

# One-of-a-kind auction finds to benefit Space Coast seniors

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BREVARD COUNTY — Gorgeous fine art, intricate oriental rugs, sports memorabilia and more will be up for auction at an upcoming event — with all proceeds benefiting a worthy cause.

Helping Seniors of Brevard will host a benefit auction on Saturday, Oct. 17 at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church in Indialantic from 6-10 p.m. The cost for one ticket is \$25 or a five-pack of tickets is \$100.

Joe Steckler, founder of Helping Seniors of Brevard, said he got the idea to host the auction as a way to fund Helping Seniors.

"County and United Way funding is not easy to obtain, so based on my 25 years of experience, I knew an auction of unique items would be a winner," Mr. Steckler said. "Our entire fundraising base will be built on financial actions we can control, put in place and ensure they are there to let us help those who need help."

Mr. Steckler, who also founded The Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation, said that in 2011, he began to see a need for more of an outfit that worked to complete the care equation for seniors.

"What good did it do to have all of these wonderful resources, like a memory disorder clinic, day care, Aging Matters and more, if people did not know about them?" Mr. Steckler asked. "Since I started the third radio show in the United States that dealt with senior issues in 2000; a senior column in 'Florida Today'

in 2007 and started the television series 'Focus on Seniors' in 2007, I knew we had a head start on programs to disseminate information."

From there, Mr. Steckler pooled his resources and founded Helping Seniors of Brevard.

"We work to inform, educate and connect seniors, and those who care for them, to resources," he explained. "Where we differ from others is that Kay Keyser, our information specialist, talks to people, finds out their problems, gets to help them and then follows up to ensure help was received."

Helping Seniors also established a Senior Advocacy Council, conducted an eight-month survey and published its results to the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners and recommended an aging plan for the county.

"We do not have such a plan, and in a county that is about 50 percent seniors, that is not right," Mr. Steckler said.

A retired United States Navy captain, Mr. Steckler said he began working on the benefit auction about eight months ago.

"I contacted artists across Florida and the U.S. who had helped me in previous fundraisers," Mr. Steckler said. "I got a picture of Capt. John McCandles making the first untethered space walk. He is a Naval Academy classmate."

Mr. Steckler said he also went to sources he knew well and those who are senior-friendly, such as Jan's You

Frame It, House of Frames, Oceanside Framing, Studio3Framing and Renaissance Framing, which donated a majority of the framing.

The benefit auction also features many unique items, such as arrowheads that Mr. Steckler's brother dug up in Kentucky.

"They are, in fact, up to 10,000 years old," he said.

There will also be several World War II posters, which are framed by teakwood that came from the decking of a submarine rescue vessel.

"The jewelry (up for grabs) was made by a man who has helped me with fundraising for many years," Mr. Steckler said. "I got Super Bowl posters from Charles Fazzino, the artist, who has helped me for many years. The signature of Coach Bill Belichick of the Patriots was obtained by Joe Trancini, a Navy quarterback, who asked Joe Bellino, former Navy Heisman Trophy winner and later a Patriot, to ask the coach to sign them, which he did."

Mr. Steckler said he believes it helped a little that Coach Belichick's father was one of his own coaches when he played football for the Naval Academy in 1954-55.

Falasiri Rugs in Vero Beach has also kindly donated 11 beautifully crafted Persian rugs.

"When the owner learned what we were doing, he said he would help," Mr. Steckler said. "That is how it has come together. We bought a few items,



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most are donated, and it has taken a lot of work to make it happen."

Helping Seniors of Brevard also received a football helmet signed by Hall-of-Famer Marcus Allen and two oil lithio-stereograph paintings from Maak Gallery in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church is located at 3050 N. Highway A1A, Indialantic.

For more information about the auction or Helping Seniors of Brevard, call (321) 473-7770 or visit [www.HelpingSeniorsofBrevard.org](http://www.HelpingSeniorsofBrevard.org).

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