

Elder Friendly, Part III

In part one of our three-part communities; we talked about the need for information, or the communication of helpful facts to elders and those who care for them.

In part two, we discussed the value of education, that is, ways to develop senior awareness of available resources to help them age safely. Now, in part three, we will talk about how to connect people with the services they need.

We live in a media age, so it makes sense to use media resources to connect seniors. In 2000, the "Elder Hour" radio show was launched as the third out of 11,000 shows nationally to address seniors needs and programs. From 2007-11, a newspaper column titled "Focus on Seniors" was published in Florida Today. Concurrently, a "Focus on Seniors" television show was produced at Brevard Community College, now Eastern Florida State College.

Picking up on all of this, Helping Seniors was formed in 2011 to promote the development of an information and education program that would simply expand on what was already in place. Today, we air the "Helping Seniors" radio show each Thursday at 1 p.m. on WMEL 1060 AM Radio and produce "Helping Seniors" television shows that are broadcast 15 times a week on Bright House Networks Ch. 49 and Space Coast Government TV Ch. 499.

Building a new print program required more work. We began with a column in Hometown News, followed by a column in Senior Scene Magazine with a four-page centerfold newsletter that soon expanded



HELPING SENIORS
JOE STECKLER

to an eight-page insert. Shortly thereafter, we became associated with "Spotlight Magazine," then Ebony News Today, and now Al Dia Today. With this print coverage, we can reach out to all of Brevard County, providing information and education resources to help potential clients connect to needed resources in an elder-friendly community.

The missing piece was the human link, a person or persons informed about available resources who could connect those needing assistance to the source of help. Helping Seniors does this through our information specialist, a person knowledgeable of the many excellent programs in Brevard County.

This person can be contacted at (321)-473-7770. There are minimum wait times, as all calls are logged and quickly returned by a live person who will discuss your problem and offer potential solutions.

Brevard County is home to about 250,000 senior citizens. Many need information and certainly education about what is available to help them. The good news is that Brevard is already an elder-friendly community. We just have to do a better job of advertising and promoting the individual pieces.

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Touring with the Townies



The Rev. Rose Whitham and her daughter Suzanne Eusebio of Merritt Island couldn't leave home without a copy of the *Hometown News* while visiting the King Kamehameha Statue in Oahu, Hawaii, April 24.

Are you a fan of the Hometown News? Well, we are inviting you to take us along on your next adventure. Each week, we will feature a different reader-submitted photo that showcases one (or more) of our Brevard County residents reading the Hometown News in a unique or exotic place. Whether you take a trip to the Grand Canyon or a cruise to the Bahamas, bring your Hometown News with you and have someone snap a picture. Email your photo (at least 1 MB in size) to yourphotos@hometownnewsol.com and include your first and last name, the city you live in and the location/date of where the photo was taken. Type 'TOURING WITH THE TOWNIES' in the subject line. Let's see how many places we can go!

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QUESTIONS? Call Dennis Watkins at (321) 267-3036 or email: watkins@titusville.org