

A City of Naperville Senior Task Force Publication

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Welcome to Our Voice

Ask the Task Force

Do you have a question about a particular service for seniors? Want to know more about what's available just for you? Email the Senior Task Force at seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us or call (630) 848-3613. Your question might get selected to be answered in a future edition of Our Voice!



What's Happening

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 City Notes](#)

On behalf of the Naperville Senior Task Force (STF), we are excited to present to you Our Voice, the new quarterly newsletter geared towards seniors and their caregivers. Our Voice was designed to connect Naperville's senior community with programs, services and timely information to help foster continued health and well-being, education and independent living.

This newsletter is for and about you. Our Voice needs to include YOUR voice. We want to hear from you about your needs, ideas, suggestions, special experiences or concerns. We're also

[Sign up to receive the City Link eNewsletter in your inbox](#)

[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](#)

hoping that you contribute to Our Voice with articles, opinions and questions. We are planning to have a few recurring columns in each issue, but we want to know what you'd like to see. If you have suggestions, please feel free to contact us at seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us or call the Senior Help Desk at (630) 848-3613 and leave a message. If you see this first edition of the newsletter in print form around town, sign up to receive it electronically at www.naperville.il.us/enews.aspx.

We also want to encourage you to attend our speaker series taking place this year. Topics will range from preparedness to avoiding scams to affordable housing, and much more. Full information - including dates and times - is at www.naperville.il.us/seniortaskforce.aspx.

We look forward to hearing your voice, but until then, enjoy Our Voice. Please also accept the STF's best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year.

With best wishes,
Bev Patterson Frier and Karen Courney
Senior Task Force co-chairs

Senior Task Force Update

By Karen Courney and Bev Patterson Frier, Senior Task Force co-chairs



The Senior Task Force gathers together after a recent meeting. From left to right: Jane French, Jim Hill, Nancy de La Hoz, Bev Frier, Leigh Ann May, Karen Courney, Carol Story, Sherri Fitzgerald, and Carl Skrabacz.

After the creation of the Naperville STF was authorized by the City Council in August 2014, Co-Chairs Karen Courney and Bev Patterson Frier sent out a call for volunteers and received almost 40 applications, which surprised and encouraged the duo. A steering committee of seven members was selected, and five subcommittees dealing with the issues of transportation, housing, education, healthcare and collaboration were formed.

The group's first accomplishment was to revamp the senior service pages on the City's website at www.naperville.il.us/seniorservices.aspx by adding and organizing content. The STF then researched, designed and distributed the Senior Services Pocket Guide, which is available at most government facilities throughout the City. This pocket-sized brochure is a handy reference of non-profit senior services contact information. If you have not been able to obtain it, let the STF know so the group can make it available at a location convenient to you. The STF also posted an online community needs survey to get a feel for senior activities and needs they may have.

Newly established focus groups and roundtable discussion groups with seniors, caregivers and service providers are ongoing, and the results are enlightening. There is a vast array of available services to seniors and caregivers that were not well known, and those currently listed on the City's website are only the start. Based on feedback, the STF has recently compiled a listing of services both in Naperville and within 15 miles of Naperville. These resources will be added to the City website in the future and made available at the Senior Help Desk housed at the Alfred Rubin Riverwalk Community Center at 305 W. Jackson Ave.

Through meetings and the survey, the STF was able to determine what was needed by the senior community. The five subcommittees have diligently pursued research in their areas as well. The result of these efforts is a report to the City Council which provides recommendations developed by each subcommittee. You can view the report, which is included for discussion on the January 19 Council agenda, by clicking [here](#).

Transportation and housing were identified as the areas that should receive initial focus, and as of the present time, transportation has been selected for implementation.

Watch this column and the City Council agenda for status updates on these initiatives.

Our Health - Medication Storage

By Carl Skrabacz, Senior Task Force member

Are medicine cabinets the best place to store medicine? Since medicine cabinets are usually found in bathrooms, the answer is probably not, and here's why.

Many of the medicines stored in medicine cabinets are prescription vials containing either tablets or capsules. (Of course, there may also be many other forms of medications, such as liquids, inhalants, ointments, etc.) But let's focus for a moment on tablets and capsules, be them prescription or non-prescription.

When you open an over-the-counter (OTC) tablet or capsule, you will find a packet of granules packaged with the product that usually includes the wording, "For product freshness - do not eat." These packages contain an absorbent to reduce moisture in the bottle, and they should be retained in the bottle until the product is consumed. (Pharmacists do not include such a packet with prescription medications because if used as directed, long-term storage is unnecessary.)

Excess moisture will degrade most tablets and capsules prior to their expiration dates. Bathrooms are typically the most humid rooms in a home - think about how the mirror steams up each morning when you take a shower! Due to the humidity and moisture, it's best not to store these items in the medicine cabinet, or anywhere in the bathroom.

When deciding on a new place to store medications, choose a place that you use frequently. For example, if you place a medication storage container next to your dishes, you'll be reminded three times a day to take your medication. You can even place a sticky note on the outside of the box as a reminder. If you have visits from individuals you suspect may be interested in drug experimentation, you can use a locking box to prevent any issues.

Now the only thing left to do is figure out what to do with all of that open space in your medicine cabinet!

Caregivers Corner

The STF recently held a roundtable discussion with day care service providers to discuss the needs of the seniors they serve. This was the first time they had attended such a meeting, and companies in attendance shared openly about their fees, census data and service model in a congenial manner. All attendees were all passionate about the services they provide.

Some of the comments and observations they provided about seniors and caregivers are below.

- Seniors and families don't always recognize the signs that someone needs assistance.
- In terms of safety, it was identified that improvements were needed at home. Areas of concerns included throw rugs, and improvements included additional handrails, shower grab bars, the width of doors and alert buttons or monitors for emergency.
- When at home, seniors could face a lack of activity/exercise and socialization. Seniors often eat better in a group setting.
- Caregivers must learn to handle the emotional shifts and personality changes in their parents or the senior they are caring for. They also are facing sleep deprivation related to their caregiving tasks.
- For seniors, losing the ability to drive is one of the most difficult issues to face; there is a need for affordable and reliable transportation in Naperville.
- Many seniors want to stay in their homes, but the attendees felt there is no adequate structure for aging in place at this time.

In addition to identifying services for seniors, the STF is looking for ways to support Naperville's caregivers. We are in discussion to establish a caregiver support group in Naperville and would like to know what would help caregivers fulfill their unique role. To share your thoughts, or if you are interested in the support group, email seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us.

City Senior

Do you know a Naperville area senior who is going above and beyond in the community? Perhaps your neighbor or friend has a unique hobby, gives of his or her time to make a difference in the

community or has some good advice to share with fellow seniors. We want to hear about them!

Our goal in future issues of Our Voice is to highlight the efforts and achievements of a Naperville area senior. All recommendations are welcomed. Please email the STF at seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us or call the Senior Help Desk at (630) 848-3613. Leave a message with the seniors' name, reason for nomination and your phone number, and we'll call you back for more information.



Your photo could be here!

News of Note

SNOW SHOVELING HELP FROM THE JAYCEES. The City of Naperville requires all sidewalks be clear of snow and ice 48 hours after a snowfall of 2 inches or more. Thanks to a dedicated pool of volunteers, as well as students from area schools, the Naperville Jaycees is providing shoveling assistance to seniors and others unable to shovel their snow this winter. If you are in need of this type of help, please contact Mark Coleman at (630) 461-1612 or email coleman.mark.j@gmail.com.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY. Looking for a change of pace in the New Year? Naper Settlement is hosting a volunteer open house for potential tour guides, known as building interpreters, who can lead tours of the museum's historic buildings. Some interpreters wear period costumes, but this is not a requirement. Plan to attend the open house from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26 or 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 30 at the Settlement's Meeting House on the corner of Webster St. and Porter Ave. The time commitment is two four-hour shifts per month between April to October.

DID YOU KNOW? Golden Elders Adult Day Care assembles goody bags for our servicemen and women throughout the year, and soon a nonprofit organization will take donations for supplies. Stay tuned for more information!

