



# The Importance of Local News

By Joe Steckler, *President, Helping Seniors of Brevard County*

Dear Friends,

Most of us have grown up with some type of newspaper or magazine supporting our community. Sadly, many of these publications 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 news outlet? 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 community publications. When Helping Seniors was founded in 2011, we realized that the public needed to be better informed 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 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 programs 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 charities two years ago when our Commissioners eliminated county support

for nonprofits (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, hurting, 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 local newspapers and magazines. §

*When Helping Seniors was founded in 2011, we realized that the public needed to be better informed about the importance of senior services, especially in a community with so many seniors.*

**CD SPECIAL!**

**2.55% APY\* 13 MONTHS**

**Inside Your Walmart Supercenter®:**  
1000 North Wickham Road, Melbourne, FL 32935

Open an account today with promo code **SSM19**

**321-421-7890 | AxiomBanking.com**

\*Annual Percentage Yield. Rates and APY are subject to change without notice. The APY is as of 04/01/19. These accounts require a minimum opening deposit of \$500. Substantial penalty for early withdrawal. Offer not valid on brokered or institutional deposits. You will be paid the disclosed rate until maturity. Your 13-month account will automatically renew into the 12-month fixed rate certificates, respectively. You will have a grace period of 10 calendar days after the maturity date to withdraw the funds in the account without being charged an early withdrawal penalty. The CD products are limited to \$250,000 per product per household. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. Fees could reduce earnings. Contact an Axiom Bank Banker for further information about applicable fees and terms.

© 2019 Axiom Bank, N.A. All Rights Reserved. Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender BBB