier By Hiring Professionals

Over the past eight years, Rochelle Hoffman has become somewhat of a moving aficionado. Why? She has helped move her in-laws a total of four times.

Her mother and father-in-law's first move was from their home of 50-plus years to Parkshore Place, an independent living community in St. Louis Park. Rochelle remarked, "Being fully responsible for their first move made me extremely uneasy. I didn't know how to pack their cherished treasures they had accumulated over the years. What to do with all the excess was another thing." The Hoffman's own Treasure's Island, a family business that her father-in-law had started 56 years ago. "My husband and I both work, so finding the time to do all that was necessary was tough. We were burning the candle at both ends.

Two months after the move, Rochelle's mother-in-law passed away. Her father-in-law remained in that apartment for four years when they started to notice some health issues and realized that Dad needed more support.

The Hoffman's talked to the administrative staff, who helped them make the decision that their dad's needs would be best served in the assisted-living building, fortunately located only a stone's throw away on the same campus.

One problem still remained. Someone had to do the physical move. "I pleadingly looked to the staff for some type of reassurance on how we were going to make it through this traumatic process once again and that's when they informed me of a company called "Gentle Transitions," stated Rochelle. "My initial phone call convinced me that they were our answer. They had a deep understanding of the senior population, my dad, his unique needs and the things he was experiencing with all the changes. They said all the right things so we never looked further."

Rochelle remembers the first time they met Nancy Lovestrand who became their moving facilitator. "Nancy was our angel of mercy," claimed Rochelle. "Having worked with Gentle Transitions for seven years, Nancy had been through every possible scenario. She treated my dad with such kindness and respect, as she helped us through the sorting, packing, unpacking and resettling. Little did we know at that time that Nancy would continue to provide support to our family, following dad through two broken hips and assisting with yet two more moves."

Mr. Hoffman is now residing at EPOCH, a community in Minnetonka. Rochelle remarks, "Every time I visit Dad, I watch families move in and out. On the day of their move, I see these elderly residents sitting in a room of boxes until their family can help them. I want to tell them that someone can help them through the process and take the details off their shoulders." She concludes, "People are living longer, families are getting busier and it's great to know that there is help available like Gentle Transitions."

In the past 13 years, Gentle Transitions has moved more than a thousand seniors to more than 125 senior communities throughout the Twin Cities. For more information, call 952-944-1028.

Reprint courtesy of Senior Times.