



Hometown News PET OF THE WEEK

At 13, Phredd is a laid-back teenager. Phredd is a Norwegian forest cat who loves to cuddle in bed, climb trees and eat. ...Phredd weighs 23 lbs!

Is your pet worthy of the spotlight?

Hometown News will be the judge of that.

We are asking our readers to submit photos of their beloved pets, as part of our "Pet of the Week" Contest. The winner for the week will have his or her pet displayed in our newspaper, while also being qualified to become the Hometown News "Pet of the Year!" Email a photo of your pet (one entry per owner) that is at least 1 MB in size to newsml@hometownnewsmediagroup.com. Write "PET OF THE WEEK CONTEST" in the subject line, and in the body of the email, please include the following information:

- Name of pet
- Age; breed
- Three of your pet's favorite things to do
- Pet owner's full name and hometown
- Phone number (in case we have questions)

How to help the elderly prevent falls

Over the years I have done many radio and TV shows and written articles on fall prevention. Chris Marriott, Director of Physical Therapy from Kindred at Home, has spoken about their Safe Strides fall prevention program on several of my shows. Today I will talk about a personal experience, which can often be the best teacher.

For those of you who are first-time readers, I have a lower back problem, fibromyalgia, and very poor balance. I use a cane and four-wheel rollator to keep me from falling. The other day I had just finished my shower and was hanging up a sweat shirt. The door hook was a little high, and as I reached I lost my balance and fell.

I have had some training in how to fall, but granite tile is still hard and can cause damage. Fortunately I sort of crumbled to the floor and rolled to my right side. I called my wife who brought a pillow to put under my knees so I could crawl to a place where I could use a combination of my rollator and furniture to safely stand. I was lucky as many elders in a similar situation break a bone and enter a hospital from which they never leave.

As this example shows, those who use assisted walking devices should have a plan in case the unexpected occurs. When walking with my 4 wheel rollator, I am extremely careful to maintain my balance.



HELPING SENIORS
OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

Knowing that I tend to overextend makes me cautious as I move forward so that I can equalize pressure on the wheels. Three wheel rollators can be even trickier. Frail elders who use a device with only one forward wheel are more prone to falling. It is important for those of us who need assisted walking devices to use one best suited to our needs. I prefer the four-wheel one with a built in seat so that I can rest when I become tired.

While I am on the subject, I think more of us need to wear a medical alert button around our neck. Preventing a fall is one thing, but once a fall has occurred it is important to get help. Making an ill advised move on your own can cause additional damage. If you live alone, it is even more important to have an alert device. I recently heard of a person who took three days to crawl to a phone after he fell, whereas he could have pushed one button to get instant help.

There are no shortage of similar stories I could relate, as could many of you. See SENIORS, page 13

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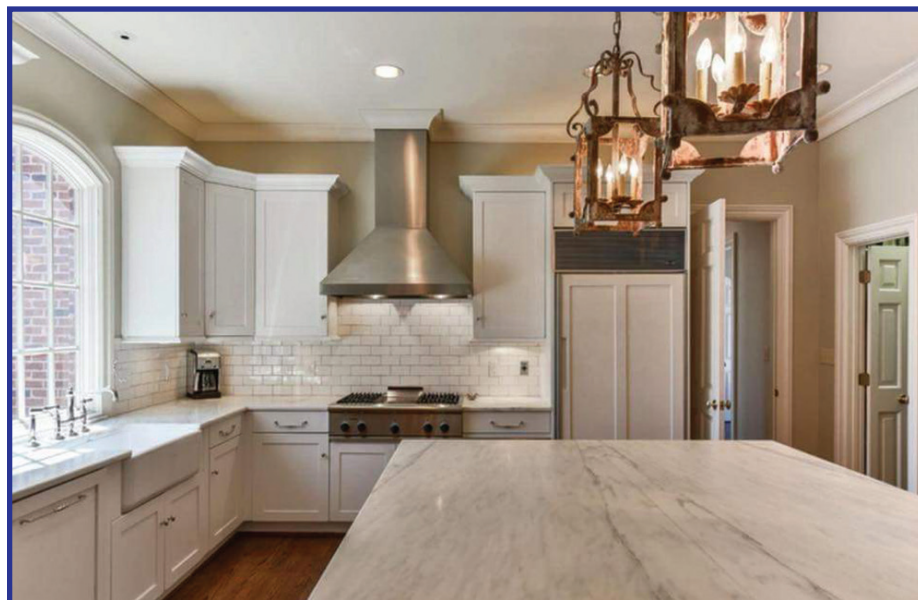
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Senior

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fice it to say that alert and assistance devices become more important as we age. Making the decision to purchase an assistance device is one step in the right direction; wearing or using the device then becomes our challenge, as we must protect ourselves as best we can.

Once you choose your device, learn how to use it properly, and then use it!

The same goes for any other safety device you select. As we age we become more prone to losing our balance or making a misstep and falling. Many falls can be prevented – continued caution is one thing we can all practice, so be prepared and use the device most suited to your individual situation.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770, at www.HelpingSeniorsOfBrevard.org, or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.

Calendar

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NW in Palm Bay. This year's Fall Fest is presented by Janitorial Depot of America. Festivities will include trunk-or-treating, inflatables, games, food and other vendors, hayrides, costume contest, and a movie in the park. Admission and parking at the event are free.

At 6 p.m. the costume contest will begin with prizes awarded in the following age groups: 0-5 years, 6-11 years, 12-18 years, 18+ years, and best family/group costume. After the costume contest, winners will be announced for best trunk-or-treat sites including best decorated car or space, best dressed group, and most spirited group. At sunset, Hotel Transylvania 3 (Rated PG) will be shown on a giant outdoor movie screen. Patrons are encouraged to bring chairs and blankets to enjoy the movie.

For more information about the event please visit our webpage at www.pbfl.org/FallFest or call the Ted Whitlock Community Center at (321) 952-3231.

• League of Women Voters Hosts Hot Topic: The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast (LWVSC) invites Brevard residents to participate in a Hot Topic panel discussion on Home Rule. The public event will be held from 10 a.m.-noon today at Schechter Community Center, 1089 S. Patrick Dr. in Satellite Beach.

Home Rule is an issue that has the potential to impact all Brevard residents. Panelists including Nancy Peltonen, President of Greater Palm Bay Chamber of Commerce; and Courtney Barker, Satellite Beach City Manager, will discuss how state preemption impacts quality of life issues, small business operation and the Space Coast environment. Moderator for the event will be Nicolette Springer from LWV Orange County. The cost is \$10 per person and includes light refreshments. The RSVP deadline is Friday, October 25. To register, go to www.lwv-space-coast.org (events calendar). For more information, contact Terry LaPlante at tlaplante2012@gmail.com.



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