

Our Voice

Winter 2025



Welcome to the Naperville Senior Task Force's (STF) quarterly newsletter: *Our Voice*. The STF enhances quality of life for Naperville seniors through supportive independent living, promotion of their health and well-being, education opportunities and recognition of their self-worth and community belonging. Please visit naperville.il.us/seniortaskforce for information and updates, and follow us on [Facebook](#). Thank you!



Constructive Corner

City of Naperville Public Libraries (For a full listing of events, visit www.naperville-lib.org.)

Readers' Rendezvous Daytime Book Club
11 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, Jan. 21
Program Room, Nichols Library

Book it to the library for a daytime book club that explores a diverse range of topics. This

month the discussion will center on "The Woman They Could Not Silence," by Kate Moore.

Snowy Mason Jar

1 to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 22
Program Room, Naper Boulevard Library

Join a fun, hands-on crafting session where you'll design a winter-themed jar perfect for decoration or gifting. No registration required, but space is limited to the first 18 participants.

Love and Laughs with Michelle Buteau

7 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 23
Online

Join comedian, actress and producer Michelle Buteau in conversation with Greta Johnsen. Michelle is the creator/writer/star of the Netflix series "Survival of the Thickest," inspired by her autobiographical book of essays of the same name. She is also the host of two popular reality competition shows, "The Circle" and "Barbecue Showdown," and hosts the popular podcast "Adulthood."

Greta Johnsen is an interviewer, podcast host and book person. She is loved as co-host of HBO's Official "Game of Thrones" podcast and hosted WBEZ's "Nerdette" podcast for 11 years. ***Registration required.**

Shanghai: Safe Haven During the Holocaust

7 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27
Online

"Shanghai: Safe Haven During the Holocaust," presented by the Illinois Holocaust Museum, illuminates a little-known chapter of Holocaust history. Fleeing Nazi persecution, European Jews, turned away by country after country, found refuge in the unlikely of places: Shanghai, China. In 1946, American photojournalist Arthur Rothstein captured the resilience of Jewish refugees living in the Hongkew District. This powerful exhibit features Rothstein's photographs alongside artifacts from former ghetto residents, offering a profound look at their lives during this period. ***Registration required.**

Estate Planning Explained

7 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 4
Meeting Room A, 95th Street Library

Join us for a comprehensive overview of the estate planning process from start to finish. We'll explore the importance of planning, examine common techniques, and review the essential documents involved in estate planning. This class clarifies the distinctions between wills and trusts, while addressing key topics such as probate, power of attorney for healthcare and financial matters, and guardianship appointments. By the end of the session, you will have a solid understanding of the steps necessary to safeguard your spouse and heirs, equipping you with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions regarding your estate.

Criminal Spines

7 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13
Program Room, Naper Boulevard Library

Join our book club for enthusiasts of mysteries, thrillers, true crime, and all things suspenseful! We'll keep you on the edge of your seat, with varying levels of intensity and violence from title to title. February's discussion will focus on "The Killing Hills," by Chris Offutt.

Edith Head: The Woman Who Dressed Hollywood

1 to 2 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 20
Meeting Room A/B, 95th Street Library

Discover the extraordinary legacy of Edith Head, an iconic costume designer whose

remarkable career earned her eight Oscars and continues to inspire new generations of designers. Renowned for dressing Hollywood's biggest stars, Head's dazzling creations captivated audiences while her competitive and secretive nature fueled her meteoric rise in the industry. Join educational entertainer Martina Mathisen for an engaging exploration of why Edith Head remains the most influential costume designer in Hollywood history.

Books Recommended for Seniors

“The Alchemist” by Paulo Coelho. This philosophical novel about a shepherd’s journey is a classic story about following your dreams and finding your true purpose in life.

“Breathing Lessons” by Anne Tyler. Anne Tyler won a Pulitzer Prize in 1989 for this much-loved novel told across a single summer’s day as Maggie and Ira, married and middle aged, drive from Baltimore to Pennsylvania for the funeral of a friend. What emerges is a tender and vivid portrait of a 28-year marriage painted in hard-earned truths.

“The Pillars of the Earth” by Ken Follett. A sweeping epic that takes place in 12th-century England, revolving around the construction of a cathedral and the lives of the people connected to it.



Five Healthy Habits for a Great 2025

By Amy Friedman
Senior Task Force Member

The start of the new year is a perfect time to prioritize your health. But before you jump in, realize that it takes a minimum of 21 days to form a new habit. Some behaviors are easier to change than others, but consistency, motivation (knowing your why), and positive reinforcement are key to sustaining long-term behavioral change.

Here are five fantastic habits you can start today:

1. **Drink more water.** The saying goes that if you wait until you are thirsty to drink water, it's too late — you are already dehydrated. Staying properly hydrated not only helps rid the body of toxins, but it also provides energy to exercise, helps maintain a healthy body weight, keeps joints lubricated, and regulates body temperature. What's more, hydration promotes clear thought, benefits mood and supports kidney function.
2. **Get a good night's sleep.** The objective is to go to sleep and wake up at the same

time every day, even on the weekends. Sleep is critical for cell division and protein synthesis, which happens at the highest levels during the deepest part of sleep. Sleep is the best time for the body to repair damaged tissues and regenerate new cells. To make sure you go to sleep and stay asleep, avoid caffeine in the afternoon, as well as late-night snacking.

3. **Eat more plants.** People who eat more fruits and vegetables tend to live longer and have fewer instances of heart and other diseases. Aim to avoid food “products” or processed foods by eating “real” foods and not manufactured items that come in a box or a bag. Salads, soups and fruits are smart and affordable options.
4. **Move your body.** Sitting may be the modern equivalent of smoking. Go for a walk or take the stairs when possible. Park far away from the store, find an exercise buddy or put on a yoga video. If you don’t move it, you’ll lose it! Try for a goal of 8,000 steps per day.
5. **Stop doom scrolling.** Sometimes too much of a good thing can become a bad thing. Check your screen time usage on your devices and be aware of how much and what type of content you are consuming. Social media is designed to keep your attention, and algorithms are designed to make us addicted so we keep looking for more. Know that our brains easily become addicted to the dopamine hit that is produced when we see something shocking or infuriating. Screens are designed with all the colors, lights and sounds of a Vegas slot machine, which also lights up the brain. Try changing your screen setting to grayscale to make devices less appealing. You may also want to consider setting time limits on specific apps that you find especially addictive. Or, simply put the phone down and invest in some self-care by taking a bubble bath, reading a book, calling a friend, or going for a walk.

Try adopting one or all of these habits for a healthy start to 2025. And, if you are already incorporating them into your daily routine, good for you. You are ahead of the curve!

Two Monthly Memory Cafés Now Offered

Are you caring for a loved one with dementia? A Memory Café is a social gathering of those living with dementia and their care partners. It is a place where both care partner and care recipient can socialize together and connect with others in similar situations.

Activities at this FREE event vary, but typically include education, music, games and art. Memory Cafés are sponsored by Dementia Friendly Naperville and the Naperville Senior Task Force.

Two Memory Cafés are now being offered monthly:

First Tuesday of the Month

1 – 2:30 p.m.

Fort Hill Activity Center, Multipurpose Room #1

20 Fort Hill Drive, Naperville

Second Tuesday of the Month

2 – 3:30 p.m.

Naperville Public Library, 95th Street Branch, Meeting Room A/B

3015 Cedar Glade Drive, Naperville

To register for the cafés, send a message to dementiafriendlynaperville+info@gmail.com or call Lisa Kirchner at 630-710-7502.

MEMORY CAFÉ

Sponsored by Dementia Friendly Naperville and
the Naperville Senior Task Force

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3015 Cedar Glade Drive, Naperville
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Adopt These Simple Methods to Declutter Your Life

By Amy Friedman
Senior Task Force Member

Terms like 'pack rat' and 'hoarder' are thrown around casually these days, but clutter not only can affect mood and zap energy, it can also become a burden to your loved ones after you are gone. The start of a new year is a great opportunity to tackle what most people have put off for another day.

The number one reason people hold on to material belongings is because it can be difficult to let go of the past. But memories are forever in our hearts and minds. It's easy to take a picture of the children's artwork and store it digitally instead of storing mountains of paper. Other obstacles to decluttering are the urge to save things in case they are needed "someday," as well as the urge to take advantage of every sale and "good deal." Clutter

can get out of control quickly, and it can be overwhelming to know where to begin.

Start small and begin with one room at a time. Set a timer for 30 minutes and build momentum. Sort items into categories: “keep,” “sell,” “donate” and “throw out.” Ask yourself: Do I need this? Does it bring me joy? Apply the 20/20 rule: Can I replace this for \$20 and in 20 minutes or less? If the answers to both questions are yes, the item must go.

Another method of decluttering is the 90/90 rule: Have I used this item in the past 90 days? Will I need to use this item in the next 90 days? If the answers are no, then the item goes. Turn the hangers in your closet backwards and then see which articles of clothing get put away in the closet the correct way. After 90 days, clothes with the hangers still facing backwards must go.

The final rule is based on the Pareto principle, which suggests that people use 20% of their possessions 80% of the time. Regardless of whether you have a large or small space, you should fill that space to 80% capacity and leave the remaining 20% empty to “take a break.”

Whether you choose to sell, donate, or toss the stuff that is weighing you down, the process of letting go is a way to create space and invite positive change into your life. More importantly, you are giving a great gift to your loved ones. When the time comes, they won't be burdened with your clutter.

Resources to Help You Sell, Find New Homes for Unwanted Items

You have diligently sorted your possessions and now have a stash of items ready to leave the premises. Although no longer useful to you, they may still serve others well.

The Naperville area has many charitable organizations that will take clothing and smaller household items: **Goodwill, Amvets, Pennywise Resale Shoppe, Sweet Charity Resale, Second Chance Resale Shop, Serendipity Resale Shop** and **local churches**. For furniture and larger items there is **St. Vincent's Wayside Cross Ministries** and **Habitat for Humanity Restore**.

You can also sell items through a garage sale or list them online. There are many closed groups on Facebook, such as **Naperville Area Trade and Sell** or **Naperville Garage Sale**. In addition to Facebook, many apps can help you sell your items, including **OfferUp, Nextdoor, Poshmark, eBay, Decluttr, letgo, Mercari** and **Chairish**. There's also **Buy Nothing**, a Facebook group and app that people use to give away items for free. After someone lists an item, people share their personal connection to the item, as well as the reasons they would like to have it. The person listing the item then decides who should receive it.

As the seller, you are in control of the exchange. You can choose to meet the buyer at a busy parking lot or police station lobby or schedule a porch pick-up, in which you leave the item on your porch and ask the buyer to leave payment or use a digital form of payment such as Venmo or Zelle. Above all, beware of scammers and protect your personal information and mobile number.



Need a Lift to the Doctor? Ride Assist Naperville is Ready to Help

By Arlene Orr

Senior Task Force Member

Are you a senior living in Naperville who needs a ride to a medical appointment? Ride Assist Naperville (RAN) is an organization that helps seniors get to medical appointments with the assistance of volunteer drivers who have been trained and vetted. Prospective riders must be Naperville residents who are 60 or older and are able to get in and out of a vehicle.

According to the RAN website, rides can be arranged for any type of medical or dental appointment (excludes procedures/surgery where anesthesia is administered), including regular check-ups, pacemaker checks, blood tests/lab work, vision, hearing, dialysis, X-rays/scans, wound care, physical therapy, and chemotherapy.

Once a prospective rider has filled out an application, one week (or more) notice must be given for an appointment date. The rider is then matched with a volunteer driver who will take them to the appointment, wait for them, and return them home. A donation of \$15 for the return ride is suggested. Rides are available from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Volunteers are insured and use their own vehicles to provide rides.

Ashley Abraham, executive director at RAN, says the service offers “more than a ride to the doctor. It could be (the rider’s) only outing, and we want to make that pleasant for them.”

RAN is always looking for more volunteers, so you may also wish to consider donating your time and driving skills if you are able. Visit [RAN'S Facebook page](#) for current news. Information for riders and volunteer drivers can be found on the [RAN website](#).



Four Practices to Reduce Your Risk of Falls

By Arlene Orr

Senior Task Force Member

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for adults ages 65 and over? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in four older adults report falling every year, but fewer than half tell their doctor.

Approximately 95% of hip fractures are caused by falls, and falling is the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries in older adults. Falling once also doubles a person's chances of falling again.

Why are seniors at risk for falling? There are a variety of reasons. For seniors who have mobility problems, the likelihood of falling increases. The same goes for poor eyesight, cognitive impairment and poor balance/muscle weakness, which all increase risk. Taking multiple medications can also be a risk, due to side effects such as dizziness. Even something like incontinence issues can become a risk factor when it causes a person to rush to get to a bathroom.

But there's good news: Many falls are preventable! Four steps are recommended to reduce risk: exercise, medication management, vision checks and home safety.

Exercise. For those with fewer risk factors, maintaining daily physical exercise is beneficial. Walking, exercise classes, biking, tennis, golf, tai chi and dancing all help keep joints, tendons and ligaments flexible. For those at a greater risk of falls, a more structured program — perhaps created with the help of medical professionals — may help improve particular risk factors.

Medication use. Taking multiple medications can increase risk, as side effects such as dizziness or drowsiness may increase the likelihood of falling. You may wish to discuss any potential medication interactions with your physician.

Eye exams. Booking regular eye exams is crucial for minimizing falls. Our eyes change as we age, and some falls are directly related to poor eyesight.

Fall-proofing your home. Use assistive devices such as walkers and canes. Install grab bars, shower chairs and railings on both sides of steps. Other hazards include clutter, loose cords and carpets, and slippery bathtubs. Instead of using a stepstool, place everyday things so you can reach them. Importantly, wear proper shoes, such as a pair of sneakers.

You can also be prepared in case a fall happens by keeping a well-charged cordless or mobile phone with you at all times and arranging for someone to check in on you daily if you have risk factors for falling and live alone.

You may also wish to consult the [CDC's STEADI program](#) brochure to assess your personal risk of falling.

Silver CPR Returns in February

Resolve to be safer in 2025! The Naperville Senior Task Force is again offering the opportunity to learn the lifesaving skills of basic CPR, the use of an automatic external defibrillator, and choking intervention.

Silver CPR **classes are free** to participants and taught in a relaxed setting by Naperville Fire Department paramedics. Classes are scheduled for **10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11**, at the A. George and Patricia Pradel Safety Town of Naperville, 1320 Aurora Ave.

To register, click on the link for the class time that best fits your schedule:

[10 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11](#)

[12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb 11](#)

For more information, send an email message to silvercpr2025@gmail.com.



Don't Skip Your Annual Physical

It's an Investment in Your Well-Being

By Dr. Nuzhat Chalisa
Senior Task Force Member

Our health needs become more complex as we age, so getting annual physicals and preventive care is essential for overall well-being. For older adults, these checkups are not just routine. They are a proactive approach to addressing the unique challenges that

come with aging. Annual physicals can dramatically improve quality of life and longevity, from managing chronic conditions to catching potential issues early.

Why are annual physicals crucial for older adults?

Annual physicals provide a comprehensive picture of your health, allowing doctors to track changes and identify early warning signs of illness. For older adults, this continuity is essential as age-related health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, or osteoporosis often develop gradually.

These visits are an opportunity to address mental health, discuss mobility, and evaluate nutrition — all vital aspects of aging well. For example, addressing mobility issues early can help prevent falls, a leading cause of injury in older adults. Furthermore, annual checkups provide the chance to discuss long-term planning, including advance directives and healthcare preferences, ensuring peace of mind for you and your loved ones.

Preventive tests and their recommended timeframes

Preventive care is at the heart of healthy aging. Below are the key tests and screenings recommended for older adults, along with their suggested frequency.

Blood pressure measurement:

- Frequency: at least annually or more frequently for those with hypertension.
- Why: High blood pressure significantly increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Cholesterol and glucose:

- Frequency: every one to three years, depending on your health history.
- Why: These tests help detect diabetes and high cholesterol, common conditions in older adults.

Bone density test:

- Frequency: every 2 years for women over 65 and men at risk.
- Why: Early detection of osteoporosis can prevent debilitating fractures.

Cancer screenings:

- Colon cancer: every 10 years with a colonoscopy, or more frequently with other tests for those at higher risk.
- Breast cancer: mammograms every one to two years for women starting at age 45, or earlier for high-risk women.
- Prostate Cancer: PSA testing should be discussed with your doctor based on individual risks.
- Lung Cancer: annual low-dose CT scans for high-risk individuals, such as smokers.

Eye Exams:

- Frequency: every one to two years.
- Why: Regular exams help catch cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration early.

Hearing Tests:

- Frequency: annually or as needed.
- Why: Hearing loss can significantly impact quality of life, and early intervention is key.

Cognitive Assessments:

- Frequency: during routine visits if there are memory concerns.
- Why: Early detection of dementia allows for better planning and management.

Vaccinations:

- Influenza: annually.
- Pneumococcal: once after 65, with possible boosters.
- Shingles: two-dose series after age 50.
- Tdap: booster every 10 years.

The role of lifestyle counseling

Annual physicals are not just about tests, they're also a time to discuss lifestyle factors that contribute to long-term health. Maintaining a balanced diet, staying active, and remaining socially engaged are all crucial elements of healthy aging. For example, regular exercise helps improve mobility, balance, and overall strength, reducing the risk of falls. Similarly, staying socially active combats loneliness and boosts mental health.

Mental health is another critical focus during these visits. Depression and anxiety often go undiagnosed in older adults, yet they can significantly impact overall health. Open communication with your doctor during an annual physical creates an opportunity to address these issues.

A holistic approach to aging

Preventive care doesn't just manage illnesses; it empowers older adults to live with dignity and independence. By prioritizing annual physicals and the recommended tests, you're taking an active role in your health journey.

Ultimately, the goal of preventive care is simple: to help you age well, maintain your quality of life, and enjoy more of what you love. Don't underestimate the power of an annual checkup. It's one of the best investments you can make in your future.



Introducing New Student Task Force Member

By Fatimah Khan

Senior Task Force Student Member

My name is Fatimah Khan, and I'd like to introduce myself as the newest member of Naperville's Senior Task Force. I'm a junior at Naperville North High School and began working with the Task Force in October.

I've always been interested in getting more involved with the Naperville community. Many of my teachers encouraged me to apply to Naperville's boards and commissions as a student representative. With the guidance of a City Council Member, I was introduced to the Senior Task Force. I now assist the STF with outreach.

As a student representative, my responsibilities are varied. One of my main roles involves managing the Task Force's social media presence. The Senior Task Force both organizes and promotes events specifically designed for the senior population. I create and post graphics, event reminders, and updates across various platforms to ensure Naperville's senior population stays informed and connected.

Additionally, I photograph significant events to document the Task Force's activities and achievements, such as during the Senior of the Year awards. I also attend monthly board meetings, where I collaborate with other members and provide updates on my outreach efforts. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for me to contribute ideas and learn more about what needs to be shared with the rest of the community.

Overall, I am very inspired by the meaningful contributions the Task Force has made to improve the lives of Naperville seniors. I think serving as a student representative for this task force has helped me learn more about my community and has given me a valuable opportunity for service. I'm looking forward to working with the Senior Task Force even more in the future!

The Senior Task Force will host a City Council candidate forum from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 20, in Council Chambers of the Municipal Center, 400 S. Eagle St. All are invited. The STF is developing questions to be answered by each candidate and shared with the public in anticipation of the Consolidated General Election on April 1.

Four Council seats are up for election, with three incumbent Council members seeking re-election: Ian Holzauer, Jennifer Bruzan Taylor and Benny White. Councilman Paul Leong is not seeking re-election. Five additional candidates have submitted petitions to run for the City Council seats: Meghna Bansal, Mary Gibson, Nag Jaiswal, Derek McDaniel and Ashfaq Syed.

A flyer for a City Council Candidate Forum. The top left features a graphic of red and white wavy stripes. The top right contains the date and time: "March 20, 2025" and "7:00 - 8:30 pm". Below this is a blue star. The main title "CANDIDATE FORUM" is centered in a large, dark blue, serif font, underlined with a red horizontal line. Below the title, it says "HOSTED BY THE NAPERVILLE SENIOR TASK FORCE" in a smaller, dark blue, serif font. Underneath that is the phrase "*City Council Candidates respond to community issues*" in a red, italicized serif font. A second blue star is positioned above the location information: "Naperville", "Municipal Center", and "City Council Chambers" in a dark blue, serif font. The bottom right corner features a graphic of a blue field with white stars, representing the bottom of the American flag.

March 20, 2025
7:00 - 8:30 pm

★

**CANDIDATE
FORUM**

HOSTED BY THE NAPERVILLE
SENIOR TASK FORCE

*City Council Candidates
respond to community issues*

★

Naperville
Municipal Center
City Council Chambers



Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Presented by:

Alzheimer's Association

Illinois

The Fourth Tuesday of the month
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Naperville Public Library - 95th Street Library
3015 Cedar Glade Drive
Naperville, IL 60564

To RSVP email: DementiaFriendlyNaperville+info@gmail.com

Call: Lisa Kirchner at 630-710-7502

or call Our Helpline 800.272.3900

Visit www.alz.org/illinois to learn more about caregiver programs and resources. To further extend your network of support, visit ALZ connected®, our online community, at alzconnected.org.

Build a support system with people who understand.

Alzheimer's Association® support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for people living with dementia and their care partners to:

- Develop a support system.
- Exchange practical information on challenges and possible solutions.
- Talk through issues and ways of coping.
- Share feelings, needs and concerns.
- Learn about community resources.

800.272.3900 | alz.org

Our Voice Newsletter Sign-up

Sign up for the STF *Our Voice* quarterly newsletter by registering for the City's eNews at naperville.il.us/enews. Don't forget to check the "Senior Newsletter: Our Voice" box!

Disclaimer: The distribution of this information does not imply Naperville Senior Task Force or City of Naperville endorsement.

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