



The Sunrise

Published by the Rotary Club of Naperville Sunrise

February 2026

Bruce Dixon, editor (dixon-bruce@comcast.net)

Sunrise Calendar

Subject to change

All February meetings at Naperville Country Club (NCC)

February

6: Regular Club meeting, 7am, NCC – **Brett Weiss**, Weiss Scholarship Foundation

10: Virtual Board meeting, 7:15am

13: Regular Club meeting, 7am, NCC – Youth Cmte. grants

20: Regular Club meeting, 7am, NCC – **Monica Conners**, Naperville Development Partnership

27: No Club meeting / Board meeting, 7:15, Egg Harbor Cafe
direct ideas for speakers

*and Club projects to **Nick Niemi***

Facilitating Entrepreneurship



Over the next three months, students at three Naperville middle schools will undergo specialized training in entrepreneurship, leadership, and purpose-driven business design created by the Naperville Inside Out Club. The program, called “Business Designers 4 Good, (BD4G)” has been successfully used at Jefferson Junior High School, and is offered as a summer camp.

Inside Out Club Executive Director and Sunrise Rotary President, **Marion Ruthig**, said students “explore how to create a business that makes money - *and* makes a difference - while gaining real-world confidence, collaboration skills, and connection with peers.” This winter’s BD4G Programs at Jefferson, Lincoln, and Madison Junior High Schools include up to 18 hours of experiential learning. Students create a full business idea, then pitch that idea to community judges.

Marion said the overall mission of the Inside-Out Club is to empower young people to live each day with good character. “We help them focus on their strengths. They can then accomplish way more. As they enter middle school and high school, character becomes centered more around life skills...the ability to solve problems, connect with others, and manage challenging situations.”

(More)



Terri Lynn and **John Nania** hosted a “cozy holiday biscotti demo” social at their home. On the menu: homemade classic twice-baked Italian cookies. From left, above: **Ginny Moore**, **Maria Laterza**, **President Marion Ruthig**, **Terry Lynn**, **Kim Coyne**, **Beth Wilken**. (Photo by **John Nania**)

❖ **Ginnie Moore** has fully recovered from foot surgery.

❖ **Mary Ann** and **Brand Bobosky** became great grandparents on January 12.



Ryan Siebert reports that preparations for our March 14 St. Paddy’s Day 5K are on track, and he asks for member help in getting additional sponsors, adding that tabletop sponsorships are a good entry point for new participants.



February 2026 (cont.)

Riverwalk Update



The opening of the Eagle Street Gateway reflects continuing improvements to the Naperville Riverwalk. Riverwalk Commission Chairwoman **Jan Erickson**



(left) said the commission’s goal is to raise enough money to complete Riverwalk upgrades by 2031, the 200th anniversary of the city and 50th anniversary of the Riverwalk itself.

Erickson said the first Riverwalk Master Plan, drafted in 2000, included an ambitious list of 150 improvement projects. That list has been whittled to 12...six capital and six enhancement projects. Highlights include:

- Expansion of the Grand Pavilion to accommodate a multitude of events
- A new Prairie Nature Garden to showcase native ecology and habitat
- Riverbank restoration to improve ecology, habitat, and connectivity
- A new park and gateway to North Central College
- Improvements near Hillside Avenue to increase exposure and accommodate cyclists
- Extension of the Riverwalk to Martin Avenue, linking to the Edward-Elmhurst Campus

For more information:

<https://www.naperville.il.us/government/board-and-commissions/riverwalk-commission/>

<https://www.naperville.il.us/enjoy-naperville/naperville-riverwalk/>

Secret Sauce



Jen Bystry is director of community engagement for Bridge Communities.

Bridge Communities (BC) is a non-profit corporation providing transitional housing to families with children experiencing homelessness in DuPage County. Speaking at our January 9 breakfast, **Jen Bystry** said the goal is “permanent, generational, self-sufficiency; to make sure our families are healthy, have enough money to live on, and have a home they can afford.” In essence, she said, BC helps families break the cycle of homelessness. We help people facing homelessness rebuild their lives. 40% of our housing units are here in Naperville.”

Bystry said the amount required for a parent supporting two children to afford basic needs and permanent housing without being rent-burdened is \$70,000. She says 44% of DuPage renters are considered rent burdened.



BC Chief Executive Officer **Amy Van Polen**, writing in the Bridge Communities brochure, says, “what makes (us) truly special is what we call our ‘secret sauce,’ a unique, proven model built on the simple yet profound idea of neighbors helping neighbors. Whether you serve as a mentor, give generously, or advocate for our mission, you are part of something extraordinary.”

(End)