

Affordable housing an issue in Brevard

Dear Friends, for several weeks I have been the acting Information Specialist for Helping Seniors. I have answered the phone, listened to callers, and tried to resolve problems. The hardest ones are those requiring financial help and lodging. In my opinion, it is becoming more difficult to provide this assistance. Many callers could be helped if Brevard County had a plan to address senior needs like homelessness and short term lodging.

It is no secret that affordable housing is lacking in Brevard. The County's list of "affordable" housing with monthly rent of \$700 to \$900 is far from affordable for those living on SSI, small Social Security checks, or other low monthly incomes. There also is no temporary housing. Callers tell me that counties up north give out housing vouchers to those in need, but I doubt County Commissioners who eliminate financial assistance to nonprofits would be willing to



**HELPING SENIORS
OF BREVARD**
JOE STECKLER

listen to a plea for such vouchers in Brevard.

Many seniors who have outlived their retirement savings call us about jobs. We may believe they could have planned better for retirement, but that does not apply in all cases. Some seniors made a plan, but did not have enough money to set aside for retirement or lived longer than expected. They often do not have family who can help them. When these seniors call our helpline, we discuss many options and usually manage to develop a workable plan.

Recently an 83 year-old man called us. He had lost his job (yes, at 83 he was still

working to supplement his Social Security, as his retirement funds had been used up), which he had held for 11 years. The new company did not want an 83 year old person working for them. We tried for several days to assist him, but there were no resources available. Consequently he lost the food in his refrigerator when his electricity was turned off and may lose his rented home.

This heartbreaking situation prompted Hometown News to offer us a weekly Senior Employment Corner, which Helping Seniors will develop and manage to assist seniors who must work in order to survive. Living longer does cause new problems, which is why Brevard County should have an aging plan to address the issues described in this article.

Most of us have no idea of the problems many seniors face as they get older. Eliminating funding for nonprofits will only accelerate the calls we receive on our helpline while

hindering our ability to provide relief. To my knowledge there are no other resources besides Helping Seniors and 2-1-1 Brevard that offer such services. Whether we like it or not, seniors do need assistance, and problems that increase in magnitude could be helped if addressed early on.

For a county that is in the top 1 percent nationwide in terms of those over the age of 65, we should be able to do a better job of assisting those in need. Having gifts for seniors at Christmas is a wonderful idea, but what about the other 364 days of need? An aging plan for the County that includes support for nonprofits is a much needed starting point.

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 group at info@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org or call (321) 473-7770.

Calendar

From page 4

Florida produce, local honey, fresh eggs, baked goods, olives, organic soaps, soy candles, hand crafted wood, embroidered sundresses, jewelry, rocks and minerals, handmade childrens clothes, jerky and boiled peanuts, massage therapist, handcrafted pottery and paintings, quilts,

tasty treats, Music by Del and more! For more information, call 321-961-2732 or email Joyce Rizzo and Pam Rollins at spacecoastfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Sunday, Dec. 16

Music on Sunday Afternoon: The Cocoa Beach library will host music by the Platinum Coast Chorus, Sunday Dec. 2 at 2 p.m. in the Community Room. The local chapter of the Sweet Adelines International, an organization of over 30,000 women

singers who love to sing and perform in the barbershop style. Join them for a joyful celebration of the season a cappella. For more information, call (321) 868-1104.

Cocoa Beach Book Signing: On Sunday Dec. 16, 2018 the Studios of Cocoa Beach will host a book signing from 2 to 4 pm. featuring local author Jeff Tressler. His book, Seaside Sentiments, showcasing his 20 years of writing experience. Jeff has written poems to nourish the heart and connect with the whole family, both adults

and children. For more information, call 407-376-0348.

Space Coast Farmers Market: The Space Coast Farmers Market will take place on Sunday, Dec. 16 at Larry Schultz Park on 2560 Fiske Boulevard in Rockledge. Event is open to the public and runs every Sunday until Dec. 29. Fresh from Florida produce, local honey, fresh eggs, baked goods, olives, organic soaps, soy candles, hand crafted wood, See **CALENDAR**, page 9

NEW! Privacy Curtains for your Pool & Porch Enclosure

20 Year Residential Warranty

Adirondack Pool & Patio Furniture

- Lounge Chairs
- Single & Double Gliders
- Tables/Dining Sets
- Made in USA
- Recycled Material
- Veteran-owned family-operated

Thanks for voting us Best Outdoor Furniture for 4 straight years!

Back Home Leisure Furniture

2880 S. Hopkins Ave., Titusville
321-213-3712
www.backhomeleisurefurniture.com

2018 READERS' CHOICE

Perfect for all occasions!

Indian River Jewelers

- Jewelry Repair
- Watch Repair
- Appraisals
- Watch Batteries
- Engraving
- Custom Work
- Special Orders
- Consignment
- Pearl Stringing
- Gem/Rock Cutting

Personal service is our standard

Tuesday- Friday 9:30 am - 5:30 pm • Saturday 9:30 am- 2pm
Closed Sunday and Monday

373 Cheney Highway, Titusville, Florida 32780 • (321) 225-8950

Owned and Operated by the people you know from JayBee Jewelers!

2018 READERS' CHOICE

Cocoa Veterinary Hospital
(321) 636-2230
www.cocoaveterinary.com

Port St. John Veterinary Hospital
(321) 636-7001
www.caringforlifeinc.com

Pet care is our Passion!

We Love Your Pets!

- physical exams
- vaccinations
- digital radiology
- endoscopy
- ultrasound
- dental cleaning
- dental x-ray
- EKG
- intensive care
- fluid therapy
- nutritional therapy
- avian medicine and surgery
- exotic medicine and surgery
- laser surgery
- orthopedics
- laboratory testing
- DNA testing
- boarding
- grooming

New Customer Special Save 50% Off
Our Regular Consultation Fee with appointment and this coupon.
Treatment costs & medications not included. Not valid for after-hours emergency services.

Microchip your pets!

2015-2017 READERS' CHOICE