

VIEWPOINT

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Rants & Raves

Got something to say?

Email the Hometown Rants & Raves at

brevnews@hometownnewsol.com
or call (321) 242-1276.

The Rants and Raves section provides a chance for readers to share their thoughts with other readers. The opinions included are not those of Hometown News or its employees

Please limit your submissions to 250 words, so that we can include more entries. Readers are asked to refrain from making libelous statements.

Water department, meter readers not doing jobs well

I am writing about fake and defective water meters.

The area I live in is about 35 years old and the water meters are outdated and they are placed below the ground.

I am a professional engineer and contacted the mayor and utilities director to start replacing the meters and to be attached to the wall for easy scanning.

With greatest difficulty I got my meter replaced paying \$50.

The water department officials are very lethargic and the meter readers are not doing their jobs well.

It takes nearly 20 minutes to read each meter after removing the dirt and slime which gets accumulated.

In this scenario, Jeeter the meter reader can only read about 10 to 12 meters a day and he needs to remove nearly 3 cubic feet of dirt and put the dirt in his truck.

We are in 2017 and the meters are defective and outdated, giving erratic readings which will be not be fair for residents and the utilities department.

My bill is around \$200 a month, which is miserably excessive unless one will be in the shower for four hours. My water consumption last month was 16,000 gallons which physically is not possible as the industry standard stipulates 100 gallons per day per person with factor of safety built in.

It is about time that our elected and appointed personnel discuss the issue for a tangible resolution of not billing properly to the consumers.

Be nice; good things go around, come around

A few months ago I found a woman's purse in a cart in the parking lot of a large, well-known store in Viera.

It contained her wallet, car keys, cell phone and other personal items.

I did not look into it and turned it into the courtesy desk at the store.

I never heard whether it was returned.

Last week, somehow I lost my driver's license.

Today, my mail delivery woman flagged me down and handed it to me, saying someone had found it and turned it into the Post Office.

To that person - although I had it canceled and a new one issued - thank you very much for your honesty.

Good things go around and come around. We all need to be kinder and nicer to each other.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas to everyone.

Publix always has had best prices, sales

When you are shopping for a family, you have to check everything and choose wisely.

I always made a list of what was needed and compared it to the various ads.

Then a list was made for the various items I needed from the sales at each store making the store that had the fro- See RANTS, page 7

Cozy up by the fireplace



Photo by Jamie Desena-McFarland

Since 2013, Island Lakes resident and Community Manager Bonnie Schlingman and her husband have set up an elaborate Christmas display in the community's clubhouse at 4499 Wood Stork Drive on Merritt Island. Most of the village, which includes a working train, behind the left bow, is from her family's collection. Other pieces have been donated by or are on loan from residents.

The importance of information, education

On Dec. 1, 2017, I received a Superstar Award from 2-1-1 Brevard and Parrish Medical Center, recognizing my work with Helping Seniors.

It is a humbling experience to be selected by your peers for such an accomplishment, but after 38 years in the military and 29 years with nonprofits, I know that such an achievement is the result of a team effort by family, staff, volunteers, and donors.

Driving home from the awards ceremony, I reflected on the many wonderful organizations we have in Brevard County that serve people in need. Parrish Medical Center and 2-1-1 Brevard did a splendid job with the event - presentations and attendees were all supportive of programs that



HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

help people. Arriving home I checked the answering machine. News from our Information Specialist at Helping Seniors quickly brought me back to reality.

Helping Seniors had received a call from a 63-year old woman who was living on civil service retirement of \$895 a month and taking care of a 31-year old disabled son. The son worked as a bagger to help out, but they were still living in a van, paying \$500 a month. See SENIORS, page 7

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NBREVARD

Rants

From page 6

zen items needed the last for one for my shopping trip.

I took a cooler and my lists and was on my way.

Three stores were visited with Publix being the last as more was purchased there.

All stores have loss leader items to get people in and you must use that to your advantage.

Just buy what is on the list unless there is a great buy.

To me, Publix always has had the best prices and sales. Also their staff is friendly and helpful.

Now it is the store I go to because there are only two of us now, however, I still use a list in order to save money.

We're in Roman times

We are in Rome . . . decline and decay. Wake up!

I sure hope everyone who voted for this nightmare reaps the benefits.

There are two sides to every tax plan

When I read Rants & Raves, the one thing that bothers me is the one-sided opinion of the contributors.

For example, last week, a contributor wrote that the new tax plan would hurt the middle class.

I believe it behooves everyone to watch all the channels with an open mind, then analyze the news and ascertain the chaff from the wheat and make a thought-out determination.

Here is a quick rundown of the new

tax bill. The new tax bill reduces the number of brackets from seven to three - 12 percent, 25 percent and 35 percent. This may hurt some of us if we were between 13 percent and 24 percent brackets inclusive as we will now go to the 25 percent bracket. There may be another bracket at 35 percent. However, since the income levels have not been determined, we cannot ascertain how we will be affected.

There will be an increase in standard deductions and child tax credit. Standard deductions will be doubled and child tax credit will be increased and a provision of \$500 tax credit for dependent care will be added.

Itemized deductions will be eliminated with the exception of home mortgages, charitable donations, higher education benefits and retired security. Note: A majority of taxpayers do not qualify nor itemize itemized

deductions. Since the standard deductions will be doubled, it should make up for some of the items no longer eligible for deduction. The doubling of standard deductions will be beneficial to those who do not itemize.

The estate tax will be eliminated as this tax has been taxing property that has already been taxed and paid for.

Corporate taxes will be reduced to 20 percent, making the U.S. compatible with foreign countries whose lower corporate taxes have lured many companies offshore. These corporations with proper incentives should want to come back to the U.S., bringing with them more jobs and tax money to boost the American economy.

Seniors

From page 6

month for medical insurance and \$400 a month for two storage units containing all their possessions. They were getting a mere \$15 a month in food stamps because they were making too much money - but living in their van.

The lady did not know where to start to try to solve her immediate problems.

She needed help, most of which involved where to go for help.

As questions were asked, it became apparent that what she initially called about was the tip of the iceberg. What she really needed was more information on the many programs available in Brevard that could help her with food, housing, and disability services.

We might say that this is a rare case, but in fact it occurs rather often. We just do not hear about it. Our ignorance does not mean that such happenings are not important or do not exist.

On the contrary, these cases underscore the need for more education and

information. The programs that help people in Brevard cannot be effective if no one knows about them. That is why organizations like Helping Seniors that inform, educate, and connect people to the help they need are such an important part of the care equation.

The title of this article is a wake-up call: All of us should be more aware of the many nonprofits that exist to serve others. Finding out that people who desperately need help, especially with food, only receive \$15 a month in assistance demonstrates the urgency of

our mission. This type of information gathering also underscores the need for a County Aging plan that can bring together community resources to plan for the future.

Joe Steckler is president of Helping Seniors of Brevard, a nonprofit organization designed to advocate, educate, and fundraise on behalf of Brevard's senior citizens. Contact the nonprofit at info@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org or call 321-473-7770.

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For more information or to register visit
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