



SENIOR LIVING

Naperville Township expert ready to help



KAREN COURNEY

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Bev Frier and I are continuing to visit with organizations that provide services to our seniors. The goal is to accumulate information about programs available here and combine it into a comprehensive database so we can have "one-stop shopping" for senior needs.

Most recently we met with Jenny Dawley and Jan Barbour at Naperville Township.

Dawley coordinates the township's senior services. We were impressed to learn that she is a certified elderly services officer.

This training is sponsored by the Illinois attorney general's office and consists of an intensive weeklong course designed to educate and sensitize police officers to issues that affect our older citizens. The training educates law enforcement to become aware of the needs and problems faced by the senior community.

Dawley also attended the Advanced Elderly Service Officer Training that provided more in-depth knowledge on the most important issues facing today's seniors. While Dawley is not a member of law enforcement, she earned the designation to better do her job at the township.

For these reasons and others, Dawley is an excellent resource for seniors. The township might not be able to address their needs, but she will know where they should call.

Some of the services regularly provided by the township include:

■ RTA senior reduced fare card —



Bev Frier has been helping columnist Karen Courney come up with a list of senior services for Naperville residents. | SUN-TIMES MEDIA FILE

Apply at the township to obtain the card. It allows seniors, at a reduced fare, to ride Metra, Pace and CTA anywhere in the six-county RTA service area. A photo ID that includes a birthdate is required. No appointment is necessary. This reduced fare card is also available to persons with disabilities.

■ Ride DuPage — Register at the township office for this subsidized transportation service for township residents. The cost of a one-way trip is a dollar plus a dollar per mile.

■ LIHEAP — This federal- and state-funded program provides heating and cooling assistance to financially qualified individuals. It also provides repairs and replacement as deemed necessary.

■ Benefit Access Program — This program replaces the Circuit Breaker program. Services include free transit rides for seniors and disabled people and discounted license plates. There are income restrictions.

■ Tax deferral — This program al-



Naperville Senior Services are coordinated by Jenny Dawley.

lows seniors to defer all or a portion of real estate taxes until the property is sold. There is an annual income qualification.

There are other assistance programs through the township that are available to anyone in need:

■ General assistance can be

FEEDBACK WANTED

Columnist Karen Courney wants to know what you think of having a person — no sifting through a menu — answering a dedicated telephone number, so you always know where you can easily get the senior-related information you need. If this idea appeals to you, she asks that you kindly share your thoughts by sending her an email at sun-seniorliving@gmail.com.

obtained for anyone meeting the financial requirements.

■ Emergency assistance is available once in a 12-month period, with a lifetime maximum of five times.

■ Assistance with utilities, rent and mortgage payments is available to qualified individuals. Salvation Army funds are administered through the township on a limited basis for utilities, rent or medication.

■ Access DuPage is a nonprofit that provides care for low-income individuals who have no health insurance. Applications are taken at the township office.

All of these services are available through Naperville Township — now use them!

Receive more information by contacting Jenny Dawley at 630-357-8058 or the township at 630-955-2786.

Parting note: Last week, Dawley received a letter informing her that the office of Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan selected her as one of the 2013 Outstanding Elderly Service Officers. The award will be presented during a ceremony Sept. 12 at the Illinois State TRIAD Conference in East Peoria.

Coming soon: Long-term care, reverse mortgages and SALT

Karen Courney has lived in Naperville since 1970. Contact her at sunseniorliving@gmail.com

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