



Steuben Senior Services Fund

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Albany Guardian Society  
12 Corporate Woods Boulevard, Suite 200  
Albany, NY 12211-2524  
Re: Great Ideas Contest

Steuben Senior Services Fund, Inc. (SSSF) is a private not-for-profit corporation founded in the year 2000 for the purpose of supplementing in-home services to the frail elderly in Steuben County. Although SSSF works closely with the Steuben County Office for Aging, they are a separate 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to increasing funds to allow aging in place for Steuben County seniors.

In 2009, the organization began a process of identifying perceived needs of seniors which would enable them to stay in their homes, to be followed by implementation of those services. The rural town of Pulteney was chosen as the first area in Steuben County to be surveyed. Using the Beacon Hill Village model, surveys were sent to the older residents of Pulteney, and returned surveys were compiled and analyzed. The action plan below was developed as a result of that feasibility study:

- 1) Increase access to and knowledge of transportation in the Town of Pulteney.**
- 2) Increase the availability of non-medical assistance in the Town of Pulteney.**
- 3) Increase the availability of medical-related, health assistance services in the Town of Pulteney.**
- 4) Increase the publicity and information to older Pulteney residents about the availability of services.**

In the fall of 2009 and in early 2010, two grants were received from the Community Foundation of Corning-Elmira and the Finger Lakes; Keuka Area Fund and the Community Health Foundation of Western & Central New York (CHFWCNY); Southern Finger Lakes Fund totaling \$18,000 to start the implementation of the action plan. Although all four objectives are being addressed, the emphasis of the project is on two of the objectives- increase access to and knowledge of transportation and increase the publicity and information to older residents about the availability of services. These objectives were chosen as Pulteney is a geographically isolated area of the county with no essential services such as medical services, grocery stores, gas stations, pharmacies, etc. Receiving services of any kind is directly related to the need for transportation. Also, through the survey results, it became apparent that many Pulteney residents are unaware of existing services available through the Steuben County Office for Aging and other agencies.

A part-time coordinator was hired and formed an Advisory Group. The Advisory Group consists of senior representatives as well as the pastors from both churches in Pulteney, a Town Board member, and the Director of the Pulteney Free Library. In addition, "graffiti walls" were set up in five public areas of the town asking residents to indicate services or attributes that would make



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Pulteney a more livable community. This information was also compiled and presented to the Town Board.

We have been working with Project Care, an existing volunteer-based program that serves the greater Bath area, to increase the number of volunteer drivers and other volunteers willing to do basic services enabling older residents to remain in their own homes. We are also coordinating with Steuben Coordinated Transportation, NY Connects, the Steuben County Office for Aging, and other existing agencies to expand their reach to the Pulteney area. In addition to working with “traditional” service providers for the elderly, the coordinator has been developing and coordinating additional services from “non-traditional” service providers such as the Pulteney Free Library, Hammondsport Central School, and the Pulteney Fire Auxiliary.

This project is being created in such a way that existing service providers will be developing new services or adapting current services to better serve the growing number of older residents in the Town of Pulteney. In addition, the Pulteney project will serve as a model to be replicated in the rural areas of the county to provide better services allowing aging in place for many older county residents. As new services or collaborations are developed, a “lead agency” will be determined that will ensure the sustainability of the service past the grant funding period. For example, surveys indicated that most seniors in the Town receive information through direct mailings rather than websites or local newspapers. The director of the library has offered to compile a town newsletter outlining services available and the Town of Pulteney will assist in mailing costs after the grant period ends. This model is very unique as another level of oversight and administration is not being created; rather we are looking at sustainability as a shared function of collaboration through various traditional and non-traditional agencies. A member of the Steuben County Office for Aging Advisory Council, who has done extensive research into developing NORC’s and Aging in Place initiatives including attending the Beacon Hill Village training in Massachusetts, recently remarked that he has not heard of such an innovative model being implemented anywhere. Obviously, we are pleased with the progress and enthusiasm that has been achieved in Pulteney.

We submitted an additional grant request to the Keuka Area Fund this fall for \$4800 to pay for mailing costs of a quarterly town newsletter, and to provide incentives for volunteer drivers such as increased mileage reimbursement, training, and free oil changes, discount tires, etc. We received \$1000 of our request; therefore we are seeking a \$1000 gas card to assist these volunteer drivers.

You may visit the Aging in Place webpage at <http://www.steubencony.org/ofa/aginginplace.html> for more information about the Pulteney project. In addition, please contact Kathy Burns, Pulteney Aging in Place Coordinator at 607-664-2298 or [kathleenb@co.steuben.ny.us](mailto:kathleenb@co.steuben.ny.us) or Linda Tetor, Executive Director, Steuben Senior Services Fund, Inc. at 607-664-2298 or [lindat@co.steuben.ny.us](mailto:lindat@co.steuben.ny.us) for more details.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our Pulteney Aging in Place submission.