



## Affordable Housing, Nursing Homes, and Homeless

Joe Steckler President, Helping Seniors of Brevard

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 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.

On February 6th, Florida Today ran a column entitled “\$2.5 billion was meant to help; lawmakers raided the fund instead,” in which State Senator Gary Farmer, D-Lighthouse Point, said “We sort of keep kicking this affordable housing crisis down the road.” I could cite numerous instances of this happening since Governor Chiles established the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund in 1991. Some money was used for its intended purpose, but most was not. Florida is changing. Foreign investors are buying property that could have been used for affordable housing, so there is less space available. Consider where we might be now if our elected legislature had been more insightful.

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.

**Roseland United Methodist Church**  
 12962 Roseland Road, Roseland  
**Rev. Jerry Milner**  
 In Person or Virtual Worship  
 9 a.m. Praise Service  
 11 a.m. Traditional Service  
 Sunday School for all ages

**Roseland Thrift Shop**  
 10am-2pm  
 Open Mon-Wed-Fri-Sat  
[www.roselandchurch.com](http://www.roselandchurch.com)  
 (772)589-3035

Licensed **Mike Haggerty** Insured  
**Pressure Washing At Its Best! Barefoot Bay - Snug Harbor**  
 Home & Driveways are our speciality.  
 Driveways done with a surface cleaning machine.  
 Cell: 203-804-6770 Home: 772-202-4476  
 Mobile Homes - Drive Ways - Barefoot Bay Resident

**CAREPLUS PHARMACY**  
 13260 US HWY 1, Sebastian, Florida 32958 (Across from Home Depot)  
 Ph: 772-571-6496 Fax: 772-918-8783  
 Business Hours  
 Mon-Fri 8:30 am to 6 pm  
 Sat 9 am to 1 pm  
 Sun CLOSED

**HealthMart PHARMACY**

**We carry all covid 19 vaccines and boosters Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J**  
**Walk-in's Welcome from 9am-2pm**

**We have All COVID-19 Supplies**

- Free Delivery • Pet Medication • Medical Supplies • We Offer C.B.D. Oil
- Unit Dose Packaging • Few Minutes Wait Time • Best Customer Service
- Best Cash Price in Town • We Offer Immunizations • Non Sterile Compounding
- Most Insurances Accepted • \$3.99 for 30 Days RX Program • \$9.99 for 90 Days RX Program

**Transfer your Prescriptions and get \$10 Gift Certificate for OTC Products**

**Geroges Shanad**  
 Your Health Is Our Main Priority!!

**We're Here For You**

Whether you need post-surgical home health clinical support, expert wound care or extra help around the house to assist with everyday activities, we've got you covered.

*VNA. Your trusted source for home health and private care.*

**321.316.5669**  
[www.vnatc.com](http://www.vnatc.com)

License# HHA299991471/HHA299995046

**POPCORN CEILINGS & REPAIR**

- Interior/Exterior Painting
- Knockdown or Skip Trowel
- Glitter or Diamond Dust
- Orange Peel
- Water damage

**JOSEPH STEVENS & SONS PAINTING**  
**772-569-0200**

**• FREE ESTIMATES •**

**Since 1970 - 50 years of Good Service**