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Fort Hill Activity Center: Overflowing with Opportunities for Seniors

Submitted by the Naperville Park District



Did You Know?

May is Older Americans Month (OAM), a time to nationally acknowledge the perennial contributions of older adults to our nation. The 2016 OAM theme is *Blaze a Trail*. The Administration for Community Living is using this month to raise awareness about important issues facing older adults. Want to know more? Visit <http://oam.acl.gov/>.

The Naperville Park District is excited to announce that the Fort Hill Activity Center, opening in August 2016, will offer a variety of activities and opportunities for seniors as well as for the entire community.

For the first time, the Park District is able to provide large indoor spaces for year-round sports, fitness and play in one location. The Activity Center includes a walk/jog track, gymnasiums, group exercise rooms and a fitness area for strength and cardio training.

What's Happening

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

Seniors interested in the popular sport of pickleball

Naperville and the Naperville Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

Starting June 1! Check out the new mobile friendly City of Naperville website and [user friendly calendar](#).

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

TRIAD Events

Mark your calendars now for these fun and important TRIAD events taking place this year!

Senior Picnic

Friday, June 10

Noon - 2 p.m.

Judd Kendall VFW

908 West Jackson Ave.,

Naperville

Healthy, Wealthy and Wise Senior Conference

Friday, September 16

8 - 10 a.m.

Naperville Municipal Center

400 S. Eagle St, Naperville

Fall Car Care Clinic

Saturday, October 8

8 a.m. - noon

Lisle Fire Dept. Station 51

1005 School St., Lisle

Bingo Jingo Holiday Party

Thursday, December 8

12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Lisle Park District Building

1925 Ohio Street, Lisle

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

will now be able to play the game indoors year round at the Activity Center, in addition to playing outdoors at several parks. Having indoor courts will enable the Park District to offer more consistent programs. Other games seniors may enjoy at the Activity Center include basketball, volleyball and badminton.

With nearly 80,000 square feet available for recreation, the Fort Hill Activity Center can provide not only the structured programs desired by seniors, but also common areas for meeting friends or enjoying a cup of coffee. With a structured play area and classes for children, the Activity Center can provide seniors an enjoyable bonding experience with their grandchildren. The café will offer healthy snacks, beverages and lunch and breakfast foods. The walk/jog track provides a place to exercise while catching up with friends. Meeting rooms are available as well for parties, educational programs, special events, community meetings and other uses.



Construction on the walk/jog track continues.

Located on the corner of Quincy Avenue and Fort Hill Drive, the Activity Center can be accessed by public transportation, and plenty of parking will be available. Designed to be a beautiful, spacious facility with plenty of windows and natural light, the Activity Center is likely to become a favorite destination for seniors. Time spent there will reap the benefits of health, wellness and connecting with

you can go for information.

[Senior Services & Resources website](#)

[Senior Task Force webpage](#)

[Our Voice eNewsletter sign-up](#)

the community. Watch for further details about the opening in the Summer Program Guide and on the District's website at www.napervilleparks.org.

Senior Task Force Update

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

The Senior Task Force has been very busy the past few months. On January 19, we presented our task force update and report to the City Council. The report included the recommendations of our five sub-committees. In addition, we requested an extension of the term of our task force for another 12 months. If you want to read the report, visit www.naperville.il.us/seniortaskforce.aspx.

The Transportation Committee presented a recommendation to establish a volunteer program to drive seniors to their medical appointments. They will not only pick up the rider and caregiver, but they will also stay with them during their appointment and drive them home.

Our volunteer driver program will be operated as a stand-alone corporation, so we have recently established an Illinois nonprofit corporation. We intend to file for 501(c)(3) charitable organization status with the IRS. We are currently seeking volunteers to launch this program.

In January we began a monthly speaker's forum held on the second Wednesday of every month. Topics presented so far are how to prevent being the victim of common scams, homeland security, communicating end-of-life wishes to family members and keeping seniors safe. In addition, Representative Grant Wehrli provided a legislative update to seniors. We will not host forums during the summer months (June through August) as we focus on our other initiatives, but please check back for more information on the forums this fall.

As we move into the summer, we are working on a support structure to facilitate "aging in place." More seniors in this day and age are choosing to stay in their homes, and we aim to support that population. Some of the services already in place are the DuPage Senior Citizens Council's volunteer Chore Days in the spring and fall each year and the Minor Home Repair Program. If interested in

learning more, call (630) 690-1612. Also available is "Meals on Wheels".

These three services, along with our newly established volunteer driver program, will allow more seniors to stay in their homes as they age.

As part of our education efforts, we began submitting articles to *Positively Naperville* in January. Our "Senior Voices" column is a great way to stay in touch, and if you have any ideas for future columns, please feel free to let us know by calling (630) 848-3613 or emailing seniortaskforce@naperville.il.us. Please also kindly let the Senior Task Force know of services you require to make your life more comfortable in Naperville so that we can help!

"You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our Health - Dry, Itching Eyes

By Carl Skrabacz, Senior Task Force member

As many as 25% of persons over 65 years of age are affected with dry eye issues. Most issues can be relieved with simple eye drops, but seldom is the condition curable. While there are a few diagnostic syndromes that cause dry eye (Sjogren's syndrome comes to mind) very often, the aging factor, environmental elements and drug use are the most significant culprits.

Environmental elements consist of low humidity, pollution, cigarette smoke and extended visual tasks on electronic devices. Most of these can be altered with a little attention to detail within your home or working environment.

Drugs that can cause dry eye issues are often the same ones that cause dry mouth. The most common of these are antihistamines and anticholinergics. If you suspect that your systemic medications may be causing discomfort of your eyes or mouth, have a discussion with your physician. By changing your antihistamine, anticholinergic or other meds to alternatives within the same class, your physician may be able to lessen the negative effects that you are experiencing.

Tear substitutes are the most frequently prescribed first-line treatment for dry eyes, and most are available without a prescription. A number of different products are available in solution, gel or ointment forms. First-time users should

start with a Preservative Free - Solution product. If that does not provide sufficient relief, alternative products that are more viscous (thicker) with preservatives might do the job. Keep in mind that the more viscous the product, the more likely that your vision will be temporarily blurred after application. Gels and ointments are the most viscous, but some of the solutions on the market are also quite thick.

In any case, if the problem continues after you have tried a product or two, a visit to your physician and/or ophthalmologist is in order.

Staying Fit Has Several Benefits

Submitted by Monarch Landing

You've worked hard in your life, and staying fit is important for a number of reasons. First and foremost, fitness will help you to maintain your independence so that you can enjoy your hard-earned golden years.

Exercise is a key factor in improving energy and balance, delaying the onset or worsening symptoms of disease and conditions and reversing some of the downsides of aging. Not only good for the body, exercise has been proven to be good for the mind, mood and memory as well.

The key to benefiting from exercise is making it part of a routine in your life, and the best way to do that is to identify activities that you really enjoy. Gyms are a good place to start, as they have a variety of equipment to keep you fit. Exercise classes can include dance, yoga, tai chi and more. Swimming, bike-riding, walking, playing water volleyball - the choices for exercise are endless.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that Americans ages 65 and older complete 150 minutes of exercise weekly, focusing on endurance, balance, strength and flexibility.

Our Veterans

Mike Barbour is currently the veterans advocate with Naperville Township. He works with veterans and their families to help them apply for federal, state and local benefits. There is no charge for this service. Barbour noted that over 12,000 veterans are right here in Naperville. His focus is on medical care, pensions for veterans or widows, disability compensation, burial allowances and employment

help.

A benefit most commonly overlooked by veterans is healthcare. Military service prior to 1980 required only a day of service to qualify for lifetime benefits. After 1980, two years of service is required to receive healthcare benefits. Reservists and National Guard do not qualify for these benefits unless they are called up for active duty. Health benefits include medication, outpatient care, hospitalization, caregiver support, hospice care and suicide prevention.

There are three different pension benefits available for senior veterans and their dependents, and each has income and asset eligibility requirements.

The Basic Pension functions as cash assistance for low-income veterans and their dependents. The Housebound Pension covers assistance with day-to-day activities. A doctor must certify that the assistance is needed on a regular basis. The Aid and Attendance Pension provides benefits for veterans and surviving spouses who require assistance on a daily basis. This is another benefit that is frequently overlooked.

Some of the projects Barbour has been involved with include arranging transportation from Naperville to Hines Veterans Administration Hospital using VA buses and coordinating with Hines to bring its Mobile Medical Unit to Naperville every month. During the time he has been in this position he has obtained healthcare benefits for several hundred veterans and participated in job fairs that resulted in over 2,000 job placements, but most important to him was assisting in preventing individuals from taking their own lives.

Barbour has two things he wants veterans to remember: "Do you know where your discharge papers are?" and "Your veteran benefits are not an entitlement, it is a benefit earned when you put on the uniform".

For more information, contact Mike Barbour at (630) 355-2786. Please note that Mike recently announced he will be retiring from his position on Sept. 1. Future plans for the position have not been determined; please check back in the fall for more details.

Help Say Farewell to the Barn

The landscape of Naperville continues to change, yet the community loves its traditions and heritage. As activities at the Barn Recreation Center wind down for

its last season, the Park District invites the community to celebrate the Barn's history at the Barn Farewell Event on Saturday, June 4 from 4 to 9 p.m. at 421 W. Martin Ave.

The event features three bands; free food and non-alcoholic drinks to the first 250 guests; a free commemorative cup to the first 500 guests; kids inflatables; beverages for sale; raffle prizes; and a "memory lane" with Barn nostalgic items on display, photo opportunities and a time capsule opening and viewing.

Soon after the close of Ribfest in the first full week of July, site work will begin for a new maintenance facility at Knoch Park and the Barn Recreation Center will be demolished.



The cornerstone ceremony for the Barn in the 1960s featured George Bussey (left) and Councilman Owen Beidelman (right).