



**Joe Steckler**

**My New Year's Resolution**

How does the phrase "One-Hundred-Dollar-a-Year Club" strike you? I once wrote a short article about contributing one hundred dollars a year to a fund designated to helping seniors. Little did I realize how apropos those words would be today. Now that I see funds to assist non profit organizations tightening up, I want people to realize the increased importance of their donations.

A common misconception is that non profits are funded primarily through money distributing foundations. In fact, only 7% of annual funding is accrued through grants. My belief is that successful organizations of the future are going to be those that develop alternative funding sources. For example, numerous small donors can stabilize an agency's funding and enhance its long-term viability and capacity to provide charitable services.

In addition, effective non profits should know how to maximize government funding without spending those funds for other than direct services that assist people. It appears to me that the incoming administration will require stricter accountability of government funds to ensure that they are correctly used to help people rather than pay for overhead costs. The same reasoning must also apply to locally raised funds.

The bottom line is that the survival of non profits will depend on the need for their services, plus their ability to raise funds to meet expenses. The sustainable organizations will be those that are innovative, prove their value, and are cost effective in providing services.

Demographics also play a part. In a county like Brevard with a large elderly population, there will always be a need for information, education, and assistance navigating the care network.

For years we have depended on funding from the government, United Way, and a relatively small number of donors to meet the budget. I believe this will change, and that donors will be more cautious, especially if they cannot easily see the need for and use of their money. However, the majority of donors will support organizations that use their donations wisely, frugally, and in pursuit of worthy causes.

While every donation counts, think about the title of my article. There are 545,000 people in Brevard; just 1,000 annual \$100 donors would establish the primary operational base for one charity's success by allowing staff to spend more time on service provision and less time on fund raising. This in turn would enable donors to realize a more effective use of their money. If you have not selected a charity, I encourage you to contact one whom you think would make good use of your donation and consider becoming one of their committed \$100 donors. This could be a New Year's resolution that could help a lot of people.

Joe Steckler is the President of Helping Seniors of Brevard, a non profit organization designed to advocate, educate, and fundraise on behalf of Brevard's senior citizens. Feel free to contact us at: info@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org or calling: 321-473-7770

**Memories in the Making - A FREE Art program by the Alzheimer's Association**

Starting February 17th and runs each Friday until April 14th, 10-11:30 am

One Senior Place, 8085 Spyglass Hill Rd, Viera, FL 32940

Space is limited, please call 800-272-3900 to register

Memories in the Making - The Alzheimer's Association Memories in the Making® program offers creative art expression for individuals with early to the middle stages of Alzheimer's or another related dementia. People experiencing dementia are often able to paint their thoughts, emotions and memories in a manner that is expressive and beautiful. Art becomes their voice. Through painting, people are often able to reach outside of their dementia and paint a picture that reconnects them with a past memory.

Memories in the Making® programs meet weekly in small groups under the guidance of a care professional and art facilitator who have been specially trained to work with individual with memory loss and dementia. For most of the individuals who participate in the group, this is their first time painting. Since there are no mistakes in art, the process is more important than the product. Caregivers are invited to paint as well.

Sharon Melton

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