

Growing old is a challenge

My 80-year-old brother said to me in a recent phone call, "Brother, you are old". I thought about that and then replied, "Yes, I am". Since I can't change the fact that I am old, the real challenge is how I handle it. In my last Navy assignment I worked with 550 retired military personnel, only one of whom was younger than me. I learned a lot from them that influenced my ability to age well, then picked up additional skills in the ensuing 33 years. Now I want to pass along my knowledge in the hopes of helping others in their own aging processes.

One part of the aging equation that is often missing is knowledge of the care necessary for seniors to live safely and



HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

receive care when dementia or other disabilities set in. When a person can no longer manage activities of daily living, case managers can help locate the type of help they need, whether it is inside or outside the home. In the main, these resources can all be managed by professionals who know the system and can assemble the necessary care team.

But what about the person who needs care but, regardless of the difficulties, wants to remain where he or she is most comfortable? We often assume that those who need care are ready to receive it. There are many seniors not yet ready to give up the fight. With a little assistance, they may still be able to live as they choose. This foregoing thought is very important in helping the person changing their lifestyle to understand.

Try to avoid pushing or forcing a person to be placed. Letting such a person say, "I am ready, or, I think I may need more help" enables him or her to accept the use of a case manager to access the care required. A respectful and empathetic approach can

really affect how the change in life style is received. Too often I have encountered situations where family members did not understand the need for the older person to accept their living transition; they were just told, "You are old." It happens.

It would be a wonderful world if we did not have to talk about getting old. We do, but how we address such fact is an indication of our individual beliefs, the desire to help others, and our knowledge of the aging process and the tools we have to address that process.

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

Vision zero

From page 1

gram, but then as traffic deaths rose here in the United States, you know the whole idea behind it gravitated towards the United States," said SCTPO safety and education coordinator Kim Smith. "...Right now you're hearing more about it and it's gaining momentum."

Locally, Ms. Smith says their Vision Zero "mission" began in July, 2019. From there, the action plan was adopted in summer of 2020, part of which was to get other municipalities on board.

To that end, the City of Cocoa officially adopted Vision Zero a few months ago, and very recently the Town of Melbourne Beach did the same, Ms. Smith added, also noting that the SCTPO was "working with a few other municipalities" that she believed would also adopt the program in the coming months.

"People are pretty frustrated with the number of people that are being seriously injured or killed on our roadways," Ms. Smith said.

Education also seems to be needed in some instances.

"We have to maintain speed limits," Ms. Smith said. "We have to pay attention for other folks. We need to know the law. A lot of folks, you know when you start talking to them about crosswalks and what their responsibilities are for pedestrians, they don't understand what those laws are and that is part of the responsibility of being a driver, or a pedestrian or a bicyclist actually."

Ms. Smith added that the SCTPO has scheduled a number of events in the near-future. On Oct. 6, they'll have a "Walk to School" Day and on Oct. 15 the SCTPO will host a "White Cane" Day to raise awareness to those who have limited sight.

The organization will also begin what it calls "Mobility Week" on October 29, Ms. Smith said. That week will kickoff with a crosswalk awareness initiative in Melbourne Beach that will mirror the organization's "Stop on Red" event held earlier on Aug. 3 held at the intersection of Wickham Road and Eau Gallie Boulevard in Melbourne.

Those interested in more information should visit spacecoasttpo.com.



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~ Tim Talks about latest on Vitamin D ~
Are you taking your Vitamin D? If not, here is a good reason for making sure you are taking a healthy dose. In a recent meta-analysis which incorporated health data from almost 14,500 people who were hospitalized with COVID-19 infections, researchers found a significant correlation between lower serum concentrations of vitamin D and an increased risk of becoming infected with the virus. Some practitioners suggest as much as 20,000 international units daily. "While vaccination programs are widespread and the number of vaccinated patients grows, the underlying risk factors for the severe course of COVID-19 are still being investigated," the authors of the study wrote. "The common denominator for all of these risk factors is the disturbed immunological response which may in fact be the underlying mechanism for the severe course of COVID-19. One of the most common and thoroughly examined causes of immunosuppression is vitamin D deficiency. It comes as no surprise that in the era of COVID-19, vitamin D became an object of interest for much research worldwide in terms of preventing the severe course of the disease."

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