

VIEWPOINT

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The value of information

In the 22 years that I have been working with seniors, I have stressed education and the value of connecting those who need help to the right resources.

For seniors, the importance of information must be stated and restated, as it is critical to continued good health. Most significantly, we should all understand that false pride, a pride that prevents us from using assistive devices as we age, is something we must overcome.

We all know how beneficial it is to exercise regularly if we are to age gracefully. In a recent television show with Chris Marriott of "Kindred at Home," we discussed the value of body suppleness to an individual's ability to move as safely and painlessly as possible. I have fibromyalgia and know what pain can do as we age. Exercise, especially walking, is vital to my continued mobility.

In the conduct of the show, Chris and I discussed the use of canes, walkers and other devices to assist us as we walk. Falls are the leading cause of fatal injuries for older Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The number of seniors who die from fall-related injuries has nearly doubled since 2000, and about one-in-three seniors falling every year. Non-fatal falls can cause broken bones, brain injuries and decreased independence.

Many of these falls can be prevented



**PRESIDENT,
HELPING SENIORS
OF BREVARD**
JOE STECKLER

through the use of a walking device. Although using assistance devices is sometimes considered a sign of weakness, I use them to remain safe and independent. I have a cane and four-wheel rollator in my car and one I use at home. Most of the time, I use the cane, but if I think I am too unsteady or have more pain than usual, I use the rollator. It is safer, eases my mind and gets me to my destination safely and on time. It takes no effort to remove the cane from the car and only a little more effort for the rollator.

Knowing all of the above, why do so many ignore the warning signs and turn into couch potatoes? I personally do not like walking, although I believe it is the best possible exercise for me at my age. Running and other impact exercises may not be our best choice, but we can develop individual plans with the advice of a personal trainer or friend. There are excellent facilities in Brevard, some free and some for which you pay a small fee.

At the start of this article, I mentioned the value of education, information, and access to services. The nonprofit organization Helping Seniors of Brevard will help you get connected when you call our helpline at (321) 473-7770 or visit the website at www.helpingseniorsofbrevard.org.

It is also important to know that changes under the Affordable Care Act will change the way we have been using therapy and rehabilitation after a fall or surgery, so it will become more important to know what is available to us in a way of assistance in recovery. In the meantime, keep moving and use the devices that will help you remain safe.

Joe Steckler is the president of Helping Seniors of Brevard, a nonprofit organization designed to advocate, educate and fundraise on behalf of Brevard's senior citizens.

Feel free to contact Helping Seniors of Brevard at info@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org or (321) 473-7770

Just keep climbing!



By Alex Schierholtz/staff photographer

Marc and Beth Tiziani of Melbourne take on an obstacle during the 'Insane Inflatable 5K' Saturday, Feb. 13 at Max K. Rodes Park in West Melbourne.

Rants & Raves

Got something to say?

Email the Hometown Rants & Raves at brevnews@hometownnewsol.com or call (321) 242-1276.

Contributors are asked to refrain from making slanderous or libelous statements.

Anonymous Rants & Raves

Why do you not require people to be accountable for their rants and raves and sign their names? How do you know the same people are not posting them over and over?

Editor's Note: Hello! We provide our Rants & Raves section as an opportunity for readers to voice their opinions on a variety of different topics while still remaining anonymous. Each rant or rave that is submitted to our paper goes through our news clerk first, so he can identify (whether via email or phone) that these opinions are coming from different individuals. While we don't select which rants and raves are

printed (they are printed on a first-come, first-served basis when space allows), we ensure that they are not being submitted by the same individuals each week. Submissions that are sent in for our Letters to the Editor section include the name and city of the person who submitted it. Hope this clears things up! Thanks for reading.

A follow-up rant

To the person who critiqued my rant about ISIS having a passport printing press: You need to wake up. ISIS has been entering the United States by the hundreds every day using passports

See RANTS, page 14

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