

[Seniors](#) 

# Seniors get organized

By Mary Wenzel

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MARLBOROUGH - After years of working hard and raising their five children, Pat and Roger Beaudet live a simpler life during retirement.

But between volunteering to help Hurricane Katrina victims in New Orleans, where they live out of a car, relaxing at their vacation home in New Hampshire, the Beaudets have spent little time at their Marlborough home. They're contemplating what to do with 40 years' worth of accumulated possessions stored in their attic and

Recently, the Beaudets joined more than 30 other local seniors at the Marlborough Public Library in order to attend a presentation on "Organizing Gems for Seniors," presented by local resident Patty Von Schoppe of Organized Solutions.

Pat Beaudet said she wanted to make sure she was on the right track as she sifted through her clogged storage. "I don't want to leave this mess for the kids," stated Pat Beaudet. "It's so unfair."

Each year, thousands of seniors leave their homes, making it necessary to de-clutter the home and to sort, store, and dispose of possessions.

"The greatest gift you can give to your children is to make the decisions about what to do with your stuff now," Von Schoppe said. "This process is hard on older adults and on their adult children. We can help keep things on track and provide a supportive hand."

A professional organizer and a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, Von Schoppe took advantage of NAPO's Get Organized Month in January to raise awareness of the benefits of getting organized and hiring a professional organizer. She also offered ideas for stopping telemarketers and handling donation requests, as well as reducing and getting rid of junk mail and much more.

"I've been in the business of changing and organizing spaces for more than 20 years," explained Von Schoppe. "I've always had a flair for organization and creativity, which led me to the creation of Organized Solutions."

Working full time as she was raising four children and managing a busy household, Von Schoppe experienced the challenges of minimizing clutter in her own life.

"I understand the demands on time during working hours, and the stress of having too much to do with too little time," she said.

When seniors downsize, it doesn't mean throwing away all their belongings; however it does mean making

to keep more than what will fill the space available at the new location. Von Schoppe said that a good qu yourself when downsizing is, "Would you pay someone to have it moved?"

Here are a few more of her suggestions:

·Remember that organizing doesn't mean throwing away all your belongings.

·Start slow -- one room at a time and one space at a time.

·Don't keep anything you don't love.

·If you must get rid of a piece that means a great deal to you, take a picture of it that you can look at anyti

·Giving to a charitable organization or to a rummage sale as well as selling on eBay or in a consignment s good ways of getting rid of unwanted items. "In the eyes of the beholder, my trash may be something you Von Schoppe.

·Give away family heirlooms as birthday and holiday gifts. "Our kids do want our stuff, but not our junk,"

Seniors will gain a sense of freedom and control by organizing a lifetime of possessions, Von Schoppe s

"Your home will have a new look," she said.

Pat Beaudet, who has already begun downsizing, agrees. "The house feels lighter," she said.

To contact Von Schoppe, call 508-481-0153 or email her at [patty@organizemetrowest.com](mailto:patty@organizemetrowest.com).

For more information about Organized Solutions, go to [organizemetrowest.com](http://organizemetrowest.com).

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Angela Stoller,Marlboro,Ma

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