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Sandy Nauta, Patricia Davies, Deborah Shaw and Michele Parchman of Senior Focused Relocations with Helen Taliaferro

photo by Leah Ratliff

Senior Relocation Made Easier

By Wendy Crooks

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED what will happen when you or your parents get to the age when you have to choose a “senior” environment? Whether it’s a small condo in Florida, a local nursing home or an assisted living facility near family, most people consider where they might end up as they enter their golden years. However, they tend to concentrate on the *where* but not the *how*.

When thinking about relocating a relative to the best alternative place, it is often a very stressful situation even if the aging person is completely in support of the move. There are so many loose ends to consider with regard to the move that it can be an overwhelming task even for the closest of relatives.

That is exactly what happened when

Michele Parchman began the process of moving her aging grandmother into an independent living facility. There were so many things to consider that Ms. Parchman felt like it could easily be a full time job for her. After all of the work that Ms. Parchman did for her grandmother, she soon realized there was a need for a service to accomplish these tasks. As Ms. Parchman worked even harder to insure her grandmother’s comfort in her new surroundings, she met many who could benefit from a service dedicated to these specific needs. Ms. Parchman’s grandmother’s new friends were amazed at how quickly her new residence became a home. With boxes removed and pictures on the walls within only a day or two, Ms. Parchman’s grandmother quickly became

the envy of many who had lived there for quite some time and still didn’t feel like they were “home.”

Shortly thereafter, Ms. Parchman mentioned her findings to her friend Sandy Nauta. Ms. Nauta immediately saw there was a definite and common need for these invaluable services. In fact, it could become their full time jobs.

After the work she did for her grandmother, she realized there was a need for services to help with these tasks.

In October of 2005, Ms. Parchman and Ms. Nauta formed Senior Focused Relocations Inc. and became Senior Move Managers. Within a few short months they had their first job and two additional

frisco STYLE MAGAZINE



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employees. This newly founded company became the only senior relocation company in Texas that is part of the National Association of Senior Move Managers.

So, what exactly is a “Senior Move Manager?” A Senior Move Manager is a professional who specializes in assisting older adults, and their families, with the entire moving process. As Senior Move Managers, Ms. Nauta and Ms. Parchman assist individuals and their families in as little or as much as they need. From developing and facilitating a personalized move plan to hanging pictures on the wall in their new home, these Senior Move Managers and their competent staff manage everything.

The average age of the person they are helping move is 82 years young, these seniors have not moved in 20, 30 or even 40 years.

According to Ms. Nauta, developing a solid personalized move plan is the key to a successful senior relocation. The average age of the person they are helping move is 82 years young. More often than not, these seniors have not moved in 20, 30 or even 40 years and that often means decades of treasures that have to be considered. Downsizing is imminent and these professionals are capable of helping their clients handle the daunting task of working within the boundaries of their new, limited space. Realizing the new space they will live in and planning for it is crucial.

During the downsizing process, Senior Focused Relocations provides staff to oversee the packing and moving. Painstaking efforts are made to ensure that the new home resembles the old home as closely and as quickly as possible. Digital pictures are taken of the way things are set up before everything is packed so that when they arrive at the new place, it is easy to replicate the set up of the senior’s belongings.

Special attention to detail is emphasized in this business. From shopping for new things for the new place or shredding unneeded papers or even arranging “Estate



Frisco Chamber of Commerce: The Connecting Link

ANYONE RECEIVING HONORS for outstanding contributions of any sort should certainly be proud of their high achievements and the recognition from their peers and the community. In Frisco, many outstanding people are honored with awards each year. The City is blessed with an abundance of dedicated, highly motivated achievers in every field of endeavor, many of whom are members of the Frisco Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce is the connecting link in the network of businesses, government officials and residents working toward the common goal of making Frisco the best place in which to live, work, and play. The Chamber provides a variety of resources to assist business owners, residents and visitors to Frisco, including new-resident packets filled with flyers, coupons and announcements from local businesses, along with the Chamber's Relocation Guide/Member Directory, and a City map that is updated every year. For information, the Chamber is a vital resource for businesses and residents, as well as anyone interested in moving to town.

When it comes to achievements, the Frisco Chamber of Commerce is recognized for its dedication to the community and as a strong advocate for business in Frisco and North Texas. Find out what the Chamber can do for you. Stop by and visit us at 6843 Main Street, Frisco, or call us at 972.335.9522. You can also view our web site at www.friscochamber.com.

Sales" or charitable contribution pick ups, Senior Focused Relocations offers service after service to enable the senior, and their families, peace of mind for a stress-free move.

Due to the nature of the business, this line of work can be an emotional one. The best thing for everyone is that the family is all on board with the move and having the Senior Move Managers involved. "It is typically a family member who will hire us," said Ms. Nauta. "They generally need our services because they have full time jobs they can't get away from or they aren't living nearby."

The Senior Move Managers also offer something that the family can't offer. They offer a new, unbiased ear. When downsizing their personal belongings, many people feel like they have to keep things they no longer use or will never use again simply because it was a gift from someone they love. While they know it is senseless to keep that certain item, they feel guilty about discarding it for fear of hurting someone's feelings. The Senior Move Manager helps to alleviate that pressure. "Sometimes all they need to do is tell the story of how they got something one more time. We listen to that story," said Ms. Nauta.

Mrs. Helen Taliaferro, a recent client of Senior Focused Relocations, was very pleased with her moving experience. "I really think having them help made the process much easier." She laughed as she added, "Every once and a while I had to say, 'No, No, No' when they were trying to get rid of some things." Mrs. Taliaferro explained that she particularly liked her bathroom and closet. "They had some very good ideas and everything is just so squared away."

How much does a service like this cost? It varies according to the individual needs, which Senior Focused Relocations



Happy customer, Mrs. Taliaferro photo by Leah Ratliff

will meet personally with you to discuss. From that complimentary appointment, a specialist will provide a quote and explain all of the services and options. The experience is broken down into six different categories:

- Initial consultation
- Downsizing
- Preparing you and your home for the move
- The day before the move, moving day and the day after
- Unpacking and settling in
- Post-move visit

The cost ranges from \$500 to several thousand depending on the needs and size of the move. Senior Focused Relocations staff is bonded, insured and trustworthy. For Ms. Parchman and Ms. Nauta, this business has been a true calling. "We just had to do this." Their employees share the same passion as they do. "The people that work with us just love doing this. They just love what they do."

As the Baby Boomer generation ages, Senior Focused Relocations is truly on the cusp of a concept that is sure to be a tremendous success.

Wendy Crooks is a freelance writer living in Plano.