

# Hometown News

PALM BAY

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Friday, May 10, 2024



## KEYBOARD WARRIORS

Here's what our readers are concerned about this week

**RANTS & RAVES**

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## WHAT A CATCH!

Submit your latest catch to be featured in an upcoming edition!



**HOMETOWNNEWSBREVARD.COM**



## TAKE ME HOME!

This beautiful girl is seeking a family to call her own

**ADOPTABLE PET**

**5**

## NEED MORE?

Keep up with what's happening in Brevard County on our website



**LOCAL NEWS 24/7/365**

## Community Calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 10

**HOLES FOR HOPE GOLF TOURNAMENT** – A Holes for Hope Golf Tournament will be at Rockledge Country Club, 1591 S. Fiske Blvd., Rockledge on Friday, May 10 at 8:30 a.m. Registration: \$125, single; \$400, team of four. Go to [www.facebook.com/events/779359140308213](http://www.facebook.com/events/779359140308213)

SATURDAY, MAY 11

**RUN FOR THE GECKO 5K** – The 21st annual Run For the Gecko 5K benefit for Eau Gallie High School will be at Wickham Park Community Center, 2815 Leisure Way, Melbourne on Saturday, May 11. Registration opens at 5:45 a.m.; race starts at 7 a.m. Registration: \$35, advance; \$40 on race day; kids' registration, \$20, advance; \$25 on race day. Go to [runsignup.com/Race/FL/Melbourne/runforthegecko](http://runsignup.com/Race/FL/Melbourne/runforthegecko).

**MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT** – The Peter Strong Second Annual Memorial Golf Tournament will be at Turtle Creek Golf Club, 1378 Admiralty Blvd., Rockledge on Saturday, May 11 at 8 a.m. Registration: \$75-\$300. Go to [app.eventcaddy.com/events/peter-strong-2nd-annual-memorial-tournament](http://app.eventcaddy.com/events/peter-strong-2nd-annual-memorial-tournament)

**MEGA RUMMAGE SALE** – A MEGA Rummage Sale will be at Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne on Saturday, May 11, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission: Free. Vendors: \$20, table; \$30, booth. Call 321-608-7420.

**KIDNEY WALK** – Footprints in the Sand Kidney Walk will be at Westgate Cocoa Beach Pier, 401 Meade Ave., Cocoa Beach on Saturday, May 11 at 8 a.m. Benefit for the National

## NEXT LAUNCH

May 10: 9:00 p.m.  
A United Launch Alliance Atlas 5 rocket, designated AV-085, will launch Boeing's CST-100 Starliner spacecraft on its first mission with astronauts

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Kerry Fink/For Hometown News

Palm Bay seniors 55 years and older can take advantage of a free renter's workshop and learn what rights they have as tenants on May 18, thanks to Helping Seniors of Brevard.

## Reserve a spot now for 55+ Renters Workshop

Nonprofit aims to better lives for seniors with resources to empower them

By **Brittany Ó Ruacháinn**

For Hometown News

PALM BAY — It's no secret that seniors are struggling to keep up with the housing market in the county, and being on a fixed income doesn't make it any easier.

Last year, the nonprofit Helping Seniors of Brevard helpline fielded 5,450 calls and 60% of those calls were concerned about senior housing.

Thanks to a grant from the city of Palm Bay, seniors 55 years and older can participate in a free renters workshop that will not only empower them, but will put them in touch with valuable resources.

The next workshop is scheduled for Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Memaw's B-B-Q (Banquet Room), 916 Babcock St. NE, Palm Bay.

Seats are limited and strictly reserved from Palm Bay citizens, but an RSVP can be made by calling (321) 473-7770 or online at [helpingseNIORSofbrevard.info/event/seniors-palm-bay-renters-workshop-051824](http://helpingseNIORSofbrevard.info/event/seniors-palm-bay-renters-workshop-051824).

A last workshop will be available on June 22.

"After COVID, it's been on our radar that all of a sudden, the housing market in Florida just took off," said Kerry Fink, executive director of Helping Seniors of Brevard. "We started getting all these calls from seniors who have lived here for 12 years, paying \$700 a month for a small place, and the landlord they rented from may have retired or thought it was time to cash out."

"Somebody new buys the property, and maybe not necessarily trying to be evil," Fink continued, "But they have a whole different cost structure. Instead of paying \$100,000 for a house they're renting, they paid \$300,000. Everything is higher, the property taxes, insurance, and all that. Then they tell the senior they're going to have to pay \$1,400 a month."

Seniors on a fixed income can't always go out and get a job, Fink explained, so they need to come up with creative solutions, such as moving in with family or taking on a roommate.

Helping Seniors of Brevard works with

See **WORKSHOP**, page 2

## Scholarship honors former Palm Bay Police Chief

Horses & Heroes benefits those struggling with PTSD

By **Kerri B. McMullen**

For Hometown News

COCOA VILLAGE — The Heroes United to Heal first Heroes United to Heal Kentucky Derby on May 4, a benefit hosted by George & Dragon English Tavern, was an afternoon that hit close to home for many: a reminder veterans and first responders are struggling with PTSD and they need our help.

Organizers hope to make this benefit an annual event.

During the early evening, Heroes United to Heal [HU2H] presented its first donation of \$5,000 to Southern Strides of Cocoa. This local equine therapy facility does outstanding lifesaving work with veterans and first responders. This donation covers up to a year of therapy for a hero.

This scholarship honors former Palm Bay police chief James Rogers, who was the police chief who lost his battle in 2022 to PTSD.

"Thank you to this organization. By preventing suicide in our local heroes, breaking the stigma, and seeking help, we hope through events like this and raising awareness, we can let others know there are people there to support them and provide help," said Christina Langille, owner and president of Southern Strides.

Those experiencing PTSD symptoms can feel guilt, loneliness, hostility, irritability, mistrust, and even self-destruction. Finding a therapist can also be difficult.

The other struggle heroes are faced with is often their therapist has never experienced PTSD symptoms, leaving the hero frustrated. Questions from their therapist, such as, "What does that feel like?" or "How

See **HONORED**, page 2



Kerry Fink/For Hometown News

Kerry Fink, executive director of Helping Seniors of Brevard; Vinnie Richardson, HUD-certified counselors; and Attorney Frank Scaglione, Esq., will be on hand to answer your questions at the Renter's Workshop on May 18.

## Workshop

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CareerSource Brevard, which has a program called "Back to Work 50+."

Where working just isn't an option for seniors, Fink hopes this workshop will provide some ease of mind.

This month's guest speakers are Attorney Frank Scaglione, Esq., with the Florida Bar Eviction Prevention Project, and Vinnie Richardson, Housing and Urban Development-certified counselor and executive director for Christian Housing Ministry.

"Vinnie's been a HUD counselor for decades and is a senior herself," Fink said.

"She gets exactly what we're trying to combat against, which is keeping seniors from becoming housing unstable."

Scaglione, Fink said, has been working eviction cases and can help seniors know what their rights as renters are, and what exactly they can ask from a landlord if they're not fulfilling their part of the rental contract.

"Everybody who has gone through this workshop said it's empowered them," Fink said. "We're trying to make a difference for each of these people attending."

If you can't make it to the workshop or find that it's fully booked, you can still call the Helping Seniors of Brevard helpline at (321) 473-7770.



Kerri B. McMullen/For Hometown News

In honor of former Palm Bay police chief James Rogers who lost his struggle with PTSD in 2022, Heroes United to Heal presented a check for \$5,000 to Southern Strides of Cocoa to cover one year of therapy for a hero. From left: Christina Langille, owner/president of Southern Strides; Donna Michaels, founder of HU2H; Erin Harris, HU2H Secretary; and Joany Zuhlke, Sergeant at Arms HU2H.

## Honored

From page 1

does that look?" leave the hero frustrated because the therapist they hope to get help from cannot relate. Therefore, the veteran or first responder will quit therapy within a few months.

"Don't wait until you've gotten yourself in a real trough to get help, get help before it reaches that point," said Donna Michaels, founder of HU2H.

Heroes United to Heal (HU2H) provides financial assistance to heroes seeking PTSD

treatment from facilities vetted by HU2H, covering things such as lodging or even travel.

One vetted treatment facility is in Virginia Beach, which can be financially difficult for those outside Virginia. During peak season, lodging could jump from \$3,000 to \$5,000 when they need to be there for their treatment.

If you would like more information about HU2H, visit [www.hu2h.org](http://www.hu2h.org). To learn more about Southern Strides, visit <https://southernstridesequine.com>

If you are in crisis, please call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room.

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