

# The Redding Pilot

with the news of Georgetown

'Get A Move On! Inc.' Business helps seniors  
downsize

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Moving from a spacious house to a small apartment is difficult at any age, but when a lifetime of memories and keepsakes are involved, the task can be daunting. Susan Church of Redding has a business tailored to the situation - Get A Move On! Inc., which helps seniors move.

Whatever the reason - a move closer to family in another state, to enter a retirement community, senior housing, or just into a smaller, more manageable home - Ms. Church said seniors often hesitate because of the overwhelming task of sorting, packing and choosing among the acquisitions of a lifetime. Add to the mix the conflicting opinions and desires of adult children, and the anxiety level can really rise, she said.

The company has handled moves both small and large, nearby and cross-country, some initiated by the parent and some by the children. They've also handled moves where the air is emotionally charged by the family relationships, where the elder doesn't understand the need for the move because of dementia, or where the adult children have trouble making a decision because they are still afraid of the parent, Ms. Church said.

"My partner Lila (Cummings) is a licensed social worker and it was her idea to start the business. She was getting a lot of referrals from Realtors," Ms. Church said. Ms. Cummings has worked extensively with families on transition and conflict resolution and with adults in the early stages of dementia.

Ms. Church has spent eight years in non-profit services in the counseling and development areas. She served in Guinea, West Africa, with the Peace Corps where resourcefulness and mastering the art of dealing with other people's needs and hopes is a necessity.

"We are often hired by the children," Ms. Church said.

"We are objective. We don't have any emotional attachment to the things in the house, and there is no family dynamic going on with us. That is very important," Ms. Church said.

"Sometimes we are hired by the client, usually because they don't want to burden their children."

One of the perks of the job is the people the two women get to meet.

"We often start with these marvelous independent, in-control individuals - they want to take responsibility," she said.

After the initial inquiry, Ms. Church said they set up an assessment meeting at no cost to the client.

"We ask a few basic questions, time frame, house sales, locations. We feel it is important that our clients meet us in person," she said. They like to have the first meeting with the parent and

children if possible.

"They have to trust us, or it doesn't work," she said.

Fees are either by the project or by the hour, and do not involve a commission percentage on what is sold, as is the case with some organizations.

"We help the client choose" what to keep and what to dispose of, Ms. Church said. After decisions on the precious things have been made, "In the end, it always comes down to a pile of butter containers on the counter - I tell them they only need a few, not two dozen."

Ms. Church said her firm will get three moving estimates, measure both furniture and the new living space, arrange tag sales, yard sales, auctions, deliveries to the Salvation Army or Goodwill, or for storage spaces, and even unpack for a client in the new space.

Some people want to recreate their present environment, while some want something new, Ms. Church said. If asked, they will set up the new living space as close to the old one as possible using a detailed set of photos for reference. One assignment included packing and unpacking a bookcase with the books in the same exact order, she said.

Usually, Ms. Church said, there are unneeded items to store or sell after the move as well.

"We do the ground work. We offer our opinion, but it's all their

choice," she said about her clients. "It's all about listening," she added.

The company is a member of the National Association of Senior Move Managers. For information call 914-509-6175, visit [www.getamoveoninc.com](http://www.getamoveoninc.com) or send an e-mail to [info@getamoveoninc.com](mailto:info@getamoveoninc.com).

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