

Friendship needs change as we age

This article is a departure from what I normally write about—nonprofits, senior programs, funding, and affordable housing. Today, though, I want to write about people, people who make it easier for others to age with dignity. I use the word friendship, but it is really just people coming together to assist others in need, and often becoming friends.

Certain life events, like medical issues, cannot be avoided and affect almost every family in some way. At times these needs are recognized, and people and resources come together to solve or minimize the problem. At other times, the need is not recognized, and the family does not receive help. Many people are reluctant to ask for or accept the help they require.

One enterprising lady had a flag in front of her home to communicate with her neighbors. When she got up, she turned the



HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

flag a certain way signaling that all was well. When she went to bed, she reversed the flag. It worked fine until the time she fell in her bathtub and remained there for 36 hours before the neighbors realized the flag error and came to her assistance. Perhaps a phone call procedure might have been more timely and safer.

Now I will get a little more personal. For three years I have relied on a wheelchair due to complications from a knee operation. This was a disruption but since my wife Terry was driving, we could get just about anywhere needed. That changed

when she was diagnosed with cancer and had to undergo chemotherapy. Getting to church, driving to medical appointments, and just living became a real concern. We quickly learned aging was not for wimps, and the meaning of friendship.

One person organized a driving group to get Terry to her chemo sessions. Another organized a group to get me to physical therapy and medical appointments, while many others helped get us to the barber shop, grocery store, and other necessary places we took for granted when we were well. You might be surprised how much you learn about people when you come to their assistance and vice versa.

Offering and accepting help is difficult for most people. Steel yourself, if necessary, and determine if you want to/can help an older adult with a safer and easier aging process. Terry has handled her first series of

chemotherapy quite well and will start a second series soon. Neither of us is driving, so we are still quite dependent on friends for transportation. Hopefully that will soon change.

There are many ways to help people age in place. Our own situation has caused us to take a hard look at our living circumstances. We know we need to downsize and consider smaller living accommodations, but it is still hard to do. Think about how you might become a team leader to assist those in need in your neighborhood. I am certain that you and those you help will become friends, friends we all need if we are to age with dignity.

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

Out

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phony.com/

SATURDAY, JULY 8

"WAVES OF EMOTION" FILM - Surfside Movie Night will premiere of "Waves of Emotion" by Dr. Diana Wehrell-Grabowski at Surfside Players, 301 Ramp Road, Cocoa Beach on Saturday, July 8 at 6 p.m. Tickets: \$9.75 per person. For tickets, go to www.surfsideplay-

house.com/

"FROM BACH TO BROADWAY CONCERT" - The Florida Chamber Brass of Brevard Symphony Orchestra will perform "From Bach to Broadway Concert" as part of the Summer Music Series at Suntree United Methodist Church, 7400 N. Wickham Road, Melbourne on Saturday, July 8 at 7 p.m. Tickets: \$25 per person. For tickets, go to www.brevardsymphony.com/

34TH SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT PARTY - The Historic Cocoa Village Playhouse, 300 Brevard Ave., Cocoa, will announce the roster

of shows planned for 2023-2024 season at the 34th Season Announcement Party on Saturday, July 8 at 6:30 p.m. Tickets: \$25 per person. For tickets, go to www.cocoavillage-playhouse.com and click on "Buy Tickets."

SUNDAY, JULY 9

LIVE JAZZ CONCERT - Bass musician Bob DiTota will be joined by Matt Heister on guitar; Daniel Jordan on sax; and Bryan Gardenour on drums in a live Space Coast Jazz Society concert at Veterans Memorial Center, 400 S. Sykes Creek Parkway, Merritt Island, on Sunday, July 9, from 2 to 4 p.m. Tickets (at the

door, general admission): \$15 for Jazz Society and Veterans Memorial Center members; \$20, guests; free to students under \$25. For more information, go to www.spacecoastjazzsociety.org.

THURSDAY, JULY 13

SUMMER YOUTH BAND GRADUATION CONCERT- The Summer Youth Band of Melbourne Municipal Band will hold its graduation concert at Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne on Thursday, July 13 at 6 p.m. Participants are invited to bring a picnic dinner. Admission: Free.

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