

# Affordable homes, nursing homes, and homeless

Today I am starting a series dedicated to informing you about some serious shortfalls in the people care industry. We talk about these issues a lot, and once in a while throw a little money in the direction of the most contested areas.

In a recent newsletter for the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys, it was reported that “a bill that would require greater transparency around how nursing homes statewide spend their money, passed the Florida House...Its unanimous passage comes as the nursing home industry is requesting an additional \$469 million in Medicaid funding to support nearly 700 nursing homes operating statewide.” Reflect now on my previous comments about the State having 50,000



**HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD**  
**JOE STECKLER**

people on their Medicaid waiting list, and how one way to make better care available and to pay workers more was to examine the profit to cost ratio. The lawyers representing this industry seem to agree.

At Helping Seniors, the number one call we get is for affordable housing. Sadly, the demand far outweighs the supply. If you look closely at those holding signs at intersections, you will see that many are

well dressed. Some have children with them. Is such an act to play on your sympathy? We get calls from women living in their cars, women whose grown children want them out of the house, and women who have lived for years in a safe environment but now need a place to stay. And, I assure you, safe places for care are dwindling in number.

If we continue to misuse funds meant to develop affordable housing, we will always play catch up. To my knowledge, we do not even have a plan. Years ago when we built the Alzheimer’s center on Wickham Road, we developed a plan to build ten such centers throughout Florida. In each location, the city would donate the land and the building cost would be

divided between local government and sponsors. I took it to Governor Bush who evidenced great interest, directed me to his financial staff, and then completely dropped the matter.

I am convinced these plans can be developed, but it takes informed elected leadership to make it happen. Our aging country dictates that we find a way – it is incumbent on us to build more affordable housing, challenge the homeless to change their way of life, and improve how we accomplish long term care for our elderly.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770, at [www.HelpingSeniorsofBrevard.org](http://www.HelpingSeniorsofBrevard.org), or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.

## Butler

From page 1

That’s kind of my goal.”

As one might imagine, his success at the high school level seems to be an asset in terms of recruiting athletes to join the program at EFSC.

“It’s seemed to have helped me so far because I’ve had a lot of kids from out of the area reach out to me already from Ocala, Tampa and South Florida. They are very interested in coming here to run so I think my name, my recognition, my success that I’ve had is a definite benefit,” Mr.

Butler said.

EFSC’s cross country season will begin in August. Mr. Butler says the team will practice at Melbourne’s Wickham Park.

Mr. Butler has previous ties to the school, having also competed at both track and marathon running at Eastern Florida in the late 1980s.

“They had track, I ran there for Coach (Frank) Craig,” Mr. Butler added. “I’m very honored to be the first one to coach Cross there. If Coach Craig were around today, I think he’d be pretty proud that somebody that ran for him got to start the program.”

Those interested in more information should visit [efscTitans.com](http://efscTitans.com).

## Calendar

From page 3

### Studios of Cocoa Beach Sponsors Street

**Cleanup:** The Studios of Cocoa Beach is a non-profit art gallery staffed by local artists. Their goal is to bring beauty to the beaches by creating beautiful works of art, by offering art classes, and even by keeping the area clean and litter free. The Studios has adopted Minuteman Causeway in downtown Cocoa Beach. On Saturday, February 26 they will hold a quarterly clean up, removing trash and weeds, keeping the rain gardens healthy and beautiful. The cleanup begins at 8:30 a.m.in front of the Studios, 165 Minuteman

Causeway, and ends by 11 a.m.. Cocoa Beach residents are invited to join in the fun. While there, you can view the paintings, photography, pottery, jewelry, fiber art and more created by these talented local artists. The gallery is open Wednesday and Thursday 9 am to 6 pm, Friday and Saturday 10 am to 7 pm and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. View artist portfolios and class schedules at [www.studiosofcocoabeach.org](http://www.studiosofcocoabeach.org). Or follow the Studios of Cocoa Beach on Facebook and Instagram.

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See **CALENDAR**, page 8

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