



## A Friend to Seniors



By Joe Steckler

Dear Friends,  
Picking up on the many comments in Florida Today and by the Brevard County Commissioners regarding funding for nonprofits, I have the following story to tell. This story drives through many myths about who helps and who does not, and whether or not the county has responsibility for helping the frail elderly, the homeless, and disadvantaged.

Regardless of your position, it is true that there are many needs that are not being met. Community based organization fund-

ing of \$510,000 is a small drop in our county budget. However, to the nonprofits who receive said funding it represents community support of their efforts to help those in need. It is one thing to say the business community will support, but rather another to actually receive that support. It is easy to say how something can be done but when it comes time to fundraise, it is another ball park – a ball park with often closed doors.

My story is about a local business that steps up to the plate to help others yet receives few accolades for its work. In 1994 I asked a car dealer to help me raise funds for Alzheimer's patients. He provided cars to raffle, gave us free adver-

tising, hauled the raffle cars to Daytona and local events, and put on events at his store at no cost to us. At the same time he loaned us three vans to take clients to and from daycares.

Time moved on. After starting Helping Seniors in 2011, I went to seven car dealers for similar help but had no success. Just recently I called the same dealer and said I wanted to buy a car but could not afford anything expensive. The dealer asked me to come in and talk. He insisted we get a muscle car, but I told him it would be too expensive. He then pointed to a 1951 Ford Victoria and said, "I could sell that car for (X dollars) but for you the price is zero because I want to help you help seniors."

Yes, folks, A.J. Hiers of Boniface-Hiers gave us the car from his personal collection and we will use it as our 2017/8 raffle fundraiser car. It is similar to the one driven by Robert Mitchum in the 1951 movie Thunder Road, with matte black finish, high gloss gold top, and matching interior. You can view the car at [www.Helpingseniorsofbrevard.org](http://www.Helpingseniorsofbrevard.org).

The Commissioners' decision to delete county financial aid will make it necessary for nonprofits to develop new partners. I could write several articles about A.J.'s support of charities, but I think my point is made. There are people like A.J. in our community who will help if asked and if they identify with

the cause they are asked to support. A.J. has supported seniors and children for the 23 years we have known each other.

Raffle details and a schedule of the car's showing can be accessed on our web site or by calling us at 321-473-7770. Or you can go to Boniface-Hiers dealerships to see the car and get raffle tickets. I encourage you to stop by and also tell others about this very special car and the purpose for which it was given – to help seniors. Thank you, A.J..

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



## Osteoporosis Awareness



Osteoporosis is a condition characterized by low bone density. People with low bone density stand a greater chance of fracturing their bones. The elderly and frail are at greater risk from falls which can lead to bone fracture.

The aim of National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month is to promote good bone health through the prevention, detection and treatment of osteoporosis.

Through Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month, people are encouraged to understand the risk factors associated with this condition. Preventative measures which promote healthy bones include sufficient calcium intake, achieving adequate levels of vitamin D, and performing bone healthy exercises.

### Groups Targeted

Osteoporosis is more common in women than in men; approximately 80% of osteoporosis cases are in women. Women are often the main focus of these awareness campaigns as are people with a family history of osteoporosis.

Teenage girls are encouraged to build strong bones whilst they are still developing. The consequences of weak bones later in life can be serious. Building strong bones during this crucial development stage includes eating foods high in calcium and vitamin D, eating fruits and vegetables every day, and regular exercise.

During early to mid adult life (20's, 30's and 40's), women are encouraged to learn about preventing osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis awareness

campaigns also target people with osteoporosis, who are encouraged to talk to their healthcare providers about maintaining and increasing bone density. Advice is also given on fall prevention, nutrition and exercise.

### Osteoporosis Risk Factors

Low body weight, low estrogen levels, an irregular menstrual cycle, inadequate nutrition, lack of exercise, smoking and drinking alcohol, are all risk factors of osteoporosis. Good bone health can be achieved by eliminating these factors.

Post menopausal women, typically 50 years +, have lower levels of estrogen as their ovaries have stopped producing this hormone. Low estrogen levels are associated with bone loss. Healthcare providers can provide bone density tests. If you have a family history of osteoporosis it is important to ask for this test at this stage of your life.

About 20% of osteoporosis cases affect men. Despite women being 4 times more likely to develop osteoporosis, the number of cases in

men is still high.

### Osteoporosis In Men

Men in their 50's+ are more likely to develop osteo-

porosis than be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Much of the advice for men is similar to that for women; eat

well, move more and talk to a healthcare provider about whether a bone density test is a suitable option for you.

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