



Do We Need Nonprofits?

This is a fair question, one that should be better explained to the readership at large. Since there are a huge number of books written on the subject, I will confine my comments to a discussion of what we generally perceive of as nonprofits. Here I mean those organizations in Brevard county that address basic needs such as housing for the homeless, care of the frail and elderly, feeding the hungry, etc.

Numerous organizations meet the criteria for being designated as a nonprofit. Unfortunately, some of these are self-serving organizations that pass themselves off as being necessary providers to those in need when in fact they are primarily money making machines. The purpose of my column is to help the generous and giving citizens in Brevard be better informed about where their money goes and how it is used to assist others.

There are many worthwhile causes that seek our support. Generally speaking I will not donate to any cause that has a profit making phone calling service seeking the donation. There are many views on what constitutes a "fair" upfront cost to solicit your donation, but in my book any such cost turns me off. Years ago when I was the Alumni Director at Florida Tech I used students to solicit donations from graduates. They were fed pizza, made calls, told the person why they were calling, and did a good job obtaining funds for alumni programs.

One way to establish the "worthiness" of a soliciting organization is to look up their IRS Form 990 online, which will give you their actual revenues and expenses. If you determine that salaries, medical and retirement benefits, and building operational costs are in the 50% range, you may not want to donate to them. You can also determine how many organizations provide similar type services to identify those known to you and worthy of your support.

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strove to improve the scientific foundation of hydrotherapy. At its height, there were over 200 water-cure establishments in the United States, most located in the northeast. In 1921, Franklin D. Roosevelt (32nd President, 1932-1945) was stricken with debilitating polio that left him with permanent paralysis from the waist down. He tried a wide range of therapies, including hydrotherapy. In 1926, he purchased a resort at Warm Springs, Georgia, where he founded a hydrotherapy center for the treatment of polio patients; it still operates as the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation. In 1938, FDR founded the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, now known as the March of Dimes. Based on literature, it suggests that hydrotherapy is widely used to improve immunity and for the management of pain, heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, fatigue, anxiety, obesity, arthritis, etc. It produces different effects on various systems of the body, and though effects are scientifically evidence based, there is lack of evidences for the mechanism on how hydrotherapy improves these diseases, which is one of the limitations of hydrotherapy, and further studies are required to find the mechanism of hydrotherapy on various diseases. **SS**

Like you, I receive calls from all over the U.S. and some foreign countries and make it a point to give only to a charity I know.

There are ways for you to determine the worthiness of almost any soliciting organization. You can certainly ask your friends, for many have already done the research I mention above. Why give to an organization that does not answer the required questions on their IRS 990, or that demonstrates poor leadership through mismanagement of already scarce funds, or that does not provide the service for which they are funded? Most importantly, as funding becomes more stringent, are their services really needed? Helping Seniors did a county-wide survey in 2014 and found that the two biggest senior needs were for information and financial support. "Do we need nonprofits?" is a significant question for seniors. We have some of the best nonprofit adult day care organizations in Brevard but only a few receive United Way or county assistance. Perhaps it is time for the Housing and Human Services Department to conduct their own survey to determine the actual needs of Brevard's elderly and the capability of the nonprofit community to serve them. Without timely surveys to determine actual need, how do the county commissioners and United Way determine funding priorities? Both county and United Way dollars come from private sector so this is a valid request. The need for advocacy and information has been demonstrated in many ways. We do need nonprofits and we do need to find ways to financially support them.

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 **SS**



UPCOMING EVENTS

Costa Rica Wonders with Manuel Antonio - April 27th-May 6, 2018 - join Jean as we head to Costa Rica for some R&R and adventure! If you are a Journey's Club member enjoy an additional 5% off.

Mission Inn Luncheon and Winery Tour - Wed, Sept 20th - \$62 - enjoy a fabulous lunch at the Hacienda Restaurant at the Mission Inn, Howey in the Hills before going on tour of the Lakeridge Winery. Sign up by Aug 20th, minimum of 35 needed for this trip.

World of Chocolate - Wed, Oct 4th - \$64 without chocolate tasting, \$77 with wine & chocolate tasting - Start with a tour that takes you back in time to find out the origins of chocolate and its history. See the chocolate sculptures & learn how chocolate is made. Then enter a tasting room to sample some of the finest chocolates around the world. Deadline to sign up is Sept 1st, minimum of 35 needed to make the trip.

On Your Feet, The story of Emilio and Gloria Estafan -

Saturday, October 21st - \$96 - From their humble beginnings in Cuba to America, breaking through all barriers to become a popstar sensation. From international stardom to life threatening tragedy. On Your Feet takes you behind the scenes and inside the real story of this record making and groundbreaking couple. This is one of the most inspiring stories in music history.

Mt Dora Craft Fair - Satu, Oct 28th - \$40 - enjoy the day exploring the Mt Dora Craft Fair. Have lunch on your own with local vendors or restaurants. Deadline to sign up is Sept 28th, minimum of 35 needed for this trip

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