



# Nowak

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The remarkable Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center sits at Blunt Park

## Improving the Lives of Local Seniors — The Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center

Coming up on its one year anniversary, the 12.8 million dollar Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center opened on February 2, 2018.

The impressive two-story building at Blunt Park is about 23,500 square feet and provides many fabulous opportunities for those who enter. The RAJSC is the first stand-alone building in the history of Springfield that was developed and constructed solely for the purpose of serving the senior population. The first floor houses a 'grand room' that is a multi-purpose room used for special events. There is also a full-service commercial kitchen, a library and cafe area, a computer/meeting room, and administrative offices. The second floor has an exercise center, a large multi-purpose room for arts, ceramics and sewing and a game room. Being in Blunt Park also benefits seniors in providing opportunities for walking and other outdoor exercises.

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Members of the Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center getting their groove on at a dance class

## Get Moving with the Department of Elder Affairs!

Through the all-encompassing Department of Elder Affairs, there are many health and wellness activities provided for seniors. Throughout Springfield, there are a variety of Senior Centers providing physical activities and classes, and there is even a dedicated fitness center, all to get seniors up and active.

At the Fitness Center, located at 310 Plainfield Street, there are cardio machines, walking clubs, and more. There is also a fitness center located inside the Raymond A. Jordan senior center. Monday through Friday at the Fitness Center, seniors can have coffee and use cardio and weight machines after receiving medical clearance from their doctors.

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*The Senior Center's Morning Walking club*

## Improving the Lives of Local Seniors — The Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center

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The center, which is located at 1476 Roosevelt Avenue, is open Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 4:30pm. Within the center many activities take place on a daily basis. There are classes, games (such as bingo and bridge) and the popular and affordable lunch program. A balanced and nutritious meal is served daily in the dining room and is a popular spot for seniors. It's a chance for them to meet up with friends, enjoy an affordable lunch (just \$3.50!).

On the first floor is the Computer room where, through classes, seniors can learn computer basics, how to job search online, and how to use Microsoft Word. There are open computer times to give people a chance to utilize the computers on their own.

Thinking back over the past year, Cindy Coughlin, Director of Programming, is grateful for all those who come through the building. **“Some seniors come every day, some come weekly, there are 2000 people signed up for membership and about 60 people come into the building everyday.”**

Cindy also mentions some exciting programming at the center. “We partner with a lot of different outside agencies.

On February 8th, Andrea Littrell from Big Y hosted a healthy eating demonstration. On March 8th, over 30 vendors came to the center for a big health fair.”

The center also helps provide other important programming for seniors. One such initiative is called the SHINE program, which stands for Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone. Through this program counselors are able to provide information and assistance to Medicare recipients of all ages, as well as their caregivers. Another vital program run by Elder Affairs is Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

**Through this federally-run program, seniors get help with their resumes and interview skills, and are placed into eligible training sites where they are paid minimum wage for 20 hours a week, with the hope of eventually being hired for permanent employment.**

The center could always use donations and volunteers as well. On the third Thursday of each month they are always looking for volunteers to help pack brown bag lunches to help the local food bank. “It’s not just about helping us,” Cindy says. “It’s about giving back to others.”

For more information about the center or if interested in volunteering your time, call (413)787-6785, or visit the website, <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/hhs/?id=elderaffairs>.



*Two members of the Senior Center's Billiards League having some fun*



2018 Opening Ceremony with President Mary Cooper lighting torch on Blake Track at Springfield College

## Massachusetts Senior Games Going for Gold

**P**ete Charron, Games Coordinator, stresses the importance of getting active, and getting involved. He explains, “as an organization, it is our mission to spread health and fitness to adults aged 40 and up through athletic events and educational programs and we accomplish this through an impressive network of volunteerism.”

Since the humble beginnings of the Massachusetts Senior Games, it has experienced growth, in athletes, volunteers and sponsors. The organization credits a lot of its success to the tireless and generous sponsors that keep it going. Today, more than 2500 adults participate in both the summer and winter senior games. In 2017, with improvements in technology, the program ushered in a state-of-the-art online registration system, phasing out the need for paper, and shifting the focus to new enhancements as this new technology unfolds.

The main sports of the Massachusetts Senior Games are held at Springfield College, on a Saturday in June. They are comprised of 25 different events including:

- Archery
- Horseshoes
- Volleyball
- Bowling
- Pistol Shooting
- Triathlon
- Baseball
- Shuffleboard
- Tennis
- Golf
- Power Walking

Athletes compete in five-year age brackets, starting at 40, and going all the way up to 90+.

In the winter, the Massachusetts Senior Games host a few events: Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, and Ice Hockey. The skiing and snowboarding event continues to take place on Wachusett Mountain, and the hockey tournament occurs in Worcester.

The Massachusetts Senior Games relies heavily upon its sponsors to continue its mission to promote the health and fitness of older adults in the Commonwealth through health education programs, fitness activities, and competitive athletic events. The income from the Games’ registration fees are not enough to keep them going, so they are always looking for more sponsors. They also accept donations through their website, <http://www.maseniorgames.org>. Just last year, they were able to raise \$3547 through this avenue.

MASG is always looking for new contributors whether it be as event managers, event volunteers, donors or those who would just like to spread the word! If you are interested in learning, please visit their website, <http://www.maseniorgames.org>, or contact [info@maseniorgames.org](mailto:info@maseniorgames.org).

## Get Moving with the Department of Elder Affairs!

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Also from 7:30am-9am each Monday through Friday, seniors can have their blood pressure checked. On Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30am, those interested can participate in a resistance bands program. Other senior centers offer fitness programs such as balance, line dancing and light aerobics.

In addition to the programs offered at the Fitness Center and other surrounding centers; the main center, the Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center, also offers a variety of fitness groups and classes. Kerry Welch, Health, Wellness and Fitness Coordinator for the Department of Elder affairs, says that one of the most popular classes is the Walk and Strength Class. “We put on oldies music from the 70s and it’s about 20-30 minutes of walking and strength with exercise bands. It’s a lot of fun, people are talking and joking with each other and just being social, it’s a wonderful class.” Another popular class offered is Tai-Chi, occurring Tuesdays at 930am in the Banquet Room at the Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center. “The instructor is amazing,” Welch says. “She’s been doing this for 25 years, and she’s just so mellow, so calm. Tai-Chi helps with balance, muscle tone, and even breathing.”

As one ages, their muscle tone decreases. It is important to stay fit and active. Through these programs offered, the Department of Elder Affairs makes it easy to stay healthy and to have fun doing it. **“Our fitness groups become like a little community. It’s fun to see everyone interact. Once I saw three cousins, side-by-side on treadmills, age 82, 83 and 89! You get to see everyone act like kids, it’s a very social atmosphere.”**

For more information on fitness activities provided by the Department of Elder affairs, please call (413) 787-6785 or visit the main website at <http://www.springfield-ma.gov/hhs/?id=elderaffairs>

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How do I Write a Fitting Eulogy?



don't worry about it! Start in the middle, the main part, and decide how to begin afterwards. As you gather your thoughts, it may help to choose one of the three common ways to organize a eulogy:

- 1. Chronological Life History:** Start at the person's childhood and go through the highlights of their life. Another way to format it is to do reverse-chronological order; starting with the present and working your way back through the person's past. This method often reveals aspects of the person's life that the audience may not know, such as fun childhood experiences and stories about their career.
- 2. Choosing a Special Theme:** As you gather information about your loved one and talk to others, you may notice a theme develop. Choose one big area, and give examples. A theme will keep you focused on the direction of your speech.
- 3. Three-Point-Plan :** Think of three important things you'd like to say and the order in which you'd like to say them.

Being asked to write a eulogy is a great honor, as it can be a final gift that you can give to the deceased and their loved ones. In the midst of your grief, it may feel like a daunting task, but with some gentle preparation you can develop and deliver a wonderful eulogy to serve as a great tribute for your loved one.

As you get started, you may find yourself getting emotional. You can begin to talk with family and friends to share stories and memories of the deceased. As you share these stories, you can start developing a list, which can also include what things your loved one enjoyed. Nydia Gallagher, Funeral Director, Owner and Certified Preplanning Consultant of Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services explains further, **"Start off by writing about specific information of the person's life. Gather your thoughts before delving in."** It is OK to take breaks from preparing and writing the eulogy to let yourself work through your feelings.

After sharing stories and developing a list, you can begin to draft your speech. Remember the general rule for a eulogy is about 3 to 5 minutes (no more than 10). It helps to say it out loud as you write it. If you don't know where to start...

It is very important to make sure you write what you'd like to say down. As you write the eulogy, keep it positive. A eulogy is in praise of someone's life. "Be respectful, and keep on-topic." Nydia says. "Make sure to keep the person in mind as you are writing down what you'd like to say." Make sure to practice your speech, say it in a mirror, have someone listen and give feedback. Keep practicing until you feel confident in your ability to deliver the speech. On the day of the funeral, dress appropriately, and bring a bottle of water up the podium when it is your turn to speak. Remember, there is no requirement to give a slick or polished talk; if you feel emotional, take a few deep breaths, and carry on.

If you'd like additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the experts at Nowak Funeral Home & Cremation Services. We can help you gather information as well as provide past examples of other eulogies to help you get ideas. Please call us at (413) 543-1892 or visit <http://www.nowakfuneral.com>.