

The importance of newspapers

Dear Friends,
Most of us have grown up with some type of newspaper supporting our community. Sadly, many of these newspapers are now in a decline due to cost, lack of reader support, and expansion of the internet. Does that mean that we do not need a local newspaper? Far from it.

As the president of a small nonprofit advocating for the expansion of programs and information to seniors, I am very much aware of the need for a community paper such as *Hometown News*. When Helping Seniors was founded in 2011, *Hometown News* was the first media outlet to support our cause. They recognized the need to inform the public about the importance of senior services, especially in a community with so many seniors. We have come a long way in community awareness, but still have work to do to ensure all understand how a united community can support funding and information for services vital to the people of Brevard County.

With the decline of government financial aid, the non support of United



**HELPING SENIORS
OF BREVARD**
JOE STECKLER

Way, and the inability of many to donate to nonprofit operations, it will be inevitable that needed programs serving elders will be diminished. This reduction of services will impact many seniors living on fixed incomes. The State of Florida currently has 64,000 seniors on waiting lists for services to help them with activities of daily living such as meal preparation, bathing or toileting, household cleaning, and transportation, activities that most of us can do without assistance.

Recently I had a call from a lady who had fractured her leg, then fell and re-fractured it. Luckily she had a spouse who could help her, but what would happen if he fell (as he was also frail) and could not assist her? The woman could not walk, bathe, or go to the bathroom by

herself. Fortunately the family had financial resources to pay for aid, so we helped them develop a plan to line up those services should they be needed. I can assure you that there are many living in our community who cannot make such plans, nor are there any financial services available to fund such emergencies.

While we do have some government services that will provide the services described above, they are facing cuts in both state and federal budgets. Legislators have mainly been able to forestall them. But what if state and federal funds are cut off, as happened to local nonprofits two years ago when our Commissioners eliminated county support (saving only \$500,000 in a budget of \$1.2 billion)? Any loss of already minimal services when you are living on a fixed income of \$950 a month is horrendous.

I have talked to many seniors, trying to find them affordable housing, dental help, medical help...you name it. So many times I have asked myself what has caused all this, and I assure you it is not because these people do not want to

work. When you are sick, hurt, and of a certain age, there are many things you can not do. This I know from my own medical problems.

A senior endowment managed correctly and used only when necessary can initially assist many in need. Will it help all? No, but it will be a good start in the right direction. Though it will take time to fund the endowment, we have many who will help and perhaps your visual inspection of its growth will cause your support. Together we can make a difference and cause others to read *Hometown News*.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770 or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937. The current endowment level is \$900, an increase of \$700 since our last column.

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

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Road in Melbourne. Your \$25 Car Raffle ticket supports the work of the Helping Seniors nonprofit, gives you a shot at one of those 3 amazing Raffle Cars in the

Grand Drawing and also is your "Admit One" for this great exclusive automotive evening. Get your Helping Seniors Car Raffle tickets today! 1 ticket for \$25 or 5 tickets for \$100 donation. For more information and ticket purchases, call Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770 or online at HelpingSeniorsCarRaffle.com

Have fun at VFW Hall 4536: VFW & Auxiliary 4536 located at 4401 S. Dixie Highway in Palm Bay, hosts several events throughout the week. On Saturday April 27 enjoy a spaghetti and meatball dinner with garlic bread, salad and dessert from 5-7 p.m. for \$7. For more information, call 321-725-2999.

Sunday, April 28

Accordion Club Meeting: The Brevard Chapter of the Central Florida Accordion Club holds monthly meeting on Sunday, April 28 at the Cocoa Elks Lodge, located at Elks Lodge #1532, 315 Florida Avenue in Cocoa from 2-5 p.m. Members and See CALENDAR, page 10

SENSATIONAL SAVINGS!

Spend \$2.50 - Get a \$5 Gift Certificate

\$5 for only \$2.50 Freedom Cafe

Spend \$5 - Get a \$10 Gift Certificate

\$10 for only \$5

Beachside Fusion
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Brassie Grille @ Aquarina Beach & Golf
Copper Chimney
Mi Balconcito
Oceanside Pizza
Pat's Place
Southern Sisters
Southern Charm
Sunnyside Cafe
UR Hospitality
DeAngelo's by the Sea & Jake's Crab Shack

Spend \$20 - Get a \$10 Gift Certificate

\$20 for only \$10 On The Edge Rock Climbing
Bonefish Willy's
Slack Tide Bar & Grill

To purchase, please visit
www.hometownnewsbrevard.com
and click on Gift Certs

FLORIDA TECH

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MAY 4

FIRST PITCH @ 6 PM

MAY 5

DOUBLEHEADER
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