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What's Happening

TRIAD Meeting

Wednesday, December 7
9:30 a.m.
Naperville Municipal Center
400 S. Eagle St.
Naperville

Join seniors, law enforcement and senior professionals and be involved in making Naperville and Lisle better places for seniors.

Bingo Jingo

Thursday, December 8
12:30 - 2:30 p.m.
Lisle Park District
1925 Ohio St.
Lisle

SAVE THE DATE!

Senior Picnic
Friday, June 9, 2017
Time TBD
Judd Kendall VFW
908 Jackson Ave.



The Naperville Senior Task Force wishes you and yours a joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year! Thank you for all your support in 2016.

Changing the Course of Human History

From Roger Breisch, Speaker/Provocateur,
www.rebreisch.com

Neil Postman once wrote, "Children are the living messages we send to a future we will not see." When I ask elders if they believe they can change the course of human history, many believe they cannot. I believe

Naperville

There's always something to do in Naperville! Below are links to event listings and calendars provided by the City of Naperville and the Naperville Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

[City of Naperville calendar](#)

[Naperville Convention and Visitor's Bureau calendar](#)

Stay Informed

The Senior Task Force is committed to helping connect you with services and initiatives that enhance your quality of life. Here's some reminders of where you can go for information.

[Senior Services & Resources website](#)

[Senior Task Force webpage](#)

[Our Voice eNewsletter sign-up](#)

Disclaimer

Please note that by making this information available, it does not constitute any endorsements by the City of Naperville, its officers, or employees or of the Senior Task Force of the linked web sites, or the information, products or services contained therein.

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A full disclaimer is available to view [here](#).

they can.

At a recent speaking engagement, an elderly gentleman - heavysset, gruff and wearing a baseball cap - pulled me aside. As tears welled up, he told me his grandson had recently ended his own life. Looking forlornly at the floor he continued, "I never saw it coming." The unspoken words written unequivocally on his face asked "How could a grandfather not see that in his grandson?"

I speak to many seniors because the young people they know and love - grandchildren, great grandchildren, grand nieces and nephews and others - are at risk. Between the ages of 15 and 24, suicide is often the second leading cause of death. It surprises nearly everyone. The question I am most often asked is "Why?"

There are myriad answers, but a serious and dangerous trend, I believe, is the disconnect that often exists between those I call life's apprentices and its masters. In ancestral times, children learned to navigate day-to-day life from their parents, but they learned wisdom from their grandparents. The elders told the stories of the tribe, and through those stories they passed along the ideals, principles and values held most sacred. Today, we too often lock away the wisdom of our elders behind the iron gates of retirement communities. As one woman told me, "now that my family is assured I am safe, cared for and comfortable, they don't come to see me anymore."

My plea to elders - to you, our culture's wisdom keepers - is that you constantly look for ways to gently and generously touch the lives and hearts of young people. Share your wisdom. Share your stories. Tell of life's joy and happiness, but also share its difficulties, its heartbreak and its grief. Remind our youth that wisdom flows from suffering, and that in its aftermath, life can be, once again, joyful and life-affirming. When one gentleman admitted he, too, contemplated suicide as a youth, I asked if he shared that with his grandchildren. What a gift to learn that grandpa suffered and still lived a long and valued life.

In an era of decreasing interpersonal connection and increasing focus on screens and technology, the eldest among us know better than most the power of compassionate conversation. After spending thousands of hours counseling teens in leadership forums and on a depression/suicide hotline, I know how much influence seniors can have on future generations. There can be a special relationship between our oldest and youngest generations - one

that can energize, heal and inspire.

As Neil Postman suggests, every time we alter the life of a young person, a piece of us lives through them to generations yet unborn...and the course of human history is forever altered.

Celebrate the holidays!

**YMCA/Naperville Park District
Community Christmas Luncheon
for Seniors and Families in Need**

Sunday, December 25, 2016 at 11:30 a.m.

**Chicago Marriott Naperville,
1801 N. Naper Blvd., Naperville, IL 60563**

Reservations are due by Dec. 11.

To make a reservation,
contact Polly Rhodes at
prhodes@ymcachicago.org or 630-527-6599

Please provide your name, phone number, guests' names
and total number of people attending.

Register today, as spots are limited!

Thanks to the generosity of
community families, there is
no cost to attend the luncheon.



A Most Precious Gift

Submitted by Brian Foster, First Light Homecare

The holidays bring forth a range of emotions for many, some of which can be quite overwhelming.

Truth be told, my mind immediately panics at the thought there are only 60 days until Christmas and Thanksgiving is only three weeks away as of the writing of this article. That cannot be! How can it be? Where did the time go? How many are coming for dinner? We need to get our gift list made and plan a budget! The list of things to do seems endless beyond mere human ability to accomplish. A sense of dread is not uncommon for many of us. But have you thought about a different kind of gift this year - the gift of planning your care to reduce the burden on loved ones should you be diagnosed with a disease?

The diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease was an unexpected blow for Tim and he sat speechless, unable to move while his wife Diane quietly but unmistakably sobbed. Having raised three children, one who was emotionally and physically challenged, they had just reached a point of stability in their daily lives and the shock of today's revelation was just too much to handle. All that this meant for the future could not possibly be known; however, what was clearly understood was their life would never be the same.

Retirement was just a handful of years away. This cannot be real! One day we were talking about retiring to warmer climates, traveling the country and doing volunteer work within our community on behalf of our church. Now every waking hour was dedicated to plans to deal with Tim's advancing symptomatology, home modifications and the impact on both their careers and pension options. The list went on and on and on. They knew the five stages of grief, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance, yet they seemed to be trapped in an endless cycle through the first four.

Tim knew he was loved because Diane was superhuman in her care and support of him. What would he do without her? Family had stood in the gaps when possible, but the advancing nature of his disease meant that he was more and more dependent on Diane for his needs. Family and friends were no longer comfortable in providing much of the personal care required.

The weight of the world seemed to hang on Diane. She will tell you that she was drowning and alone with no escape. Tim could see it in her face and was devastated by the effect it was having on his beloved wife, friend and soul mate. On his knees Tim asked for wisdom and courage. He found both.

Together with Diane they approached the parish nurse and Tim articulated they needed help. He learned that Diane was indeed at significant risk to her own wellbeing and health. Tim told the nurse he did not feel comfortable with relying on strangers to take care of him or for them to be in his home but he could not allow someone he loved so deeply to suffer so and not be willing to help. They took steps to acquire respite support for Diane and personal care support for him. This was hard for Tim - it was uncomfortable, it was scary and it was embarrassing. Diane found it hard to let go and trust another. They gave each other the most precious gift possible and wrapped it in courage.

Who is in your life that you may give such a precious gift to this holiday season?

Give and Gain Piece of Mind this Holiday Season

Submitted by Meredith A. Morris, Caring Transitions

The holiday season is a time for giving, entertaining and spending time with family and friends. Right now, you may be trying to figure out where to stash all the "stuff" that has slowly filled the guest bedroom over the course of the year or clear piles of paperwork off the dining room table in order to add the extra leaf.

Most of us hold onto the possessions that fill our homes because we don't regularly take the time to evaluate the functionality or meaning of each item and discard those that are no longer useful. Instead, as we buy new items, we just set the old aside and clutter accumulates.

If you are suffering from a bout of holiday household stress due to an over-abundance of household possessions, we suggest you give yourself the gift of giving this season.

Gifting Holiday Décor

Early December is a perfect time to donate excess holiday décor. Please only donate items in good condition. While you are at it, consider supporting charities with gifts of cash donations, furniture, small appliances, linens and other household goods. Decorations and accessories that are no longer in good condition may be gifted to a craft club or hobbyists. Holiday items with sentimental attachments may be gifted to family members.

Gifting Heirlooms

The holiday season is great for passing on heirlooms. You don't have to be in your eighties or nineties to begin this kind of gifting! Make it part of your annual tradition. Give at least one meaningful item to another family member. If you have concerns the other party may not understand or appreciate the item, include a card or note that explains why it has special meaning or value. Consider who will most appreciate or use an item and look for family members or friends who have at some point expressed an interest in the item. As you consider your many sentimental possessions, it may also be the time to ask yourself if anyone in the family will ever appreciate Aunt Rose's spoon collection. It may fare better if sold or donated to a dedicated collector.

Also, in the spirit of "giving," don't forget to ask a housebound or elderly neighbor if you can drop off some of their stuff too!

"Giving Tuesday" is A Good Time to Donate to Ride Assist Naperville

Submitted by Nancy Luebke, Senior Task Force

Most of us remember when Thanksgiving was about the good food, family and friends. Some are still focused on these aspects of the long weekend, and for those who want to push back against the creeping consumerism that has turned this holiday into one long



shopping frenzy, there's a chance to do something good on "Giving Tuesday."

After "Black Friday," "Small Business Saturday" and "Cyber Monday," "Giving Tuesday" is a chance to donate to a worthy cause, and we hope you'll consider sending some of your donation dollars our way. On "Giving Tuesday," which this year is on Tuesday, November 29, please make a donation to help the Ride Assist Naperville (RAN) program, which was set up by the Naperville Senior Task Force.

When the task force began two years ago, one of the main concerns of Naperville seniors was affordable and dependable transportation. Today, RAN has been set up as a stand-alone 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation under the name Naperville Seniors in Action with 27 volunteer drivers who will take senior riders and their caregivers to their doctor appointments, wait while they are with their doctor and return them back home. There is no money to be paid at the time of the ride, and tipping is not allowed. The following month, RAN sends an invoice for the number of rides provided in the previous month at \$12 per ride. If a senior is financially challenged, they can pay what they can afford.

The small fee for this transportation service doesn't cover all program expenses, so donations are needed and welcome to run the program.

Interested donors can contact Senior Task Force co-chair and RAN director Karen Courney at seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us or by calling (630) 306-4613.

Please visit www.rideassistnaperville.org to make a donation through PayPal or by credit card. You can also write a check payable to Naperville Seniors In Action and mail it to:

Ride Assist Naperville
790 Royal St. George Drive, Suite 141 #156
Naperville, IL 60563

Every little bit helps.

Input Requested on Lifetime Home "Seal of Approval" Criteria

Submitted by Bev Frier, Senior Task Force co-chair

The Senior Task Force has created a "Seal of Approval" criteria list to discuss with builders who are constructing new residences in Naperville. The goal is for these builders to consider seniors who may wish to age in place and design "lifetime homes" that meet the needs of individuals in all stages of life. This criteria checklist will be used in discussions between the Senior Task Force and builders, after which time it will be signed by the Senior Task Force and turned into the City with the task force's remarks.

The task force wants to hear from seniors on the draft list and criteria to make sure it works for seniors and the community. Please take a look at the draft criteria by

The logo for the Naperville Senior Task Force is a blue square with white text. The word "Naperville" is at the top in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "Senior" is in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the words "Task Force" are in the largest, bold, sans-serif font, spanning most of the width of the square.

visiting www.naperville.il.us/seniortaskforce or by [clicking here to view the criteria](#). If you have suggestions, please email seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us with your feedback through January 2017. Thank you in advance for your time and input.

Nichols Library Offers Free Technology Program

Submitted by Shirley DeCorte, Senior Task Force

Bring your technology gadgets that you are struggling with to the library and our technology instructors will help answer your questions.

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Time: 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Location: Nichols Library, 200 W Jefferson Ave., Naperville

Please call the Senior Help line at [\(630\) 848-3613](tel:6308483613) to register for this program. Class size is limited so sign up soon!

Help Your Loved One Get Ready for Winter

Submitted by Mike Cooper, Naperville Senior Center

We may not want to think about it, but Old Man Winter will be visiting in the not-too-distant future. You have probably moved clothes around, replacing shorts and T-shirts for jeans and sweaters, and pulled out the fall decorations.

But what about your senior loved ones? Are they ready for winter? Here are 3 tips to help them ease into the change of seasons.

Fashion

Is your loved one gaining or losing weight? Make sure their clothes fit properly. If they don't, they may be self-conscious and not want to leave the house. This creates more isolation. We all like to get something new once in a while; your loved one is probably no different. Move their summer clothes and pull out their winter wardrobe. Many seniors tend to be cold so they may need those warmer clothes sooner rather than later. On that note, make sure their furnace has been serviced recently and ready to use so their home is always at the right temperature.

Food

Summertime is about fresh produce, salads and 'light' food. But that doesn't mean seniors need to eat unhealthy in the winter. There are plenty of fruits and veggies that are harvested in the fall. Start to make some of your loved one's favorite soups or slow cooker meals that can be portioned, frozen and enjoyed throughout the winter. Can you spend one meal with your loved one periodically? Food tastes better when you can share it with someone.

Fun

What activities is your loved one involved in? Can those activities be done in the winter as well as the summer months? If not, talk to your loved one about getting involved in something different, yet fun, over the winter. Do they like crafts, sports, music, cards or something else? See what activities are available at the local rec

Happier Holiday Guide for Seniors and Caregivers

Submitted by Frank J. Blood, Caregiver Harbor

Thankfulness, love, peace, joy, family and friends are the ingredients of a happy holiday season. Stress is not. Any undue pressure we put on ourselves to make everything perfect so that this becomes "the best holiday ever" is nothing more than a negative whirlwind of emotions that lead to unrealistic expectations, overspending, mental fatigue and physical exhaustion - or in other words, a lousy holiday. It doesn't have to be that way for anybody - but especially for seniors and caregivers of seniors with age-related challenges. You have earned the right through years of past contributions to enjoy all the benefits of family gatherings and festivities.

Yet a little planning and preparation are key elements of giving yourself the best chance at having a good time, whether you are a totally independent person, totally dependent person or caregiver. In this article, we are primarily addressing the difficulties caregivers of persons with dementia face, but anyone can modify these tips to suit their own circumstances. Today our care recipient is Mom, who has Alzheimer's. Here are a few suggestions to help you and Mom have more fun this year.

KISS - Keep It Simple Senior

Your objective is to enjoy the holiday. If you find yourself getting anxious, slow down and try to determine what it is that's causing you to be that way. What's bothering you? Are you upset with another family member who isn't doing their fair share? Is Mom at odds with someone who'll be there? Discuss it with them in private before your event.

Holiday time can bring memories of beloved relatives and friends that we've lost during the last year or so. Grief is something that shouldn't be gone through alone. Share memories with someone who knew them or if you are the one caring for a person who is grieving, get them to open up and share with you - sharing the sorrow is the most loving thing you can do for another.

Are you expecting too much of yourself? Consider saying, "No" to any request for your time that doesn't move you closer to your immediate goals. Most of us like to help others when we can, but right now it could be a distraction you can't afford. Adding more to your plate only waters down the fun and excitement of the things you enjoy most.

You know how important it is to get plenty of rest, eat well and exercise every day. Between the days leading up to Thanksgiving Day and New Year's Day we are constantly tempted to ignore the disciplines we are usually diligent about. It wouldn't be much of a holiday season without them. Moderation is the key. Don't sacrifice everything.

Know the Terrain

It is imperative in war and caregiving that you be aware of your environment. An unfamiliar house can confuse Mom and make her more uncomfortable. You are her guide and that means you must anticipate her ability to deal with her surroundings and needs - from seating at the table to a place to rest to an alternate bathroom if the

main one is busy when she needs to go. As soon as you get Mom comfortable, do your reconnaissance.

One way to get ahead of the game is to phone the host in advance to discuss:

- Special diet
- Accessibility
- A quiet place to rest
- Other special considerations
- Who else is invited (in case of personality conflicts)

At the celebration:

- Stay calm
- Lower your expectations and keep Mom from becoming too excited
- Involve Mom in the conversation
- Make sure others understand that Mom can answer for herself
- If others are singing carols, encourage Mom to join them
- Keep Mom's activities short

Seniors and Oral Health - Helping Those in Need

Submitted by Mary Jensen RDH, MS, HyLife Oral Health Alliance

Can YOU imagine not being able to brush your own teeth? Let's pretend this everyday activity that you have done your entire life is now beyond your capabilities. Perhaps it is due to arthritis, poor vision or dementia. Your inability to perform routine and effective oral hygiene care leads to dental decay and likely periodontal (gum) disease. It can also contribute to an increased risk of heart disease, stroke and aspiration pneumonia. Controlling your diabetes will be more difficult.

Unfortunately, this is what happens to many seniors. Oral hygiene care is more than routine grooming like brushing one's hair or shaving - it is infection control! Inflammation of the gums due to lack of care will negatively affect overall health. One thing that is known for sure, the mouth is connected to the body and the body is connected to the mouth. The blood that is in the infected gum tissue is the same blood that is traveling to the heart. The body reacts to infection - wherever it may be located.

The main reason seniors are hospitalized is aspiration pneumonia (AP). AP is the inflammation of the lungs caused by breathing in foreign material. Where is that material coming from to setup shop in the lungs? The mouth! Hospitalization and a course of antibiotics may be needed. AP can be a serious life threatening disease that can lead to respiratory failure. A clean mouth will decrease the amount of bacteria and food debris, thus reducing the risk of AP.

Many seniors have had the benefit of preventative dental care. They have their natural teeth! Who will take the responsibility for caring for them when they can no longer care for themselves? There are dental professionals that provide weekly oral hygiene care to seniors in assisted living, memory care or long term care communities.

To find a dentist that can provide these services, you can check with the senior's

primary care doctor or nearby assisted living facilities.

Winter Blues

Submitted by Carl F. Skrabacz, R.Ph., Senior Task Force member

During winter in the Midwest, daylight is significantly shorter than it is during mid-summer. Most of us are not as psychologically energized during the winter months largely due to this light deprivation. If this situation is carried forward to its most extreme it results in a depression known in the medical community as "Seasonal Affective Disorder" (SAD).

Other than psychotherapy and other more extensive forms of treatment, a first step to treat SAD is phototherapy. Patients are instructed to purchase a "light box" made specifically for this purpose and are given a period of time every day to just sit by the box and take in the light. Seems too simple, but it works for many patients.

While we are not necessarily suffering from SAD, we can certainly benefit from some of the treatment protocols suggested for it. During the winter months, open your shades, blinds and drapes to let in as much natural light as possible. Turn on lights during the day even if you don't normally do so.

Winter is also a great time to make those phone calls you've been putting off. Social interactions have a profound influence on our psychology. Make an effort to talk more frequently with friends and neighbors. In doing so, you are taking better care of you and you won't be SAD.



A big thanks to Boy Scout troops 597 and 4786 for their hard work this fall raking seniors' yards! The Senior Task Force was pleased to partner with area troops to rake close to 30 yards this autumn. For those seniors who have a difficult time with this physically demanding task, these young men made leaf pick-up a breeze. The Senior Task Force hopes to continue and expand this program in the years to come.