



# Dangers of the Wrong Decision

By Joe Steckler, President, Helping Seniors of Brevard County

I have talked often about protecting our ability to age well. Since we are a community with a large number of aging people, we need to consider where we live and what we can do to ensure our quality of life. In Florida, that entails a healthy respect for severe weather, especially when we can no longer do what we could when we were younger.

Hurricanes should always be taken seriously. Some people believe storm reporting is all media hype and insist we are perfectly safe from hurricanes. After all, the government put the space program at the Cape because hurricanes always miss us. This may be, but I prefer to err on the side of caution, following recommended preparation and evacuation guidelines.

I say the foregoing because I have been at sea and experienced the full force of major storms. As a Naval Officer I spent many years on surface ships and submarines, riding out two typhoons in the Pacific on submarines. These events taught me the dangers of water force and the importance of smart decision-making.

My first hurricane experience occurred as a young officer on my second submarine. We were enroute to Yokosuka, Japan, and had to maintain our position as reported to our command at Pearl Harbor. Not wanting to slow our speed of advance, the captain elected to remain on the surface and snorkel – running our engines as though we were submerged – so we could go faster and save our battery.


The thought was good but the force of the water on our steel deck was disastrous. I watched through the periscope as the water pulled about 32 steel bolts (1" in diameter and 3" long) out of the steel rails in which they were bolted, then washed away a large section of the main deck. We made repairs in Yokosuka, but the decision to snorkel on the surface was to remain forever etched on my mind.

Ten years later I encountered another typhoon, this time as the Commanding Officer of a submarine. I changed my course, avoided the major effects of the storm, and arrived at Yokosuka a day late with no damage to my ship. Three other Commanding Officers did not avoid the storm and arrived at Yokosuka with major damage.

Life is a constant cycle of changing events and decision-making. Making the wrong decision about staying in the path of a hurricane can have severe consequences. While the winds may diminish, if you are in a location prone to flooding or if you encounter a water surge, you may be left with no safe haven. Riding out a storm is a matter of choice, but it is always better to ensure you have options to remain safe. In this case it is your call to protect your ability to age well by making the right decision. §

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.

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Helping Seniors of Brevard is a Florida 501(c)(3) Nonprofit. Helping Seniors of Brevard - P.O. Box 372936 - Satellite Beach, 32937. The Helping Seniors Travel Club is operated by Senior Travel division of The Travel Center - CST # 20000881-10 FST # 14672 - who is solely responsible for all travel arrangements. A portion of travel commissions from Helping Seniors Travel Club Members travel funds the Helping Seniors Endowment.



## SENIOR SCENE MONTHLY TRAVEL TIPS

# Trips That Seniors Need to Take as Soon as You Retire *Part 3*



Senior Travel Agent Chris Morse has over 35 years travel agent experience.

**Y**ou are retired or getting close! — and if you’re reading this, you probably love to travel. With the youngest baby boomers turning 59 this year, and the first group around age 77, most of us are likely retired or semi-retired. According to AARP’s 2023 Travel Trends survey, the majority of travelers over age 50 (67 percent) planned to travel in 2024, taking at least four trips throughout the year. And since 2023 has brought record-breaking travel numbers, it’s likely that even more boomers

are hitting the road this year. And while older travelers were more likely to plan a domestic trip last year, about 43 percent of people ages 50 and up planned to travel both within the U.S. and abroad.

### Costa Rica

Looking for pura vida? The motto, meaning “Enjoy life and be happy,” is a favorite saying in this Central American country for good reason. A variety of environments, including rainforests, jungles, Pacific and Caribbean coastlines, volcanoes, and hot springs make it a fascinating place to visit.

Lovers of wildlife can see monkeys, sloths, wildcats, whales, reptiles, and sea turtles in their natural habitats. And after a day of hiking, diving, surfing, playing golf, or exploring nature, you can look forward to relaxing on an unspoiled beach or in a lush rainforest.

Five-star hotels and luxurious resorts are located throughout the country, so you can choose your favorite surroundings to ensure you find what pura vida means to you. In Guanacaste, the W Costa Rica - Reserva Conchal is surrounded by the sands of Playa Conchal. In the heart of Costa Rica’s rainforest, Playa Cativo Lodge is an upscale beachfront property accessible exclusively by boat. Nayara Gardens, on the edge of Costa Rica’s Arenal Volcano National Park, boasts unobstructed views of the volcano.

Costa Rica has two international airports, Daniel Oduber Quiros in Liberia (LIR) and Juan Santamaria in San Jose (SJO). Be sure to check the most convenient airport and ground transportation when booking your hotel.

### Africa

If you’ve wanted to visit Africa, whether for adventure, wildlife, or

*Trips That Seniors Need to Take... continued on page 42*

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