

Homelessness and affordable housing

I have been writing about homelessness and affordable housing for several years, but it does not seem to matter to those in Brevard County powerful enough to make something positive happen.

It reminds me of the current Naval and Congressional leadership that is eroding our country's naval power.

When I came into the Navy — some years ago — we had more than 2,000 ships. Our chief competitor was Russia with about the same number of ships but almost no aircraft carriers.

Today we have only 270 operational ships. This is second to China who has close to 300 ships and a building capacity that outperforms ours. We have let ourselves become weaker as a seafaring nation, just as England did, and look what happened to her vast Empire.

I have talked about a one percent sales tax to fund affordable housing. Just as we have let our sea power decline, we are falling behind in the fight against homelessness.

Miami-Dade County has put in place a one percent food and nutrition tax to help reduce homelessness... the first such tax in our country, according to my information. How long are we to be the ostrich with its head in the sand, the rigid can being kicked down the road?

We need two plans actually: one for homelessness and one for affordable housing.

Homelessness is a complex problem.

Affordable housing encompasses lower budget rentals as well as government subsidized housing, which is under the purview of the Brevard County Housing and Human Services department.

The entire problem is one that has long been ignored. This failure to address a significant issue is now magnified by a growing number of seniors who need



HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

subsidized housing, which has a wait list of up to three years, if it is available at all.

Continued inattention to this urgent matter will only make the entire problem more difficult to resolve. Action is needed now to rein in all cans and corral the ostriches.

We are informed that a few families are leaving Brevard because they do not believe they are being treated fairly. That is their choice. But how about the thousands who will come to our community since the U.S. Space Force has designated Patrick Air Force Base as a major program for the new Space Force? These people will need affordable housing.

These same people who will occupy new homes and affordable housing will not want to be afflicted with an onslaught of homeless people and all that comes with a county incapable of recognizing an immediate need and solving an ignored problem.

We are plagued with huge and often unaffordable insurance rates, and nothing is done to decrease them. We pay them and it hurts, especially for the more than 150,000 senior citizens of Brevard County.

We must urge our commissioners and elected city officials to do a better job of planning for the future and allocating funds such as the \$125 million received through the CARES Act.

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

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explore and create fun and expressive artwork! Register for class at the Studios website: www.studiosofcocoabeach.org. The Studios' workshop room is behind the gallery at 165 Minutemen Causeway in downtown Cocoa Beach. Their gallery is open Mondays, 9am to 2 pm, Tuesday to Saturday 9 am to 7 pm and Sundays 10 am to 3 pm. For more information on the gallery, artist profiles, and all upcoming classes, visit the website or follow the Studios on Facebook and Instagram.

SUNDAY, JULY 2

Suntree United Methodist Church "Suntree Stars & Stripes," free community picnic and patriotic concert — 4:30 PM games, 5:00 PM food served, 6:30 PM concert at the Suntree United Methodist Church on 7400 N Wickham Rd. in Melbourne, FL 32940. FREE. Information: (321) 242 2585 or SuntreeUMC.org.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19 - THURS-DAY, JULY 20

Swingtime Concert: A free "Not in the Park" picnic concert series from the

Melbourne Municipal Band's Swingtime Jazz Orchestra. Starts at 6:30 p.m., 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne. Bring your own picnic dinner or buy one at the event. For more information, visit www.mmband.org/concerts-and-dances/swingtime-concert

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2

COME JAM WITH US - The New Horizons Band invites you to come make music at the MASC from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$1.00 Members/\$2.00 Non-Members. More information: www.newhorizonsbandofrockledge.com

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 9 - THURS-DAY, AUG. 10

"Let's Take a Ride" concert: A free "Not in the Park" picnic concert series from the Melbourne Municipal Band's Concert Band. Starts at 6:30 p.m., 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne. Enjoy an indoor picnic concert with no ants and air conditioning! Bring your own picnic dinner or buy one at the event. For more information, visit www.mmband.org/concerts-and-dances/let's-take-a-ride

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19

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