

## USA: They Help Seniors' Moving Experience

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (CHARLOTTE OBSERVER) September 11, 2007:

The National Association of Senior Move Managers, founded in 2002, is a nonprofit, professional association of organizations that are dedicated to helping older adults with a transition. NASMM has established a national referral network of senior move managers.

Moving is stressful. Even when it involves exciting changes, it is much more than the physical act of packing and moving boxes and furniture from one location to another. While this is something that we know, for an older adult who may be meeting this challenge for reasons beyond their control, it can seem almost impossible.

Often, the desire to move is not there. Leaving an established social network and downsizing adds to the stress of moving for health, financial or other concerns. Perhaps the family is unable to help with the process.

Older adults and their family members now have the option of seeking professional movers who assist with the physical and emotional aspects of moving. They are able to locate movers that live near them now or where they intend to live.

Barbara Morris, a Kentucky native and a founding member of NASMM, started Smooth Transitions in 1995 and helps others start their own Smooth Transitions in their community.

In the 12 years Morris has been in her job, she has made the moving process more efficient for her clients. She tries to encourage her clients to "move while they are in charge." Clients may need help with the decision to move or stay put.

"Clients will want to stay in the family home so that their children will be able to visit for Easter, and this may not be practical," she said.

Her workbook guides potential clients on things to consider. Often the objectivity of a professional senior mover reduces the stress of the move.

Morris is now assisting her mother-in-law and her mother with their upcoming moves and said it would be easier if they were not relatives.

There are two members of NASMM that serve Union County -- Smooth Transitions, LLC Charlotte and Fresh Start Transitions, LLC.

While both are located in Charlotte, they serve Union County. Fresh Start Transitions will soon have a location in Union County, according to owner Adele Mahan.

Mahan and Tina Hewell of Smooth Transitions have experienced growth in business and remarked that often, family members are looking to relocate parents to this area. Mahan, a

former Realtor, speaks to interested organizations about the Senior Move Management industry to get the word out.

Moving from the family home to an assisted-living facility is another common scenario both noted. Helping the client sort through personal belongings is an important part of this type of move.

At Fresh Start Transitions, there is one employee whose job it is to help clients sell their items on eBay. Both businesses will help with sorting and disposal of personal things.

They have compassion and an understanding of the attachments a person might have to belongings, but they know that their clients often cannot take everything with them. Smooth Transitions has also assisted clients with estate dispersal without a move. Hewell mentioned how she goes from room to room with clients sorting items into piles to keep, sell, give away or throw away.

The National Association of Senior Move Managers  
[movingforseniors.com](http://movingforseniors.com).

By Pam Irish  
Charlotte Observer

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