

# New Horizons

Housing That Supports Independence



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## Google Calls Attention To Disability Rights

Reprinted from January 23, 2017 Disability Scoop by Michelle Diament

A doodle on Google's homepage is paying homage to a pioneer of the disability rights movement and encouraging visitors to learn about advocacy efforts. The search giant included a sketch of Ed Roberts on google.com Monday, which would have been the activist's 78th birthday. Roberts, who died in 1995, fought for greater inclusion of those with disabilities.



Paralyzed from the neck down after contracting polio at the age of 14, Roberts "was confined to a special wheelchair with a respirator during the day and slept in an 800 pound iron lung at night," Google said.

In 1962, he became the first student with severe disabilities to attend the University of California, Berkeley where he worked to make the campus accessible. Roberts later went on to lead the Berkeley Center for Independent Living, helping spur the development of other similar centers across the country. He also became the director of the California Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the same agency which had declined to help him attend college because they did not believe he would ever work.

Google regularly honors holidays, anniversaries and people with so-called Google Doodles, variations of the company's logo on its homepage.

The doodle honoring Roberts is set to display for visitors in the United States on Monday until 11:59 p.m. ET, Google said.

The company included a message beneath the sketch urging users to "explore the work of disability rights advocates in America" with a link to more information about Roberts, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the disability rights movement. "Researching Ed Roberts' life for the doodle was indescribably motivational," said Olivia Huynh, who created the Google Doodle.

"It was incredible to learn about how he overcame the challenges of going to school and then going on to become a leader for the community, making higher education more accessible to countless others. I chose to focus mostly on those aspects for today's doodle, which I hope conveys the full breadth of his efforts."

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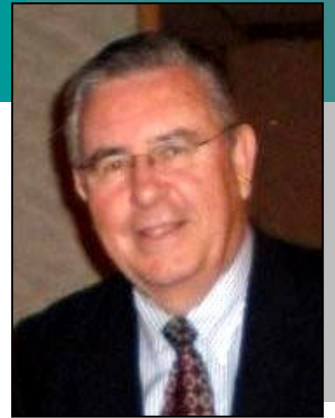
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# “My Two Cents”

By *Tim Doherty, Executive Director*



As you know, the mission of Project Freedom Inc. is to develop and operate barrier free housing so that our disabled consumers can live an independent lifestyle. And, over the years, we have created over 400 rental apartment units which are 100% barrier free, allowing someone who uses a wheelchair, the maximum freedom of movement. Most of the time, our projects have faced little opposition. Most people don't want to be seen as objecting to housing for people with disabilities so they often couch their objections to something attached to the environment, or some traffic issue.

Currently however, Project Freedom has come upon some opposition to our housing in a south jersey town, mostly from folks who just don't want anything new to be built in their neighborhoods. The opposition usually stems from old fears that affordable housing brings in the wrong kind of people to a neighborhood; that crime increases and that affordable housing costs the town more money in municipal services. In this particular case, some neighbors are objecting to our building on wooded property, that has been natural for many years. They fear that they will now be losing their pristine view, or that the new construction will disrupt the habitat of some barred owls or other endangered species.

Now I can understand these arguments, however the main issues boil down to NIMBYISM, which stands for “Not in My Back Yard”. These people say they are not opposed to our housing, they just don't want it build in their neighborhoods.

So, in response to these folks, I have always tried to dispel their fears, by stating some facts:

- PFI creates new, beautiful housing that any town would be proud to have built in their town.

- Housing values don't go down, many times they go up.

- PFI owns and operates our housing, making sure that it is maintained like new, and provides the supportive services that our tenants need to be successful.

- PFI maintains full time staff members who oversee our housing complexes so that tenants can live in clean apartments, on sites that are well groomed and maintained.

Most folks who are new to our area, often comment that they didn't know that our housing was also “affordable housing”.

As to the environmental issues, any time there is any new construction, it can be said that some animals will be dislocated. This has always been the case, and is usually temporary, until the animals find new homes. However there needs to be a recognition that sometimes the needs of the Human Race need to take precedent over other parts of nature. Disabled people—people of lower incomes, also need homes they can live in and afford. Let's work together on this one.

# From Norman's Desk



Forecasters at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center issued the U.S. Winter Outlook last October saying that La Nina is expected to influence winter conditions this year. The Climate Prediction Center issued a La Nina watch this month, predicting the climate phenomenon is likely to develop in late fall or early winter. La Nina favors drier, warmer winters in the southern U.S and wetter, cooler conditions in the northern U.S. If La Nina conditions materialize, forecasters say it should be weak and potentially short-lived.

Other factors that often play a role in the winter weather include the Arctic Oscillation, which influences the number of arctic air masses that penetrate into the South and create nor'easters on the East Coast, and the Madden-Julian Oscillation, which can affect the number of heavy rain events in the Pacific Northwest.

There are indications that the East may see colder than average temperatures this winter, especially earlier in the season. However, climate computer models are depicting an atmospheric response to the expected weak La Niña in January, which would allow warmer temperatures in the East with colder conditions developing in the Pacific Northwest.

In terms of precipitation, NOAA expects portions of the northern tier -- including portions of the Northwest, northern Plains and Great Lakes -- to see above-average precipitation this winter because of a more active northern jet stream.

Warm winters do not mean that we can relax our winter preparedness or awareness routines. In fact, we should increase our weather awareness so that we are not lulled by the warm temperatures. They are nice, but cold air rising over warm air can produce spectacular snow explosions or icing conditions. Ice conditions usually mean power outages.

**Learn from Sandy!** Now is the time to think about power outages. Store drinking water, first aid kit, canned/no-cook food, where you can get them easily, even in the dark.

Have emergency supplies on hand before storms occur.

Flashlight and extra batteries

Portable, battery-operated radio and extra batteries.

One-week supply of food to include items that do not require refrigeration or cooking in case the power is shut off.

Non-electric can opener

One-week supply of essential prescription medications.

Extra blankets.

Information during weather emergencies can be obtained from the Emergency Broadcast System through these radio stations for Mercer County:

WPST - 97.5 FM

WHWH - 1350 AM

WKXW - 101.5 FM

In all of the above situations, *prepare* for aides and personal assistants to be late, not show, or to be stuck in your home. All of these scenarios should be discussed and planned for by people who are dependent on aides or personal assistants.

Norman A. Smith, Associate Executive Director - [ProjectFreedom1@aol.com](mailto:ProjectFreedom1@aol.com)

Follow me on Twitter @normansmith02

Follow us on Twitter @TheFreedomGuys

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## Off Beat: Dogs aid veterans with PTSD

Jan. 15, 2017 12:00 a.m. (CDT) by / Christena T. O'Brien

Lucas Solie of Altoona might have returned from fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, but the war continues inside him.

The 37-year-old who spent 17 years serving in the U.S. Army — 12 of those years on active duty — is finding an unexpected friendship is helping him deal with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder. That friendship involves Denise Wenz, a 51-year-old National Guard veteran, and Echo, a German shepherd Wenz has been training as a service dog to help Solie. “Echo is already making a huge difference for Lucas,” said Wenz, who began training the pup in July when she was only 8 weeks old.

“The dog is a tool, and you have to know how to use the tool,” said Wenz, who figures she has more than 1,000 hours into training Echo. By the time, the shepherd is fully trained, Solie likely will have that many hours or more into her instruction.

Like Solie, Wenz, who spent a total of 10 years in the military, suffers from PTSD, but she found relief in Poppy, a Doberman pinscher, she trained to be her service dog.

“Before I got her, I was experiencing severe chest pains,” said Wenz, but medical tests revealed no problems with her heart. She also suffered from insomnia and crazy sleep patterns. Since she picked Poppy out in May 2015, Wenz has been sleeping better because the dog will intervene if she senses Wenz is in distress. “Dogs can smell the chemical changes when veterans start triggering,” Wenz said. “She sometimes knows I’m triggering before I do.”

Knowing the impact Poppy has had on her, Wenz — who already had found a dog for another veteran and secured funding to purchase the animal for him — decided to train a service dog for a fellow soldier in need at the request of her chiropractor, Melissa Stangl. Stangl personally made the first donation toward the purchase of Echo, and her practice, Gonstead, Stangl & Arkowski Chiropractic and Massage Therapy in Eau Claire, held fundraisers, which covered the remainder of the cost. Many others, including Wenz’s four sons, Gunnar, Graham, Gage and Gavin, the Amvet Riders, Disabled American Veterans Eau Claire chapter and Travis King, chipped in to pay for Echo’s first year of veterinary care, treats, toys, a harness, food, a crate and additional training with Bonnie Wright.

“People were very generous,” said Wenz, who is planning to coach another veteran and his Labrador retriever and train a golden retriever for another veteran this year.

Wenz and her family drove to Tampico, Ill., the birth place of former President Ronald Reagan, on July 1 to pick up the cream and black bundle of fur, and the training began. Four weeks later, Wenz was hit by a car while out biking with Poppy and tore the anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, in her right knee, requiring her to have surgery. Her son Gavin stepped in to help her train Echo in tactile stimulation, which the dog will use to disrupt emotional overloads. Her husband, Sam, also helped out by feeding the dogs and letting them out each morning.

Several veterans were interested in being partnered with Echo, but they didn’t match up, so Wenz asked the veteran she had helped find a dog to help her find a veteran for Echo. He posted something on Facebook and got nine responses, including one from Danyelle Solie, Solie’s wife. The veteran selected Solie for Echo.

Solie had started entertaining the idea of getting a service dog after he was injured in Afghanistan and returned to the United States. “But I had kind of given up hope of ever getting one,” he said, noting he had sent in a down payment on a dog and got ripped off.

Solie met Echo right before Christmas, and Wenz could tell the pair were right for each other. “When I met her, she kept looking at me, and I stared back at her,” the retired staff sergeant said. “When I looked away, she came over, sat between my legs and licked my chin.” “She hasn’t done that with anyone,” said Wenz, noting the shepherd was ready to be with her person. Since taking Echo home, the shepherd hasn’t left Solie’s side. “I’m blowing up Denise’s phone, asking her questions,” he said. That’s a good thing, said Wenz, who wanted Solie to have some skin in the game when it came to training Echo, believing it will help him as it did her.

So far, so good, said Solie, who is enjoying getting to know Echo. “It’s me learning her as much as it’s her learning me.”

Contact: 715-830-5838, [christena.obrien@ecpc.com](mailto:christena.obrien@ecpc.com), @CTOBrien on Twitter







## Hamilton Happenings



DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
2-Feb	Thu	Hamilton Crafts - Groundhog Day	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:00 PM
3-Feb	Fri	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
8-Feb	Wed	Hamilton Games	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:00 PM
9-Feb	Thu	Hamilton Valentine Crafts - Pillows & Cards	Prog. Time 5:00 -8:00 PM
23-Feb	Thu	Hamilton Games and Smoothies	Prog. Time 5:00 -8:00 PM



Robbinsville Pretzel Making



## Lawrence Goings On

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
3-Feb	Fri	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
8-Feb	Wed	Lawrence Valentine Games & Card Making	Prog. Time 10 AM-12 PM



## Robbinsville Events

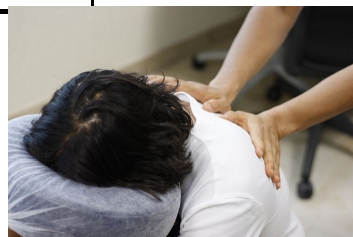
DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
5-Feb	Sun	Robbinsville Super Bowl Party - \$5.00 to Eat!	Doors Open at 5:30 PM
6-Feb	Mon	Robbinsville Valentine Games	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM
10-Feb	Fri	Robbinsville Valentine Sugar Cookies	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM
15-Feb	Wed	Robbinsville Pretzel Making	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM
28-Feb	Tue	Robbinsville Karaoke	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM



Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM

## Hopewell Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
2/3/17	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno	3:00 pm to 4:00 pm
2/7/17	Tues	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 pm to 3:15 pm
2/17/17	Fri	Emergency Preparedness Training	1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
2/22/17	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 am to 11:30 am
2/24/17	Fri	NJ Poison Education Presentation	3:00 pm to 4:00 pm



# ***Dating With a Disability*** By WENDY LUDEC Reprinted from New York Times

Women with disabilities often begin to date much later in life, and they struggle in a dating culture that places a premium on physical appearance.

Sometimes when Tabitha Estrellado meets a man, he will extend a hand and expect her to shake it. But she can't — and it's awkward to explain why when you're trying to flirt.

Ms. Estrellado, 32, has muscular dystrophy, a chronic disease in which muscles weaken and waste over time until they no longer work at all. Even as your brain commands a finger to curl or a toe to wiggle just a few centimeters, nothing moves. It's a challenge in the world of dating, where even the subtlest gestures can carry a lot of intention.

For Ms. Estrellado, a singer-songwriter, the worst part about having muscular dystrophy is knowing that many people don't see her as a prospective romantic partner to date, to marry and to have children with someday.

Still, she loves New York City night life and the possibilities that come with being in a crowd of strangers. On a recent night at Blackthorn 51, a rock club in Queens, Ms. Estrellado maneuvered her wheelchair to greet friends. When she's feeling too short, she raises her chair to the height of whomever she's talking to. "If I ever saw the pope, I would ask him to pray that I find love," she says with a sad smile.

Dating is an emotionally risky proposition for everyone, but it is particularly challenging for people with disabilities. People who rely on wheelchairs or who have another form of physical impairment often begin to date much later in life, and the rate of marriage is lower, according to Dr. Margaret Nosek, who is the director of the Center for Research on Women with Disabilities at Baylor College of Medicine and has muscular dystrophy. The overall first-marriage rate in the United States for people ages 18 to 49 is 48.9 per 1,000. For people with disabilities it's just 24.4, according to Philip Cohen, a sociologist at the University of Maryland-College Park who studies family inequality issues.

In many ways, young women with disabilities are just like other women their age when it comes to dating. They like dance clubs and meeting new people and some participate in the casual hookup culture common among young people today. But women with disabilities can also be more vulnerable. They are more likely to experience relationship abuse and less likely to report the behavior than nondisabled women, Dr. Nosek said. The less mobile a woman is, the more likely she is to experience relationship abuse, research has found.

In 1992, Dr. Nosek spearheaded the National Study of Women With Physical Disabilities, one of the first research studies to find that its participants had experienced abuse specifically related to their disability. For instance, a person might take the victim's wheelchair to isolate her. Emotional abuse might involve ridicule or mockery of her body or her disability.

Online dating services have created both new opportunities and risks for people with disabilities. DisabilityDating.com caters to the disability community. Sites like eHarmony and Match.com offer specific advice to people with disabilities and those who are open to dating someone with a disability. Be realistic, advises eHarmony, reminding us that the "heart works, even if some body parts don't."

Until last year, Ms. Estrellado was active on several dating platforms like Tinder in the hope of finding a significant other. Instead, she discovered men who wanted to be physically intimate but not fully commit to a relationship. For months, she would secretly hook up with men she met online. It wasn't easy, as Ms. Estrellado has six personal aides who switch day and night shifts throughout the week. Then one man accidentally dropped her on the way to the bedroom, resulting in severe injury, and she had to tell her friends and family the truth.

Her best friend was upset that she had put herself in a situation where people took advantage of her. Ms. Estrellado's parents seemed to understand. "My mom was happy that I tried to have sex," Ms. Estrellado says. For three months during recovery, Ms. Estrellado couldn't leave her room. She wondered if love wasn't meant to be. "I just wanted to feel something," she says. "I only did it because I realized a guy could actually like me in that way. In the hookup world, men don't care about wheelchairs."



Emilie McCauley, 24, doesn't use a wheelchair, and when people meet her, it's not apparent that she has muscular dystrophy. But experience has taught her that she is still vulnerable in the dating world.



Emilie McCauley, 24, who has muscular dystrophy, says her unpredictable health needs have affected her relationships

In 2011, Ms. McCauley exchanged numbers with a man she met through a mutual friend. Daily texting conversations led to a relationship. But soon he became sexually violent, and she didn't have the physical strength to fight back.

Advertisement

"I got into a position where leaving the relationship was extremely difficult and scary," says Ms. McCauley, her eyes downcast.

She later found a more supportive relationship when she began dating a friend she had known for 10 years. He wanted to learn about muscular dystrophy and how Ms. McCauley's other health conditions affected her body, and offered emotional support.

The topic of marriage came up often. They spoke of having a family and growing old together. But after dating for more than a year, the frequent overnight hospital visits and the uncertainty of Ms. McCauley's health began to overwhelm her boyfriend, and the relationship ended.

Taking care of a person with limited mobility can strain a relationship, says Dr. Michael Miller, a neurologist in Cooperstown, N.Y., specializing in neuromuscular diseases.

"Sometimes, the caretaker resents the fact that they have to do the caretaking," Dr. Miller says.

In the middle of their breakup, Ms. McCauley's partner told her the unpredictability of her health was too much for him.

"He felt like he couldn't take care of me like he needed to," says Ms. McCauley, who is from Greenville, N.C.

Ms. McCauley says that she's not interested in dating for a while. She takes comfort in her dog, Cassie, a Labrador-golden retriever mix. For now, Cassie and her family are enough to make her feel loved.

"After thinking we were going to spend the rest of our lives together, it makes it hard to want to be with somebody else,"



**For Club Freedom Members Only**

**Home Games Schedule**

**April 15 - 1:00 pm game— Bus leaves 11:30 am**

**May 13 - 7 pm game—Bus leaves 5:00 pm**

**July 8 - 7 pm game—Bus leaves 5:00 pm**

**July 22 - 7 pm game—Bus leaves 5:00 pm**

**August 5 - 7 pm game—Bus leaves 5:00 pm**

**August 26 - 7 pm game—Bus leaves 5:00 pm**

**\$8.00 per game— call Mary or Esther**

**609-448-2998**



**"It is a waste of time to be angry about my disability. One has to get on with life and I haven't done badly. People won't have time for you if you are always angry or complaining." - Stephen Hawking**



**MLK Day Craft at Hamilton**



**MONSTER TRUCK SHOW**



# February General Recreation

## Club Freedom Events Highlighted

6-Feb	Mon	Day Program	Prog. Time 10 AM-3 PM
13-Feb	Mon	No Day Program	
<b>20-Feb</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Presidents' Day - PF Offices CLOSED</b>	
<b>21-Feb</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Mall Trip Moorestown 5 People Needed</b>	<b>Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM</b>
23-Feb	Thu	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
27-Feb	Mon	Day Program	Prog. Time 10 AM-3 PM



**Feb. 3**  
**Monique Armstrong**  
**Jason Cohen**

**Feb. 10**  
**Hatem Elattar**

**Feb. 12**  
**Beverly Kline**

**Feb 14**  
**Mollie Robertson**

**Feb. 24**  
**Esther Gonzalez**



## Grandma Jackie's Valentine Cake

"This is a simple cake that my mom always made for me on Valentine's Day."

### Ingredients

- 1 (18.25 ounce) package white cake mix
- 1 (4 ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1 (16 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed

### Directions

1. Drain the cherries reserving juice; chop cherries and reserve.
2. Prepare cake mix according to box directions, adding water to the reserved cherry juice to equal the amount of liquid needed for cake mix.
3. Preheat oven to box directions.
4. Fold the cherries and pecans into the cake mix; stirring by hand. Pour mix into 2 round cake pans and bake in preheated oven.
5. When cake has completely cooled, frost with whipped topping; serve and keep unused portions in refrigerator.

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Project Freedom Inc. is a 501 (c)(3 ) not for profit organization dedicated to developing, supporting and advocating opportunities for independent living for people with disabilities



Like crafts, dining out, & local trips?  
Are you available on Mondays?  
Here are photos of what we made at the  
Day Program recently  
Call Dana at 609-977-1234 for more  
information

