Dr. Kumar educates patients on painful jaw condition osteonecrosis

By Ken Datzman

People treated for bone diseases such as osteoporosis, or patients receiving radiation therapy to the head and neck to treat cancer, may be at risk for developing a potentially painful jaw condition known as osteonecrosis.

Osteonecrosis of the jaw is a possible side effect caused by drugs commonly used to combat bone loss. Symptoms include pain, swelling or infection of the gums, recently treated gums that are not healing, loose teeth, exposed bone, or a feeling of heaviness in the jaw.

People with osteoporosis who develop osteonecrosis of the jaw typically receive conservative treatments, such as oral rinses, antibiotics, and oral analgesics. These treatments are usually effective, doctors say.

However, severe cases of osteonecrosis may require surgical removal of the affected bone.

This condition should be managed by an oral surgeon with experience in treating such patients.

Osteonecrosis can be diagnosed by using X-ray, CT scan, MRI, bone scan, and functional bone tests.

Osteoporosis causes bones to become weak and fragile, so that they break easily — even from a minor fall. Fractures caused by osteoporosis can be life-threatening and a major cause of chronic pain and long-term disability.

An estimated 10 million Americans suffer from osteoporosis and another 44 million have low bone mass, putting them at greater risk for breaking a bone, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation. Osteoporosis is more common in women than men.

“When women reach a certain age, around 50 to 60, they go through hormone changes,” said Dr. Sadesh Kumar, founder of Wickham Dental Care & Implant Preserve in Melbourne.

“The leading cause of osteoporosis is a lack of certain hormones, particularly estrogen in women and androgen in men. Bones become weak because there is not enough mineral and collagen content.”

There is no cure for osteoporosis. Treatment aims to slow or stop bone loss and improve bone density.

Osteonecrosis of the jaw may occur in patients taking “antiresorptive” medications, such as bisphosphonates, that are used for osteoporosis.

“We need to educate patients and the public about osteonecrosis of the jaw and the effects of certain drugs,” said Dr. Kumar, whose training includes having completed a Fellowship in oral and maxillofacial surgery at Louisiana State University.

It may be beneficial for anyone who will be starting osteoporosis treatment with antiresorptive agents to see their dentist before beginning treatment or shortly afterward, as recommended by the American Dental Association.

This way, you and your dentist can ensure that you have good oral health going into treatment and develop a plan that will keep your mouth healthy during treatment.

While there is a “very low risk” of osteonecrosis occurring in people taking any of these medications, the risk may be slightly higher in people who require invasive dental procedures, such as a dental extraction or dental implant if they also take bisphosphonates, according to the American College of Rheumatology.

In 2017, around 10,000 to 20,000 people in the U.S. who suffered from various forms of osteonecrosis were between the ages of 20 and 50, according to the National Organization for Rare Disorders.

Although it can happen in any bone, osteonecrosis most commonly affects the ends (epiphysis) of long bones such as the femur (thigh bone). Commonly involved bones are the upper femur (ball part of the hip socket), the lower femur (a part of the knee joint), the upper humerus (upper arm bone involving the shoulder joint), and the bones of the ankle.

The disease may affect just one bone, more than one bone at the same time, or more than one bone at different times.

The first three cases of “bisphosphonate–associated osteonecrosis of the jaw” were spontaneously reported to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration by an oral surgeon in 2002, with the toxicity being described as a potentially late toxicity of chemotherapy.

In 2003 and 2004, three oral surgeons independently reported to the FDA information on 104 cancer patients with bisphosphonate–associated osteonecrosis of the jaw seen in their referral practices in California, Florida, and New York.

These case series were published as peer-reviewed articles — two in the “Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery” and one in the “Journal of Clinical Oncology.”
VIERA, March 30, 2020 — Two care managers at Senior Partner Care Services, which is affiliated with Viera–based One Senior Place, the “Experts in Aging,” have earned certification from the Aging Life Care Association, America’s professional care–management association.

Certified Care Managers (CCM) Susan Lisa Conway and Dayanara Roman have each earned the designation of Aging Life Care Professional. Also known as a geriatric care manager, an Aging Life Care Professional is a health and human services specialist who acts as a guide and advocate for families who are caring for older relatives or disabled adults.

The Aging Life Care Professional is educated in any of several fields related to aging life care, including gerontology, nursing, social work, psychology or occupational therapy. For more information on this credential, call One Senior Place at (321) 751–4771 or visit OneSeniorPlace.com.

In order to earn this designation, care managers have their knowledge and skills scrutinized through truly rigorous testing,” said One Senior Place Director Barbara Fradkin. “Certification conveys mastery and is a mark of excellence. In addition to annual education requirements and a strict code of ethics for the care managers, certification also gives consumers a way to differentiate between providers, so they can find the most skilled practitioners in the field.”

Senior Partner Care Services is a trusted One Senior Place company that makes seamless, integrated, in–home care a reality.

One Senior Place is a marketplace for resources and provider of information, advice, care and on–site services for seniors and their families.

About Senior Partner Care Services
Senior Partner Care Services helps elderly clients continue to live safely and independently at home by providing them with a reliable and affordable source of high quality non–medical home care.

Senior Partner Care Services offers extra assistance including meal preparation, light housekeeping, laundry, transportation, errands, incontinence care, medication monitoring and reminders, bathing, dressing, personal care assistance, socialization and communication and extra supervision for safety. No long–term commitment is required.

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Luxurious Merritt Island home sells fast for $1.6 million at absolute auction

A waterfront estate on South Tropical Trail on Merritt Island — situated on a double lot of 3.4 acres — sold in 15 minutes for $1.6 million at a March 28 absolute auction. The price included a buyer’s premium of 10 percent.

Conducted by DeCaro Auctions International, the event was a big success.

The property was marketed by Realtor Jack Jeffcoat of Jeffcoat & Co., who runs his business under broker Ellingston Properties in Rockledge. He teamed up with Bobbie Dyer, the founder and president of the Dyer Mortgage Group in Melbourne. Her firm offered mortgage services.

“We had an amazing turnout of 16 registered bidders for the auction who brought $25,000 cashier’s checks to bid on the home,” said Jeffcoat. “It was exciting as people started showing up at 9:45 a.m. to get the last look at the property before it went out for bidding.”

“The auction started at 11 a.m. and by 11:15 a.m. the property was sold to an end–user. Hopefully, the family will enjoy the property for many years to come,” he added.

Jeffcoat estimated the land alone to be valued at more than $1.2 million. “So someone really got a deal on auction day.”

He said the recently retired seller of the estate was ready to move on in life. “I spoke with my client almost 13 months ago about his retirement timeline and told him that when he was getting close, I had a guaranteed 60–day solution for him to sell his home,” said Jeffcoat.
Is your business impacted by COVID-19?

The Coronavirus has thrown everyone's life into turmoil, including, to one degree or another, yours. However, many of us still have business relationships to manage. The more you can learn about coronavirus and the law, the better equipped you will be to manage your affairs. Make yourself safer with greater knowledge! As we navigate this uncharted territory, our team is ready to assist with:

• Insurance Coverage and Coronavirus
• Business Emergency Response Planning
• Florida Employers and the “CARES” Stimulus Package
• Impact for Real Estate, Construction, and Business

See our Guides to COVID-19 at VolkLawOffices.com/Coronavirus.

We are worried about everyone affected by this horrible situation. As a nation, we will survive, learn, and get better as a result of this. Thank you and God bless you and yours.

— David Volk & The Volk Law Team

Call 321-726-8338 Video & Phone Consultations Available
1901 S. Harbor City Blvd #700, Melbourne, FL 32901
Every action we take to combat coronavirus will be multiplied if others do same

By Brenda S. Thompson
UCF Forum columnist
University of Central Florida

While standing on my balcony last week, I felt a great need to capture my thoughts about the recent health crisis affecting all of us. Everything around me was so still and peaceful; birds were chirping in the background and the afternoon shadows over the courtyard below helped me appreciate the contrasting sunny areas from my perspective above.

Yet, with all the beauty and tranquility around me, I could not erase the surreal events of the past few weeks when — with rocket speed—America became vulnerable and joined the rest of the world in a fierce battle of survival against the ravages of COVID–19.

This all happened so suddenly.

My thoughts flickered between the daily updates regarding the virus. I was reminded again of our dire circumstances while standing in the checkout line in my neighborhood grocery store. Being very careful to take no more than my fair share of any grocery item, I was surprised when the checkout cashier informed me that I could only purchase one package of rice. I had two in my grocery cart.

“Oh, of course, no problem,” I quickly said and surrendered the second packet to her, but in the back of my mind I thought, “Will this type of rationing really make a difference in getting a handle on what’s going on in the world right now? I later concluded that yes, it would help!”

In a broader context, every small action we take today to combat the coronavirus will be multiplied if others take similar steps in the same direction. Practicing social distancing, washing our hands frequently, sanitizing living and work areas more thoroughly and frequently, and imposing self–quarantines are essential to reducing the spread of the virus.

Calling friends and relatives to check on their well–being and taking time to gauge our own mental and emotional balance during this crisis are important, as well. Every single precautionary action could have a positive impact.

My reflections continued while I was on the balcony and I thought about the selfless actions of a group of local veterans who came to the assistance of their community and made sure that the neighborhood school children had daily healthy meals for breakfast and lunch. Normally, meals would be served during the school day; however, out of an abundance of caution, schools closed a few weeks ago in order to curtail the spread of the virus.

And then I personally witnessed the care a veteran took to sanitize a work–related item before he handed it to me.

These types of actions demonstrate a genuine concern for others during this difficult time and reminded me that we are all in this together.

And let’s not forget the organizations, businesses and especially charities that are doing their part to restore stability in people’s lives during this time. Many are struggling themselves. This might be a good time to donate to their charitable efforts, if you are able to do so.

A century ago, the world experienced a similar event with the Spanish Flu pandemic that spread worldwide from 1918–1920. It was a horrific time and at the end of the virus’ cycle, it is estimated that 500 million people worldwide were infected with the virus and approximately 30 million to 50 million people died, with about 675,000 deaths in the United States. These standalone statistics are quite frightening and may give us a sinking feeling inside.

However, an optimistic and pragmatic view helps one to realize how America and the world have advanced during the past century. Through research and advanced medical methods and treatments, we are better able to respond to such catastrophic outbreaks, so there is great optimism ahead.

As we continue to identify and utilize available resources effectively and efficiently, we will gain a foothold in controlling the virus. If we demonstrate our faith, follow science, analyze, interpret and apply data correctly, and adhere to recommended health precautions, then we will have the best opportunity for success.

I believe that once the dust settles, we will realize how resilient we are. We can, we must, and we will rise to an unprecedented level of excellence through global team efforts.

Brenda S. Thompson is director of community engagement in UCF’s College of Community Innovation and Education. She can be reached at Brenda.Thompson@UCF.edu.
‘Based upon my investigation as a criminal investigator with the Craven County Sheriff’s Department there is probable cause to arrest Timothy Michaud for sexual assault on (xxxx) Michaud.’

John Whitfield
May 7, 2010
Organizations announce Coronavirus relief effort; to relieve some of the financial burden community faces

By Lisa Davidson
lisad@cfbrevard.org
Community Foundation for Brevard

ROCKLEDGE, March 26, 2020 — The Community Foundation for Brevard, the Space Coast Health Foundation, and United Way of Brevard have announced the establishment of the Brevard COVID–19 Response.

The three are working with several local partners across sectors to understand how organizations are providing important services to those most in need in Brevard.

The funders will provide additional financial resources to nonprofit agencies and individuals on the Space Coast most impacted by the growing economic devastation caused by COVID–19.

The Community Foundation for Brevard, Space Coast Health Foundation and United Way of Brevard will match up to $50,000 each, totaling $150,000 between the three funders. That means, for every dollar you donate, two dollars will go to relief efforts. With the community’s help, $300,000 could be available to assist the Space Coast’s most vulnerable.

“It’s going to take all of us working together to get through this difficult time. While the challenges are growing day by day, the generosity of our fund holders and community members, coupled with the capacity of our critical service providers, will help us weather the crisis and emerge even stronger here in Brevard,” said Theresa Grimison, president and CEO of the Community Foundation for Brevard. “I encourage everyone to join with us, Space Coast Health Foundation and United Way of Brevard as we move forward together.”

The following areas of need will be a focus of the Brevard COVID–19 Response:
- **FOOD SUPPORT:** Access to food will be critical with school closings, reduced hours in some families and the closure of our senior lunch sites.
- **EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** Families and individuals struggling with basic needs due to job loss.
- **FRONT–LINE, NONPROFIT AGENCIES:** Funds will provide additional resources to those organizations that need to adapt their programs and services in this environment. The focus will be on working with Brevard’s most vulnerable residents needing assistance.

The first phase of this work is intended to be a rapid response to meet immediate needs. As more information is learned about other resources (federal/state/private) for help and the changing nature of this unprecedented situation, we will adapt our process.

“The strongest results happen when communities come together to solve issues, especially during times of crisis,” said Johnette Gindling, president and CEO of the Space Coast Health Foundation.

“The Foundation is pleased to collaborate with the Community Foundation for Brevard and United Way for Brevard to relieve some of the financial burdens our community is facing and will face in the months ahead due to the Coronavirus. This is about coming together for the good of each other and coming out stronger after the storm,” said Rob Rains, president of United Way of Brevard.

“Our combined goal is to effectively deploy resources to local nonprofit organizations and families in need. This emergency has been fast in evolving and new information is coming in daily. However, I can tell you we will need significantly more resources to meet the demand the coronavirus crisis has put on our community.

To donate, visit:
- Community Foundation for Brevard at www.CFBrevard.org to give to the Brevard Relief Fund — COVID–19
- Space Coast Health Foundation at www.SCHFbrevard.org
- United Way of Brevard at www.UWBrevard.org to give to Brevard’s COVID–19 Response Fund

Donations will go directly to services (except for the credit card fee for online gifts). Remember there is dollar for dollar match up to $150,000.

For additional COVID–19 Community Resources visit www.uwbrevard.org.
- **About each of the agencies**
  - Since 1981, the Community Foundation for Brevard (cfbrevard.org) has helped donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, nonprofits serve the region effectively, and inspired people to make the community a better place. With the deepest integrity and best practices, the Foundation has successfully stewarded the philanthropic interests of donors, to build a better, more vibrant Brevard County and beyond.
  - The Space Coast Health Foundation (schbrevard.org) is a grant–making organization established to enhance the health and wellness of individuals and communities in Brevard County. The Foundation was formed as a nonprofit, tax–exempt 501(c)(3) organization in 2010 with funds from the sale of the Wuesthoff Health System.
  - United Way of Brevard funds large–scale collaborations, partner agencies and specific programs focused on health, education and financial stability along with a safety net of health and human services.
  - United Way also effectively deploys resources through VITA Tax Preparation Assistance, Financial Education, Healthy Families and Gifts in Kind programs. Through United Way, the contributions of thousands of individual donors become a force for changing lives and strengthening our Community. United Way of Brevard was established in 1957.
Community partners have answered the call to help Brevard Public Schools provide internet capabilities and devices to students from households that can’t afford them. As students across Brevard begin remote learning, more than $50,000 has been donated or formally pledged by business, nonprofit and faith organizations to ensure that all children can connect to teachers and lessons.

With that help, the school district so far purchased 2,200 hot spot devices and began distributing them on Wednesday, March 25. The hot spots, which provide a year’s worth of internet access, cost about $140 each. BPS continues to seek pledges until all students in need are served.

The largest commitments so far: $21,000 from Millennium Engineering & Integration Co.; and $15,000 from Northrop Grumman Corp.

“We know many students face challenges getting access to tools and equipment for learning outside the classroom, and Northrop Grumman is proud to support funding for the comprehensive plan Brevard Public Schools developed so quickly to enable student success,” said Kirsten Dreggors, vice president of Engineering and Manned Aircraft Design Center of Excellence Leader, Northrop Grumman Corp.

Organizations that have donated: Dr. Chad Reddick, orthodontist; The Avenue Viera; e–Angels; Indian River United Methodist Church; Jostens; Lifestyle Homes; State Farm Insurance agents Roger Parsons, Joe Raley, and Jeff Thummel; and The Viera Co.

“I am proud to be able to support this program so that our students can continue to learn while being forced to be away from their schools,” said Dr. Chad Reddick of Reddick Orthodontics. “I hope this temporary setback will only make us more resilient.”

“Providing connectivity for virtual instruction is the only way to keep public education moving forward, while also protecting the health of students,” said Ryan Comparato, owner of Campus Supply of Florida — Jostens. “No county can handle that task without significant help from the community,”

Said Michelle Reyes, marketing coordinator for The Avenue Viera, “This pandemic has hit us hard, but we can’t expect our community to bounce back if any child is left behind. Donating to the student connectivity project was one concrete way we could help our kids, which in turn, will help us heal.”

Anyone interested in contributing to BPS’ student-connectivity effort can do so by check or online through the Brevard Schools Foundation, 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, Fla., 32940.
UF plant and soil diagnostic labs essential to Florida agriculture and the economy during COVID–19

GAINESVILLE — In the time of COVID–19, plants still get sick, and the soil that nourishes them needs care. The health of plants and soil is critical to agriculture, an industry designated an essential service in response to the pandemic.

That’s why today, when many American universities have transitioned to online—only and their employees adapt to working from home, scientists at University of Florida/IFAS laboratories on the main Gainesville campus and elsewhere across the state are working with limited staffing and hours to test samples of soil, water, plants, and even manure sent in from across the state and beyond.

With the growing concerns about how COVID–19 will affect jobs and the economy, making informed business decisions is more important than ever. UF/IFAS diagnostic labs provide that vital information, one sample at a time. The following labs are receiving and processing shipped samples:
- Tropical Research and Education Center, Homestead
- Plant Diagnostic Clinic
- Everglades Research and Education Center, Belle Glade
- Everglades Soil Testing Laboratory
- Main UF Campus
- Extension Soil Testing Laboratory
- Insect Identification Laboratory
- Nematode Assay Laboratory
- Plant Diagnostic Center

Together, these labs receive thousands of samples each year. Samples are submitted by people who need answers about diseased plants, soil or plant nutrient deficiencies and other agricultural concerns.

“The work done in these labs is critical to the success of Florida’s agricultural industries, from plant nurseries to citrus growers, to home landscapers to cattle ranchers. That’s because results from these labs help people make informed decisions that impact their businesses,” said Saqib Mukhtar, associate dean of agriculture for UF/IFAS Extension.

For example, if a plant isn’t infected with a fungus, that knowledge can prevent a farmer from applying fungicide chemicals unnecessarily, saving money. Or, if soil is lacking nutrients, applying the proper enhancements in the right amounts can ensure nutritious grass for cattle.

“Typically, the soil testing lab processes about 16,000 to 18,000 samples a year from all counties in the state, covering nearly 100 commodities, as well as home landscapes and grasses for livestock,” said Rao Mylavaram, director of the UF/IFAS Analytical Services Laboratories, of which the soil testing lab is a part.

If someone wants to know if their plants are sick, they can send samples to the Plant Diagnostic Center in Gainesville or the clinics in Quincy or Homestead. The Plant Diagnostic Center is directed by Carrie Harmon, an Extension specialist in the department of plant pathology.

“All plant industries in Florida and beyond use our services,” Harmon said. “This week, we have received samples of tomato, potato, pepper, turf, several different woody and herbaceous ornamentals, palms and more. We receive about 3,300 samples a year, plus an additional 3,700 emergency survey samples from the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.”

Right now, staff at the Plant Diagnostic Center are working in shifts, with no more than one person in the building at a time, Harmon said. They are triaging samples, culturing fungi and bacteria, running tests, and responding to client emails and phone calls.

“Additionally, we are doing as much digital diagnosis as we can, to save folks from having to send in a sample if possible — saves them from shipping costs and reduces the load on the lab,” she said.

For the time being, even as stores shutter and students head home, both on—campus labs will continue receiving samples by mail.

“We are here for Florida agriculture. They don’t stop, so we won’t either, as long as possible,” Harmon said.

To learn how to submit samples or contact a lab or clinic, visit https://diagnostics.ifas.ufl.edu.

Mainstream Engineering in Rockledge wins contract to minimize wastewater discharge

ROCKLEDGE — Mainstream Engineering Corp. has been awarded a contract from the U.S. Navy to minimize wastewater discharges.

Navy vessels must follow local and federal regulations when disposing wastewater into the sea. These regulations prohibit discharging greywater in many areas. Therefore, the greywater generated by the galley, scullery, and other shipboard operations must be stored aboard the ship until the wastewater can be safely offloaded shore side or discharged at sea outside littoral water limits.

Mainstream Engineering is adapting a greywater recycling system originally developed for recycling Army kitchen wastewater to resolve this Navy issue. The system performance will be demonstrated through prototype evaluation.

- About Mainstream Engineering Corp.

The 34-year—old manufacturer has a history of leading—edge research and development that has resulted in advanced cost—competitive products, which are made in America. Mainstream’s mission is to transition advanced research and development into high—quality, environmentally safe, green, commercial products using lean manufacturing techniques. Areas of research include thermal control, energy conversion, power electronics, biomass conversion, chemical technology and materials science.
Anuvia Plant Nutrients in Winter Garden names industry veteran Jim Byrum as director of government affairs

By Sybil Jones
sjones@sybiljonesandco.com
Sybil Jones + Company

WINTER GARDEN — Anuvia Plant Nutrients, an environmentally sustainable plant nutrient company, has hired Jim Byrum as director of government affairs.

In his new position, Byrum will be responsible for interacting with policy leaders within government and NGOs about Anuvia and the opportunities presented by its innovative fertilizer technology, including SymTRX for agriculture. SymTRX is Anuvia’s sustainable enhanced efficiency slow-release plant nutrient developed for the agricultural markets.

“We welcome Jim to Anuvia and look forward to his valuable insight into public affairs,” says Chief Executive Officer Amy Yoder. “His depth of experience in agricultural markets will bring a unique technology that not only optimizes nutrient availability and efficiency for plants, but also improves soil health, preserves natural resources and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. To learn more about Anuvia Plant Nutrients — GreenTRX for Turf and Lawn, SymTRX for Agriculture, visit www.anuviaplantnutrients.com.

‘‘Their plant nutrient technology not only helps farmers improve soil health, increase yields and reduce nutrient loss, it also provides the sustainable, profitable and environmentally friendly crop input products needed for today’s agriculture.’’

Byrum’s previous positions include serving on Michigan’s Food Policy Council, Renewable Fuels Commission, and Commission on Agriculture, in addition to positions as the state executive director of Michigan’s USDA–Farm Service Agency, and as president of the Michigan Bean Shippers Association and Michigan Agri–Business Association.

He previously worked for Monsanto. Byrum has consulted with the Kellogg Foundation, the University of Nebraska, the University of Georgia and the University of Guelph on leadership development in the agricultural industry.

Byrum holds a bachelor’s degree in public affairs management from Michigan State University.

SymTRX is a bio–based sustainable plant nutrient. Anuvia products and its technology represent a model for the circular economy: effective reuse of resources creating bio–based products that deliver nutrients efficiently while feeding the soil and protecting the environment.

About Anuvia Plant Nutrients

Anuvia Plant Nutrients manufactures high–efficiency, sustainable bio–based fertilizers for the agriculture, turf and lawncare industries. The company developed and uses a unique technology that not only optimizes nutrient availability and efficiency for plants, but also improves soil health, preserves natural resources and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. To learn more about Anuvia Plant Nutrients — GreenTRX for Turf and Lawn, SymTRX for Agriculture, visit www.anuviaplantnutrients.com.
Weaving local safety net: 15 things communities can do right now in face of challenge to uplift lives of people

By Quint Studer

Right now in America, anxiety is the new normal. With all that’s changed over the past couple of weeks, it’s not hard to see why. Even more unnerving than what is happening is what might happen. Yet in the middle of the bad news and worry, there is a welcome bright spot: right now, those so passionately believe in the power of community are being proven right.

On a national level, it may look like we are falling apart, but remember that our strength has always manifested on the local level. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it once more: Locally is where America is at its best.

My revitalization work has given me the gift of getting to know leaders and citizens who make up communities of all shapes and sizes.

I’ve come to see that Americans are made of incredibly strong stuff. We’re innovative and resourceful. We’re connected, caring, and compassionate. Even in the face of challenge, we’re optimists at heart. And that’s why I feel this is our time to shine.

Communities can be the saving grace in a nation wracked by the coronavirus and (more severely) the fear of the coronavirus.

I believe this with everything in me. And in the same way people are catching the “panic” bug, can’t we also catch the “help each other” bug? I believe we can — and I think it will happen on a community level.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Remember that localism matters. Locally is where leaders in all sectors can make the most difference. It’s where we need to concentrate our best thinking and our best efforts. People are getting the rugs pulled out from under them in every arena: business, work, financial, family, and personal life. We have to help create the safety nets inside our community.

- Think of this like an old-fashioned barn raising. We need to come together to provide help where and when it is needed. It’s up to us to create safety nets inside our communities.

- Pull together a guiding coalition to map out a local plan. Include the organizations that touch people’s lives including chamber, government officials, healthcare, small businesses, larger corporations, education, nonprofits, religious organizations, etc. These groups can help identify who is the most vulnerable and can help direct and funnel resources to the people who need it most. Meet regularly (virtually is probably best) and stay connected. Coordination will be key: Make sure the plan is clear to everyone, that services are managed wisely, and that no one falls through the cracks.

- Communicate, communicate, communicate. After you map out the plan, you’ll need to create a communication loop that makes sense for your community. Share where things are now and what’s coming next, not just once, but daily. Be calm, intentional, transparent, and brief. You can say only so much at a time, and people can hear and process only so much. But at times like these, people really need to hear from leaders. When they don’t hear anything, they assume and expect the worst.

- Groups involved in the guiding coalition can get vital information to their members and help share it with the larger community. Eject a point person with good communication skills to ensure everyone is getting a unified message. Be available for questions.

In Janesville, Wis., Forward Janesville is helping the business community by providing conference calls and Q&A sessions with local leaders who share information on various aspects of dealing with the COVID–19 pandemic. These local people have spent a great deal of time talking to county, state, and federal experts so they can share what they’ve learned with others in the business community. It’s the pyramid effect.

- Look after vulnerable populations. Organizations involved in creating the plan can help identify these groups and figure out ways to help. Think elderly, sick and housebound people, those who live in underprivileged areas, small children without access to food.

- Consider taking it one community at a time to make sure no one falls through the cracks. One neighborhood is now updating their “block-by-block” system and seeking volunteers to keep tabs on elderly people who may need help with vital tasks like having prescriptions picked up or groceries delivered. This is a great best practice that every community can adopt.

- Support the small/local business community. Right now, small businesses are really hurting. Many are facing cash flow shortfalls, layoffs, and other serious issues. One of the first things you might do is create a clearinghouse of available resources and connect small businesspeople with the resources they need, such as SBA loans. The chamber can play a pivotal role here. Chamber leaders can urge members to come talk to them before it’s too late. Also, small businesses owners can connect with creative ways to help each other. If you’re a property owner, could you accept late rent payments? Is there a way to join forces with another small business to create a mutually beneficial partnership? Restaurants, bars, and coffee shops are really struggling. You might help by promoting them as a great source for takeout lunches (as dining rooms close) or urge citizens to purchase gift cards with them in touch with each other. This can be an incredibly valuable service.

- If you lead a business or organization, find creative ways to help. Some pharmacies are waiving home delivery fees for prescriptions for the elderly and others at high risk. Some cable companies are offering free access to Wi–Fi for 60 days to certain students who need to move to online learning, and one moving truck company is offering to store students’ belongings for free (as they rush to vacate dorms). Some restaurants are delivering meals to high–risk people. Many school systems are providing meals to students at designated drop–off points, and some are putting people to work delivering food to students’ homes.

Think creatively. Helping others builds goodwill and makes everyone feel better.

- Support your local health–care workers. These people are incredibly stressed. They put themselves at risk every day. And yet they find the courage and compassion to get up every morning and go in to work to care for others. They do this every day, all year long, but in times of crisis we’re especially grateful. These men and women are heroes. Find ways to celebrate them and to make their lives easier. Correct misinformation when you hear it.

- Model “helping” behaviors at every turn. Lead by example. Every time you go shopping for an elderly person, provide financial grace to someone who owes you, share supplies with someone who doesn’t have them, calm someone’s fears, etc. You are showing others how to live in truly unprecedented times.

- Harvest ideas from other communities. Many of the
people on your guiding coalition will belong to organizations that have local, state, and national organizations (for example, the chamber). They are all sharing information and cascading it through their organizations. You can often find out what other communities are doing through these channels. Can you tailor what they’re doing to work in your community? Relate; don’t compare.

● Collect inspiring stories of neighbors helping neighbors. Open meetings with these stories. Share them on social media. Positive stories are incredibly powerful. These are the “bright spots” that make us feel better and put us in a better frame of mind so we can get real work done. Plus, they inspire others to jump in and help.

● Find ways to create vibrancy where you can. In his book “The Social Animal,” David Brooks writes about “the urge to merge.” Social isolation will take its toll. We need to engage with others and to feel that we belong to the human family. People and communities are putting their Christmas lights back up in a show of hope in these dark times (and you can enjoy them from your car)! In Italy people are singing from open windows, and in Spain, fitness instructors are leading group workouts from their balconies. Get creative about ways you can bring people together virtually even when they can’t be together physically.

● Keep health concerns in mind always. You might think it goes without saying to wash your hands, practice social distancing, and follow all the CDC guidelines, but it can never be repeated too many times. Be vigilant. Follow the rules. Nothing is more important than keeping people safe. This is part of leading by example.

● Activate the “can–do” attitude in your community. Celebrate small wins. Make a big deal out of them. People really need something positive to think and talk about right now. With enough small wins, you’ll start to create momentum. Also, focus on resilience. Assure people that as bad as things are right now, they are strong enough to make it through this crisis.

Remember that the hard times won’t last forever. When we get intentional about doing what we can to strengthen and build up our communities now, we’re doing more than surviving. We’re setting the stage for renewed growth and revitalization once this pandemic dies down. One day in the not–too–distant future, we will find we made it through the tough times and came out on the other side stronger, better, and closer than ever.

About the Author
Quint Studer is author of “Building a Vibrant Community.” He is the founder of Pensacola’s Studer Community Institute, a nonprofit organization focused on improving the community’s quality of life and moving Escambia and Santa Rosa counties forward.

He is also the founder of Vibrant Community Partners, which coaches communities in building out a blueprint for achieving growth and excellence. Quint speaks and works with communities across the country, helping them execute on their strategic plans, create a better quality of life, and attract and retain talent and investment.


By Ken Dotzman

Christian Care Ministry, which operates Medi–Share, the nation’s leading health–care sharing program, has posted the now–hiring sign at its corporate headquarters in Melbourne.

The more than 25–year–old not–for–profit entity, with an office in Colorado Springs, Colo., has a number of positions available, including one slot for seasonal work.

“We’re hiring and that’s good news for Brevard County,” said Mark Sterr, Christian Care Ministry’s talent acquisition professional. “The job openings are posted on our website (https://mychristiancare.org). It’s best to look there to see what’s available because the postings change.”

Currently, as this story is being written, there are 14 positions open at Christian Care Ministry, with most of them at the headquarters location on West Eau Gallie Boulevard.

The one seasonal position is for a customer service representative working in the Contact Center.

“The Contact Center takes a lot of calls from providers. The providers are the doctors offices, the hospitals, and the urgent–care facilities. The health–care providers are the ones who treat our Medi–Share members. The Contact Center supports that effort,” said Sterr.

He added, “Working in the Contact Center will probably give the individual the most in–depth knowledge learning about Christian Care Ministry and the Medi–Share product. From there, you are more equipped to move into other departments.”

The Contact Center is the heart of the operation. In 2019, for example, the Contact Center received 1.4 million inbound calls. The outbound call number was 1 million. Medi–Share’s network includes more than 700,000 medical providers.

In addition to the Contact Center, Christian Care Ministry has various other departments, such as Business Development, Care Management, Human Resources, Information Technology and Engineering, Business Intelligence, Data Governance and Services, and Share Services.

There are openings in all of those areas, including for a director of group sales in Business Development, and a member development specialist (sales).

Under the Care Management wing, the organization is hiring for a care management associate II, a nurse care specialist (Licensed Practical Nurse), and Registered Nurse care manager.

“Nurses are in demand everywhere, and that’s one of our big needs right now,” said Sterr, who earned his bachelor’s degree in business administration from Bob Jones University in South Carolina and has worked in his field for years. “The RN care managers and the LPNs help with our Care Management department.”

Among all occupations nationwide, RNs present one of the career paths that is expected to see the most significant number of new job openings through 2028.

About 210,400 openings for RNs are projected each year, on average, over the decade, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

According to a report from Moody’s Investor Services, the southern and western United States will be impacted more heavily by the nursing shortage than the rest of the country, with the highest prevalence in Georgia, Florida, Texas and California, which are attractive retirement states. The latter three states alone are projected to account for nearly 40 percent of the nursing shortfall nationwide.

Christian Care Ministry is a sizable employer in the Melbourne area. About 350 people work for the organization. Companywide, Christian Care Ministry employs about 700 people.

Sterr said he started working for Christian Care Ministry in September 2016.

“I was recruited by a coworker, someone whom I had worked with before. He had taken a job at Christian Care Ministry and then recruited me. At the time there were openings in Melbourne and at the Colorado Springs location. I chose Colorado Springs and helped staff that office. I transferred to the Melbourne headquarters in July 2019.”

Christian Care Ministry made the list of “Great Place to Work–Certified” companies across America, as part of the U.S. Engagement National Study. Employees were surveyed on different metrics, including how much they liked their colleagues. Christian Care Ministry holds the Great Place to Work–Certified designation for one year, from January 2020 to January 2021.

In the survey, almost 80 percent of Christian Care Ministry’s employees said it is a “great place to work” compared to 59 percent of employees at a typical U.S.–based company.

Some of the other survey results:

● 92 percent said when you join the company, “you are made to feel welcome.”

● 88 percent said “our facilities contribute to a good working environment.”

● 87 percent said “people celebrate special events around here.”

● 86 percent said “people care about each other here.”

● 83 percent said “I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.”

“Christian Care Ministry is a unique organization,” said Sterr. “One of the selling points is that you can combine your faith with your job. That’s something we strongly encourage.”
Junior League of South Brevard’s ‘Fueling Kids’ program makes big impact on lives of students through nutrition and physical activity; public can donate online

By Ken Datzman

For more than half a century, the nonprofit Junior League of South Brevard has been on the forefront of service, identifying problems and finding solutions in collaboration with community partners.

Through its current service projects, the organization is addressing the needs of at-risk teens and children.

It is making an impact on lives and leading the way for long-term sustainable change.

The Junior League of South Brevard is comprised of volunteering women. The Junior League experience enables its members to flourish as civic leaders. They learn to shine the light on an issue that needs attention, and then the members advocate for change.

In the process, they build consensus among those who can help solve the problem.

“We are a training organization,” said Eastern Florida State College educator Kristin Schroeder, the 2019–2020 Junior League of South Brevard president.

“We seek out projects that we can do to serve the community. One of the things Junior League does really well is identify needs in our community. In the meantime, we also train our members to be community leaders. This is done through hands-on training and formal learning opportunities.”

Among the Junior League of South Brevard’s many successful ventures through the years is a program called “Fueling Kids,” which focuses on the components of nutrition and physical activity for elementary students at select public schools.

“In partnership with the Health First Foundation, which awarded us a grant, the Fueling Kids program currently serves students at Sabal Elementary School in Melbourne and at Christa McAuliffe Elementary School in Palm Bay,” said Lauryn Graves, the Junior League of South Brevard’s Fueling Kids chairwoman.

“We stock their food pantries. Combined, we serve from 150 to 160 students in the after-school care programs in the two elementary schools.”

The work of the Junior League of South Brevard helps feed needy students throughout the school day, at after-school care, and at home.

Her organization also works closely with area Early Head Start programs and the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard.

To help keep kids on the move, the Junior League of South Brevard provides recess equipment and sponsors “Field Day,” reaching hundreds of children each school year.

“We do food deliveries every month for each school’s food pantry,” said Graves, adding, “We also supply them with recess equipment, either in fall or spring, and any extra supplies they may need throughout the school year.”

“We ask the schools what their biggest needs are for the Fueling Kids program, then we provide custom solutions for each school,” said L3Harris quality engineer Anna Kiriazes, the communications director for Junior League of South Brevard.

The Fueling Kids program was rolled out in 2012.

“Originally, we were going into schools and doing activities with the students to keep them physically active,” said Schroeder, who is the director for the physical therapy assistant program at EFSC. “We would also bring the students a snack. The program has evolved from providing snacks at schools once or twice a month to stocking food pantries that are utilized daily.”

The Health First Foundation provided Junior League of South Brevard with a $6,000 grant, said Graves.

“It was one of the largest grants Junior League of South Brevard has ever received. So Health First is a big part of our organization, in that it helps fund the work we are doing with the Fueling Kids program. This is an extremely important initiative for Junior League of South Brevard.”

More than 11 million children in the United States live in “food insecure” homes, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. What that means is those households don’t have enough food for every family member to lead a healthy life.

It doesn’t always mean there is nothing to eat. But it can mean children get smaller portions than they need, or parents aren’t able to afford nutritious foods.

A common way to measure poverty is by using the federal guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The federal poverty level is the minimum amount of money a family needs each year to afford the necessities of life: food, clothing, shelter, and transportation.

In 2018, the federal poverty level was $25,750 for a family of four. Typically, a large number of Americans fall below this line.

In fact, almost 40 million people (12 percent of all Americans) lived in poverty in 2017, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Of that number, more than 13 million were children.

Of course, this number is a minimum. Families making twice that much are still considered low-income by most experts and organizations, and many struggle to make ends meet.

As part of the Fueling Kids project, each fall and spring the Junior League of South Brevard offers an education-focused program on Crock-Pot cooking to Early Head Start parents.

“Our Crock-Pot cooking event is a lot fun, and it’s
New study details significant growth of environmental and economic benefits of the PACE program in Florida

By McKinley Lewis
mckinley@on3pr.com
On 3 Public Relations

TAMPA — Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS) has released research examining the significant growth of environmental and economic benefits of Florida’s Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, which mobilizes investment in disaster resiliency and sustainability in local communities across the state.

The new research study, funded by Ygrene and conducted by University of South Florida’s Patel College of Global Sustainability faculty, identifies positive green growth in Florida PACE communities.

“As Florida strives to become a more sustainable and resilient state in the face of increasing challenges due to climate change, this study finds that PACE must be a significant policy asset in these efforts,” said Dean Govindan Parayil of the Patel College of Global Sustainability. “We believe that this research can inform critical discussions among state policymakers, government agencies, and private entities about how Florida can build stronger, greener, and more resilient communities and how PACE can be a vital tool for helping us meet these challenges amid an uncertain climate future.”

“PACE financing has proven to be a highly effective tool in the toolbox for homeowners, helping them make their homes safer and more secure,” said Mike Lemyre, Ygrene, senior vice president of government affairs. “By meeting the need for affordable financing for storm hardening improvements, such as hurricane-resistant roofs, doors, and windows, tens of thousands of Florida families have used PACE to prevent damage from the next hurricane while saving money on their property insurance premiums. This study demonstrates how effective and essential PACE is for individual homeowners, entire communities, and the state of Florida.”

This study — which examined data from Ygrene Energy Fund, the state’s leading PACE provider — shows the tremendous growth the PACE program has achieved. Generating numerous environmental and economic benefits throughout Florida since its inception in the state. These estimated benefits include:

- Electricity consumption reduction: 960 million kWh
- Natural gas consumption reduction: 480 Mcf
- Greenhouse gas emission reduction: 0.54 million metric tCO2e
- Property damage from hurricanes avoided: $970 million
- Total person–year jobs created: 21,820
- Gross State Product growth: $1.14 billion
- Gross Economic Output growth: $2.11 billion
- The estimated greenhouse gas emission reductions are equivalent to taking over 114,000 cars off the road for a year.

According to PCGS faculty and the co–author of the study, Dr. T.H. Culhane, director of climate change, “This report demonstrates that as the need for investment in sustainability and resiliency in the built environment grows, so, too, will the need for innovative policies in Florida such as PACE. The program can be further expanded to increase the implementation of solar energy in the Sunshine State and protection from extreme weather events in our hurricane prone state. The expansion of PACE in Florida can also help those in our communities who otherwise could not make these types of home improvements.”

PCGS faculty member Dr. Pradeep Haldar, study co–author, said, “This study builds upon and adds to a growing body of research across the country analyzing the public policy impacts of PACE financing, including the University of Southern California’s Schwarzenegger Institute, the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, the U.S. Department of Energy and many others. Using the innovative financing model in Florida alone, we identified nearly 40,000 projects implemented by property owners for energy efficiency, renewable energy and hurricane mitigation improvements with $848 million in investments made by Ygrene since inception.”

The Patel College of Global Sustainability plans to further expand upon this research, analyzing how PACE programs could integrate into existing and emerging state policies to address natural disaster resiliency and sustainability. A complete copy of “Public Impacts of Florida’s Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program” is available at www.usf.edu/pcgs/documents/pace–report–final.pdf.

The Patel College of Global Sustainability was established in 2014 as the newest degree–granting college at the University of South Florida. The academic mission of PCGS is advancing human well–being through sustainable development by fostering social, economic and environmental sustainability.
By Lee H. Hamilton

This is a time of great testing for Congress. As it considers responses to the nation’s health and economic crises, it faces close scrutiny by ordinary Americans, financial markets, and businesses large and small across the country. The pressure to move quickly is intense, and it is not an institution built for that purpose.

Yet Congress acts with unaccustomed swiftness when needed. The House passed the first relief measure — providing paid leave, enhanced unemployment benefits, free coronavirus testing, and food and health care aid — while the administration was still coming to grips with the dimensions of the crisis.

The Senate acted the following week. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell’s words to the GOP caucus were instructive: “I do not believe we should let perfection be the enemy of something that will help even a subset of workers,” he said. In other words: Do this now. And clearly, lawmakers took the need for speed to heart, and in a bipartisan way. The measures passed overwhelmingly in both houses.

There’s a key but basic fact to remember about how Congress works: it’s governed by a majority. This seems like a very simple thing to say, but the reality is that it is not always easy to achieve. I lost track of the number of times, when I served in the House, that I counted members, looking for ways to get to 218 votes (a majority of the 435 members) for a bill I supported. It was a constant question within the party leadership: “How many votes do we have? Can we go to the floor and expect to win?” This is compounded when, as now, each chamber is under the control of a different party. Still, while there are never any guarantees, at times of national crisis the math becomes much easier to achieve.

That’s despite the fact that members can vote any way they want to, and Congress is where all the cross-currents and needs of a complicated nation converge. Congress — at all times, but especially now — is beset by organized interests weighing in. Industry, professional groups, labor unions, farm organizations, veterans’ groups, and hundreds of others all have something to say. These groups are highly organized, effective, and sophisticated. They and their lobbyists are powerful, talented, and deeply knowledgeable of the process. Members of Congress are also listening to the no-doubt urgent messages they’re getting from their constituents and making the political calculations that, even at dire times, are very much in the mix on Capitol Hill. You can see why arriving at agreements swiftly is such difficult work.

Which is why, now more than ever, everything depends on the leadership. Even in calm times, the key to the functioning of Congress rests overwhelmingly with the presiding officers of the House and Senate, and with their teams.

Nonetheless, it is also up to ordinary Americans to keep pressure on the politicians, and especially their own representatives, to make sure that Congress performs as we need it to. I don’t think people are unrealistic about what can be done — they don’t expect miracles. But members of the public do need to remind elected officials that our eyes are on them.

This is obviously a time of great peril, with immense stakes. We are a democracy, unlike the more centrally governed countries that have reacted forcefully to their own crises. Our challenge — and Congress’s in particular — is to respond as the situation demands while preserving the best that democratic governance offers: solutions to the country’s problems that reflect the best thinking and collective wisdom of a great, diverse, and creative nation. It is not written in the stars that Congress can make it work, especially as members grapple with illness in their own ranks. But the evidence so far is that in this crisis, when we need it to come through, Congress can do important work well and do it in a bipartisan way.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Jeff Robison of Lightle Beckner Robison wins 2019 Brevard County ‘Top Producer’

The Central Florida Commercial Association of Realtors (CFCAR) recently held its annual Hallmark Awards, which celebrate excellence in the commercial real estate industry. Jeff Robison of Lightle Beckner Robison Inc. in Melbourne was recognized by his peers and awarded honors as the 2019 Brevard County “Top Producer” along with second place as the 2019 “Top Producer—Retail” in the 10-county area. These prestigious awards are an important measure of achievement for commercial real estate professionals. For additional information on this company, visit www.TeamLBR.com.
Realtor association has elected Miami native Alberto Carrillo as its 2020 Residential president. He and the entire board of directors were installed Feb. 28 at MIAMI's 2020 Inaugural Celebration at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood.

The Residential Board of MIAMI is dedicated to leadership in the industry, the real estate profession, and the communities it serves. They analyze information, are actively and visibly involved in events and programming, and promote Miami and South Florida worldwide. The association represents 52,000 residential, commercial, and international real estate professionals.

“The MIAMI Realtors Residential Board is comprised of a diverse, talented group of Realtors and we are excited to do our part to improve our real estate industry,” Carrillo said.

Carrillo is vice president of RelatedISG International Realty, after serving as Sales Manager originally for the Downtown/ South Beach Offices which were then relocated to the Edgewater Office. He has more than 13 years of Miami real estate experience.

In his time with RISG, Carrillo has overseen the transition of the agency's original, 700 square–foot office in Downtown Miami to their new, 2,200 square–foot flagship office in Edgewater. He also acts as the sales manager for the Edgewater location, cultivating the branch into the No. 1 office for the entire company. In 2018, Carrillo was instrumental in the opening of the sixth RISG office location in Brickell.

In his new role as vice president, Carrillo will work side by side with Vidal to oversee the company’s growth and development as well as the relaunch of the Fort Lauderdale office.

Carrillo came to RISG in 2014, after working for the Keyes Company for four years. While at Keyes, he focused on building relationships and creating development deals in the commercial sector, while still maintaining a year-over-year increase in residential sales. Before that, the agent spent six years as sales manager for AquaSun Realty where he was actively involved in the business development and growth of the company.

Carrillo served as the 2017 chairman of the MIAMI Young Professionals Network Leadership Board.

Carrillo is active in numerous organizations including the MIAMI Association of Realtors (where he was a key factor in the MIAMI YPN network being awarded National Association of Realtors “YPN of the Year”) and the Realtors Political Action Committee for the National Association of Realtors. He also serves on the Board of Directors at both the state and national level for the MIAMI Association of Realtors.

Carrillo has a background in information technology and computer technology, and utilizes his knowledge to help young Realtors leverage new technology and social media to sell properties.

**Tobacco Free Brevard Partnership Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 15, 2020**

8:30 am - 10:30 am

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

VIA Webinar/Conference Call
Dial in number: (515) 604-9998
Access code: 510671#
Online Meeting Link: https://join.freeconferencecall.com/tobaccofreebrevard

Tobacco Free Brevard works to improve the health of Brevard County residents by promoting smoke-free environments, tobacco-free policies and tobacco-free lifestyles. Our goals include, prevention of tobacco initiation and use among Brevard’s youth and young adults, eliminate resident’s exposure to secondhand smoke, and promote quitting among Brevard’s adults and youth. The vision of Tobacco Free Brevard is to create a tobacco-free community.

For more Information Call: 321-408-4332
By Tricia Stamper (tricias@floridarealtors.org) and Kevin Hawkins (kevin@wavgroup.com)

ORLANDO — In just 60 days, Florida Realtors Tech Helpline launched its availability to more than 50,000 Realtors, serving four more state and local associations.

The continued expansion by real estate’s No. 1 tech-support service now blankets the U.S. and Canada and is accessible by over 650,000 real estate professionals in North America.

From mid-November 2019 to mid-January 2020, Tech Helpline started serving nearly 33,000 members of the Ohio Realtors, Chicagoland’s Mainstreet Organization of Realtors and its nearly 17,500 members, more than 1200 members of California’s Monterey County Association of Realtors and the 200-plus members of La Porte County Association of Realtors in Indiana.

A service created, owned and operated by Florida Realtors, its Orlando staff of technology professionals have many years of combined information technology experience. Technical support services are available in both English and Spanish, offering agents and brokers an extensive range of expert technical assistance.

Tech Helpline support analysts help solve software and hardware issues daily, such as setting up a new smartphone, fixing wireless connection issues, laptop recovery from crashes, virus infection problems, and more.

“Tech Helpline support is a member benefit, meaning it doesn’t cost an agent an extra dime,” says Margy Grant, CEO of Florida Realtors.

According to Grant, that’s likely one of the reasons Tech Helpline often ranks as a favorite member benefit of participating associations, Multiple Listing Services, and brokerages.

Dubbed the “Genius Bar” for real estate, tech support is available by phone, chat, or email. “Agents and brokers get unlimited support to help them quickly resolve their tech issues,” she said.

Tech Helpline services are also available to technology startups and established tech firms.

Grant notes that Tech Helpline can give a Proptech firm the ability to offer exceptional and personalized tech support services “to help keep clients happy and telling friends about their great experience.”

According to dozens of surveys that Tech Helpline has conducted for more than a decade, it is often the highest-rated member benefit offered by Realtor Associations, Multiple Listing Services, and real estate brokerage firms.

“One of the biggest benefits in using Tech Helpline is the superior customer experience,” Grant said. “Tech Helpline analysts work with Realtors every day. They truly understand what an agent or broker does. They have a well-earned reputation as the friendliest tech support service available. By removing the fear of calling tech support, agents and brokers can reach out and ask any tech question.”


About Tech Helpline
Tech Helpline began nearly 20 years ago as a service for members of Florida Realtors. Known for its no-nonsense technical advice and warm, friendly customer service, Tech Helpline rapidly grew by offering its service to other Realtor associations, Multiple Listing Services, and real estate brokerage firms.

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Eastern Florida State College student Regina Stanford has received national recognition for her leadership in the community and on campus.

A student on the Titusville campus, Stanford has been named a Newman Civic Fellow for 2020 by Campus Compact, a coalition of 1,110 college and university presidents.

The award is given annually to students for what Campus Compact calls their ability to inspire and mobilize others and tackle the causes of social problems in their communities.

Some 290 students from across the U.S. and Europe were named as fellows this year.

Stanford, who is studying for her associate’s degree, is majoring in psychology and will graduate this December. She was nominated by EFSC President Jim Richey, who praised her community and campus work saying she “truly embodies the spirit and values of Eastern Florida State College.”

Stanford is the founder of Hummingbird Pantry Inc., which tackles hunger and homelessness in north Brevard County.

She founded the organization in 2012 after volunteer efforts brought her face-to-face with the needs of elementary school children whose families struggled to provide food.

The first year, the pantry provided holiday food baskets to 45 families. In 2019, it distributed 150,000 pounds of food to more than 12,500 families a month.

“The need in the community is great, particularly with the working poor,” said Stanford, who spends about 85 hours a month on the food pantry.

“A lot of hard-working people just don’t make enough money these days, especially with the high cost of housing. It takes a lot of their resources to keep a roof over their heads, and often there isn’t enough left over for food.”

Hummingbird also stocks the Titan 2 Titan food pantry at EFSC that helps nourish students struggling with work and school.

Stanford has recorded nearly 1,200 volunteer hours through the college’s Service Learning and Civic Engagement program and maintains a 3.6 grade-point average.

She has also been named a 2020 Coca-Cola Academic Team Silver Scholar and will receive a $1,250 scholarship. Selection is based on academic achievement, leadership, and engagement in college and community service.

The award is given in conjunction with the Phi Theta Kappa honor society that recognizes the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges.

Through the Newman fellowship, Stanford will gain a variety of learning and networking opportunities. The fellowship also provides fellows with pathways to apply for exclusive scholarship and post-graduate opportunities.

“The stories of this year’s Newman Civic Fellows make clear that they are committed to finding solutions to pressing problems in their communities and beyond. That is what Campus Compact is about, and it’s what our country and our world desperately need,” said Campus Compact President Andrew Seligohn.
Christian Care Ministry

Continued from page 12

He added, “When you walk through the doors of Christian Care Ministry, we want it to feel like a home environment, like you are working alongside family members. We have chapel services every week. A lot of our departments have their own bible studies. It’s an uplifting environment.”

Meetings begin with a prayer. There is a staff-led chapel service every week, and Christian Care Ministry employees are active in their churches and communities.

On Oct. 6 of 2018, Christian Care Ministry held its first “Day of Sharing,” a nationwide initiative to motivate and mobilize people to share their time and talent to serve others.

“It was an opportunity for us to take sharing out into the local community,” said Dawn Carroll, senior manager of communications at Christian Care Ministry. “We used Day of Sharing to celebrate our 25th anniversary.”

She has worked for Christian Care Ministry for 19 years. “The member growth and staff growth over that time has been incredible. This is really an uplifting place to work. One of the employee benefits — which you can’t put a price on — is use of the chapel. Every Wednesday you have the opportunity to pray with fellow employees in the chapel (which seats 340 people),” said Carroll, a two–time UCF graduate.

The 2018 Day of Sharing event saw Christian Care Ministry employees in Melbourne and Colorado Springs, along with Medi–Share members around the nation, perform acts of service and sharing in their local communities.

In Brevard, for the inaugural Day of Sharing event, Christian Care Ministry served a host of nonprofit organizations, including The Salvation Army, The Children’s Hunger Project, Love Inc., Nana’s House, The Dorcas Outreach Center for Kids, Space Coast Seafarers Ministry, Brevard Rescue Mission, The Marine Resources Council, and Honor America Inc.

“If you are seeking a job that gives you a little bit more sense of purpose, a calling, Christian Care Ministry is the place. I believe people really do find that here,” said Stern.

Like so many great American endeavors, Christian Care Ministry began in a garage in Melbourne in 1993. Founder John Reinbold partnered with the American Evangelistic Association to form and operate the ministry.

Christian Care Ministry was launched to build a community that shared each other’s burdens as the early church did in The Book of Acts 2:44–47:

“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

The ultimate result was Medi–Share, a program which today joins together roughly 413,000 members (more than 154,000 families) who share one another’s medical bills. Since 1993, members have voluntarily shared nearly $4 billion of each other’s medical bills.

The sum of the total shared and discounted services found them in these types of organizations.

The Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017 repealed the individual mandate, so no longer do people have to pay a tax penalty for not carrying insurance in the United States. President Trump removed the mandate.

When Scott Reddig was named the new CEO of Christian Care Ministry one year ago, he said his vision is to build on the success of the Medi–Share program.

“While we are strengthening that program, we’re also thinking of other ways in which to use the sharing concept. So there could be other businesses that we will explore, and even diversify what we do as the business of the ministry.”

He continued, “I believe the most exciting thing is we are starting to become more direct in how we do outreach. We are a ministry and our ministry is our business. I know there are 700 Christians (the number of Christian Care Ministry employees) who recognize how special this ministry is and are anxious to do even more right now.”
BREVARD BUSINESS NEWS / 20

By Abbey Heimensen
Director of Marketing
MarineMax Inc.

CLEARWATER — MarineMax Inc. (NYSE: HZO), the nation’s largest recreational boat and yacht retailer, recently announced that it has acquired the pioneering Boatyard digital platform to transform the boating customer experience, creating a new way for boat owners to enjoy their passion, wherever and whenever they want.

Built around the Boatyard acquisition, the new MarineMax Customer Experience Platform will be led by Boatyard founder and CEO Nathan Heber, who will become president of Boatyard at MarineMax.

Shawn Berg, MarineMax chief digital officer, said, “As a customer–centric company, we believe utilizing technology to enhance our boat owners’ experience by saving them time and allowing for easier and more efficient access to products and services can truly change the industry. The Boatyard digital platform solves one of boating’s greatest challenges given that it is highly fragmented and difficult to navigate. This Customer Experience Platform enhances the ownership experience by removing friction from the boating experience making it accessible and easy for people to enjoy the boating lifestyle.”

He added, “I am thrilled to announce that Nathan is joining our MarineMax team. He and his team bring tremendous leadership, passion and drive to our new Customer Experience Platform. We are excited to partner with him to further develop new product capabilities that will add efficiencies, making the boating experience even more enjoyable.”

Herber said he believes the talented MarineMax team “can accomplish great things for our customers and the boating industry broadly. By streamlining and enhancing the boating experience with our Customer Experience Platform, we can bring greater joy to boat owners by providing them with more time to spend on the water.”

Heber continued, “MarineMax is the leader in the boating industry and I believe our digital platform will continue to further set us apart in delivering remarkable experiences to our customers.”

The disruptive Boatyard digital platform seeks to eliminate the confusion, guesswork and stress of boating, making it accessible and easy for customers to have an exceptional experience. The Boatyard digital platform will include an expansive range of on-demand services to streamline the boating experience by qualified service providers with only a few clicks on a smartphone.

Named to “Boating Industry” magazine’s “Top Products of 2015” list, the Boatyard digital platform enables boat owners to take back their free time by curating the best services and offering excellent communication to ensure users always receive an exceptional experience.

About MarineMax
Headquartered in Clearwater, MarineMax is the nation’s largest recreational boat and yacht retailer. Focused on premium brands, such as Sea Ray, Boston Whaler, Hatteras, Azimut Yachts, Benetti, and Ocean Alexander, MarineMax sells new and used recreational boats and related marine products and services, as well as provides yacht brokerage and charter services.

MarineMax currently has 59 retail locations across the nation. For more information on the company, visit www.marinemax.com.

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Junior League of South Brevard

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educational because we emphasize nutrition,” said Dr. Angie McNeight, the executive vice president of Junior League of South Brevard who is with Caudill & McNeight Orthodontics.

“We wanted to teach them some of the dishes we like to cook with our Crock–Pots. Crock–Pot meals are inexpensive, and there’s a wide range of recipes. We wanted to provide the families with our personal recipes, too. We print copies of our recipes for them,” said Schroeder.

Graves said Junior League of South Brevard originally gave a Crock–Pot, a recipe book, and a gift card to each family. “But we wanted to be more involved in the actual Early Head Start program and interact with the families. We wanted to teach them some of the dishes we like to cook with our Crock–Pots. Crock–Pot meals are inexpensive. So we really wanted to interact with the families and that was initiated last year. It’s been great.”

If you feel inspired to help support the Fueling Kids project in any way, email fuelingkids@jlsb.net or call the Junior League of South Brevard office at (321) 610–8950. If you are interested in making a contribution to the Fueling Kids program, go to www.jlsb.net/donate.

Donating $150 will feed one child healthy snacks for an entire school year. Donating $500 will provide sports equipment for 40 students for a school year. There are other donation options, too.

“When the public supports Junior League of South Brevard, we in turn contribute money to area nonprofit organizations that need help,” said Kiriazes.

Schroeder said Junior League of South Brevard is working on coming up with a virtual fundraiser during these times that will help other nonprofits that have the means of getting food to people in need because it’s not something we can do ourselves.”

She added, “There are families out there right now that need food. With the schools being closed that compounds the situation. So that’s our goal in the foreseeable future, to see what we can do to help the community by partnering with other nonprofits.”

Part of the Health First Foundation grant goes toward helping support Junior League of South Brevard’s annual “Kids in the Kitchen” program.

This initiative teaches young people about the dangers of obesity and not exercising.

Kids in the Kitchen is grounded in the belief that by the time children are 10 they will have become obese and subsequently suffer from many associated health risks, including heart disease.

In the early 2000s, the Association of Junior Leagues International Inc. took notice of the increasing prevalence and urgency of the childhood obesity epidemic in their communities, and the Kids in the Kitchen was created.

Junior League of South Brevard has been hosting its Kids in the Kitchen event for years, and more and more families attend each year.

The 2020 program was set for April 18, but was cancelled because of the Covid–19 virus. The event includes vendors and kids’ activities along with healthy cooking demonstrations.

“We had a good response. Unfortunately, we had to cancel this year’s Kids in the Kitchen event. Hopefully, next year’s event will draw an even greater response from businesses,” said Kiriazes.

Junior League was founded in 1901 by Mary Harriman. Although born into a family of great privilege, the path she took was quite different from that which was expected of a member of one of New York City’s wealthiest and most powerful families. Today, there are 291 Junior League chapters in America doing all types of service projects.


“We’re proud of the work the Junior League of South Brevard is doing to better the community in some way. We’re all dedicated to the mission,” said Schroeder.
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The risk of developing osteonecrosis of the jaw depends on the medical condition the bisphosphonate is being used to treat. Patients who receive intravenous (through a needle placed in the vein) bisphosphonates as part of their cancer treatment are at higher risk for osteonecrosis of the jaw than those who receive the much lower doses for osteoporosis treatment, says the American College of Rheumatology. Older age, diabetes, gum disease, and smoking also raise the risk of osteonecrosis of the jaw.

A health-oriented program of oral hygiene and regular dental care is the optimal approach for lowering the risk of osteonecrosis of the jaw. Patients who receive intravenous bisphosphonates are advised to rinse their mouths at least twice a day and brush their teeth with a soft-bristled toothbrush. They should also avoid chewing gum and using tobacco products.

Dr. Marx writes, “Contributing to the clinical problem of bisphosphonate-induced osteonecrosis is the cumulative buildup on bone matrix. Oral bisphosphonates are absorbed in the small intestines, although poorly; only 1 percent to 10 percent is made available to the bone. If the bisphosphonate is taken with meals, absorption is further reduced (prescriptions for oral bisphosphonates usually instruct patients to take it two hours before a meal).”

It continues, “The circulating half-life of oral and intravenous bisphosphonates ranges from a scant 0.5 hours to a maximum of two hours, attesting to its rapid uptake into bone matrix, where 30 to 70 percent of the intravenous or absorbed doses (if taken orally) accumulates in the bone. The remainder is excreted unchanged in the urine.”

Dr. Marx says “repeated doses accumulate in bone matrix and can be removed only by osteoclast-mediated resorption as part of the bone-turnover cycle. Since bisphosphonates are toxic to osteoclasts and prevent bone turnover, what this represents is a perfect example of a biologic Catch-22: no matter what you do, you lose. Bisphosphonates in bone, particularly in the jaws, cannot be safely removed because of its effect of osteoclast toxicity, which increases with each dose. Therefore, bisphosphonate bone toxicity is both dose and time dependent.”

The researchers discovered that rescue BP injected into the jaw removed most of the BP drug causing the jawbone tissue damage, clearing the way for the animal’s natural healing process to repair the extraction site. The new technique isn’t ready for clinical use in humans yet. The researchers will be responsible for advancing the treatment to commercial clinical use. Dr. Kumar said his practice is seeing a number of patients with osteonecrosis of the jaw. “Patients typically complain of pain, which is often related to infection, swelling, drainage, and exposed bone,” said Dr. Kumar, whose full-service practice treats a wide range of patients, including autistic children.

Wickham Dental Care & Implant Preserve is one of only a few dental clinics, and exposed bone,” said Dr. Kumar, whose full-service practice treats a wide range of patients, including autistic children.

Wickham Dental Care & Implant Preserve is one of only a few dental practices in the area that serve autism spectrum disorder patients. Autism refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication.

April is National Autism Awareness Month. Oral health is as important as other types of health care, but for some, it can be challenging because of certain sensitivities or conditions. Caring for special needs patients takes compassion and understanding.

Dr. Kumar partners with the Apollo Surgery Center in West Melbourne. They provide the necessary environment for dental treatment. Dr. Kumar brings his own portable compressor and other mobile equipment to provide dental care to the patient. “We are helping a lot of kids with their dental care. We are privileged to treat autism patients,” he said.

According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people with disabilities were less likely than people without disabilities to visit a dentist or dental clinic. They were more likely to experience tooth loss.

For autism patients who need financial assistance for dental care, The Arc, with hundreds of chapters around the nation, including in Tallahassee, works with families to help out.

The Arc, a nonprofit, is the largest community-based organization of and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Dr. Kumar’s practice works closely with The Arc in Tallahassee coordinating and scheduling dental care for autistic patients in need.

Wickham Dental Care & Implant Preserve features the latest in technology, including the PIC-Camera, a high-resolution three-dimensional digital camera. This digital impression system captures intra-oral scans of a patient’s teeth to generate a 3-D model that can be used for CAD/CAM dentistry.

These high-tech systems are growing in popularity because they simplify the impression process, increase accuracy, decrease procedure time and enable digital integration with dental laboratories. The PIC Camera is like a scanner; said Christian Cantian, a certified dental technician and a dental assistant at Wickham Dental Care & Implant Preserve.

Cantian said digital impressions also are “much more comfortable for the patient because the dentist is not putting a big, bulky tray into their mouth. It saves a tremendous amount of time using the PIC Camera versus using the old-school method of impression. Some steps of these are eliminated along the way, as well as visits to the dental office.”

Dr. Kumar says his practice has invested tens of thousands of dollars in new technologies to “stay on the cutting edge of dentistry.”

He cited Digital Smile Design as another example of digital technology greatly enhancing patient outcomes at his practice. The DSD concept uses technology to improve communication with the patient, involving them in the process of designing “their new smile.”

The concept is based upon the analysis of the patient’s facial and dental proportions, using a series of high-quality digital photographs and videos.

“Understanding the relationship between teeth, gums, lips, and smile, we create a new smile for the patient. With DSD, we can see how everything flows together — the face, the eyes, the nose. With digital technology, we can achieve predictable results. It’s an exciting time,” said Dr. Kumar.

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