New Horizons

In Memoriam-Stephen W. Hawking 1942-2018



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Stephen William Hawking was born on January 8, 1942, in Oxford, England. His father, a well-known researcher in tropical medicine, urged his son to seek a career in medicine, but Stephen found biology and medicine were not exact enough. Therefore, he turned to the study of mathematics and physics.

Hawking made his first major contribution to science with his idea of singularity, a work that grew out of

his collaboration (working relationship) with Roger Penrose. A singularity is a place in either space or time at which some quantity becomes infinite (without an end). Such a place is found in a black hole, the final stage of a collapsed star, where the gravitational field has infinite strength. Penrose proved that a singularity could exist in the space-time of a real universe.

Drawing upon the work of both Penrose and Albert Einstein (1879–1955), Hawking demonstrated that our universe had its origins in a singularity. In the beginning all of the matter in the universe was concentrated in a single point, making a very small but tremendously dense body. Ten to twenty billion years ago that body exploded in a big bang that initiated time and the universe. Hawking was able to produce current astrophysical (having to do with the study of stars and the events that occur around them) research to support the big bang theory of the origin of the universe and oppose the competing steady-state theory.

Hawking's research led him to study the characteristics of the best-known singularity: the black hole. A black hole's edges, called the event horizon, can be detected. Hawking proved that the surface area (measurement of the surface) of the event horizon could only increase, not decrease, and that when two black holes merged the surface area of the new hole was larger than the sum of the two original.

In the 1980s Hawking answered one of Einstein's unanswered theories, the famous unified field theory. A complete unified theory includes the four main interactions known to modern physics. The unified theory explains the conditions that were present at the beginning of the universe as well as the features of the physical laws of nature. When humans develop the unified field theory, said Hawking, they will "know the mind of God."

As Hawking's physical condition grew worse his intellectual achievements increased. He wrote down his ideas in A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes. It sold over a million copies and was listed as the best-selling nonfiction book for over a year.

Hawking's work in modern cosmology and in theoretical astronomy and physics is widely recognized. By the end of the twentieth century Stephen Hawking had become one of the best-known scientists in the world. When asked about his objectives, Hawking told Zygon in a 1995 interview, "My goal is a complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.'

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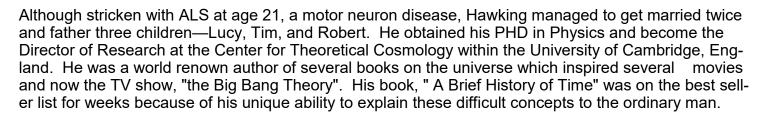
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"My Two Cents" By Tim Doherty, Executive Director

Last month I wrote my column on the deaths of two good people in my life...my cousin and my former neighbor. Both women were extraordinary in their own right and lived a life of service to their families.

And again, this month I want to remember another special individual who recently passed away....scientist Stephen Hawking. Now I know that many may not know him by name, but he was the guy in the wheelchair, who used a voice synthesizer to speak who appeared in many segments of the TV shows

a voice synthesizer to speak, who appeared in many segments of the TV show, "The Big Bang Theory", which was a theory of how the universe was created, and a subject of Hawking's research.



But as brilliant as Hawking was, Bill Prady, co-creator of the Big Bang Theory TV show, says that it was his dry, humor that he will remember most about the genius. At a lunchtime meeting, Prady related that the way Hawking used his electronic communications board often resulted in delayed comments or comments meant for a previous dialogue, minutes before, but just delivered, so they would be out of sync with the talk at the moment. Prady suggested to Hawking that he should pre-load some meal time vocabulary so that when he was at dinner with friends he could trigger a comment like "delicious" or "I must have the recipe". A smile crept across Hawkings face and at that instant, Prady knew they had clicked.

Prady related this story because like Hawking was "confined to his wheelchair", Prady was also confined by his terrible shyness. Prady found his way out of his shyness with jokes and humor. Hawking had found his freedom via his study of the universe. Both had found a way out of their "confinement" to a life that had fulfillment.

Now I don't know much about Bill Prady's life but I think we can all realize the tremendous contribution to society and science by Stephen Hawking. Although he appeared on the show several times, he also was a consultant to the show, and would offer his own humorous remarks to the planned scripts for the show. Hawking traveled extensively, gave lectures and worked on the basic laws which govern the universe. In spite of being wheel-chair bound, and dependent on a computerized voice system for communication, Hawking continued to combine family life with his research.



From Norman's Desk

Last July I took a business trip to Washington, DC, to attend the annual conference of the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL). I shared some pictures in a previous column of a demonstration on The Hill that NCIL attendees held opposing the repeal of Obamacare. That was exciting to be in and observe as a working journalist.

I had not been to Washington since 2014, and I was pleasantly surprised to a major change in terms of accessible transportation. On my 2014 trip, I used a wheelchair-accessible taxi for the first time, and it provided me with limited but more dependable service. The service was available through an 800-number, and you could get a taxi pre-scheduled or on demand with a short wait.

Last year as I was waiting at Union Station for my pre-scheduled taxi, I noticed wheelchair-accessible taxis pass by every minute from different cab companies. It was confusing at first since I was

waiting for one, and they kept passing me by. The wheelchair-accessible taxi business has boomed in Washington.

Now it is not all "roses" with this service. Although one cab did stop at 17th and Pennsylvania to see if I wanted a ride, "street-hails" are not permissible--even in a "taxi cue" common outside of hotels and at Union Station. A rider must go through a reservation dispatcher, which is annoying when trying to catch a train leaving in 45 minutes.

So, as I'm waiting to get picked up after the demonstration, I keep seeing the black limos and SUVs picking people up. I realized after looking at the license plates and seeing the drivers that these were not government vehicles with armed chauffeurs. These were Uber and Lyft rides, and I started think about wheelchair access for App-based ride services.

The article below from CNET describes what is going on in the Bay Area with Uber, Lyft, and people with disabilities.

Norman A. Smith, Associate Executive Director - "Like" us on Facebook.com/ProjectFreedomInc Follow us on Twitter @TheFreedomGuys Visit us at www.ProjectFreedom.org Follow me on Twitter @normansmith02

Lyft fails to provide wheelchair access, lawsuit says

Disability rights advocates sue the ride-hailing company for discriminating against people in wheelchairs. Last month they sued Uber. BY Dara Kerr – March 15, 2018

First Uber <u>was sued</u> for allegedly discriminating against people in wheelchairs, and now Lyft is getting the same treatment.

A coalition of disability rights groups and individuals filed a lawsuit against Lyft in California's Alameda County Superior Court on Tuesday, saying the ride-hailing service fails to make wheelchair-accessible vehicles available to people with mobility disabilities in the Bay Area. That constitutes discrimination, the groups said.

"We're taking on both companies, since we think it's crucial to transform the entire ride sharing industry in order to best affect widespread change," said Rebecca Williford, senior staff attorney for the nonprofit Disability Rights Advocates, one of the groups in the coalition.

As ride-hailing has boomed over the past five years, so has scrutiny of the service. Under California law, transportation providers, like taxis and buses, are legally required to accommodate disabled people. Disability rights groups say these same rules should apply to ride-hailing companies.

The two lawsuits against Lyft and Uber aren't the first for alleged <u>discrimination against people with disabilities</u>. Similar suits have be in filed in New York, Texas and Illinois.

For its part, Lyft says it has a strong record of working with disability groups to expand transportation options. It has partnerships with the <u>National Federation for the Blind</u> and the <u>National Association of the Deaf</u>. A Lyft spokesman said the company also provides enhanced wheelchair-accessible vehicles in certain US cities and that it's "actively exploring ways to expand them nationwide."

"There is no doubt that those living with disabilities face significant transportation challenges -- challenges that have existed for decades," the spokesman said. "Since Lyft was founded in 2012, we have sought to increase access to transportation around the country for underserved populations, including those living with disabilities."

The coalition that filed the lawsuit this week said Lyft doesn't provide wheelchair-accessible transportation at all in the Bay Area. The groups aren't seeking monetary damages, but rather equal access to Lyft for disabled people.

"If Lyft would provide wheelchair accessible vehicles, I could be spontaneous and more mobile in the community, just like everyone else," said Tara Ayres, a plaintiff in the lawsuit who uses a motorized wheelchair. "It is devastating and disheartening that in this day and age, Lyft has completely excluded people like me."

Few Parents Plan For Future Of Children With Disabilities, Study Finds

by Courtney Perkes | February 22, 2018

Many parents of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities are not doing enough to prepare for the prospect of their children outliving them, according to a new University of Illinois study.

Nearly 400 parents of children ages 3 to 68 responded to a national survey on what steps they've taken to ensure future care for them. Only 3.6 percent of parents had completed a full list of 11 tasks that researchers asked about including establishing legal guardianship, power of attorney and securing a residential placement. While 32 percent had done a moderate amount of preparation, 12 percent had taken no action, the survey showed. "We know that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are having longer lives and beginning to outlive their parents," said lead author Meghan Burke, a professor of special



Jessica Clark, who has Down syndrome and is also legally blind, reaches in to hug her mother Joann Clark in the kitchen of the home they share in Glen Mills, Pa. Joann Clark is worried about what will happen to her daughter after she is gone.

education in Champaign, III. "When a parent can no longer provide care or passes away, that's a crisis situation for the family. We have to start planning for the future and that transition."

The survey found that barriers to long-term care plans included cost, lack of time and stress. The biggest reason, cited by 61 percent of parents, was a lack of residential, employment and recreational services. "I've had parents contact me and say, 'One of the reasons why I haven't planned is because there are no services," Burke said. "You can't just keep putting the onus on parents. We also need some systemic changes in our delivery service system."

Burke, who has an adult brother with Down syndrome, said other concrete planning steps can range from writing a letter of intent describing protocols and routines for care to establishing a special-needs trust.

Among the tasks that parents were asked about, locating a knowledgeable attorney was the most commonly taken step, with 58 percent of parents reporting doing so.

Brian Rubin, a Buffalo Grove, Ill. attorney who specializes in special needs planning, said making preparations can be overwhelming for parents because their lives are often so hectic. "You are dealing with what's going on tomorrow at school," said Rubin who has a 37-year-old son with autism. "I've got this doctor and this therapy. You're dealing with the day-to-day and it's not so much intentional that you would have your head in the sand, but there's only so many hours in the day."

Thirty-nine percent of parents reported a lack of information as a barrier to future planning. Rubin said he recommends that parents attend free talks put on by nonprofits such as The Arc to help them get started. "Where is this child going to be living and with whom can be the hardest question for some parents," Rubin said. "Is this child going to be living independently with some assistance? When we try to determine how much money they're going to need, it depends on where they're living." Burke said children should also be included in the planning process. "We've been encouraging families to talk to their family member with a disability and not just make it about the parents and the siblings," she said. "Maybe just talking about it informally at first because it's such a big, loaded topic."

The study will be published in the April edition of the journal Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.





Robbinsville Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
3-Apr	Tue	Robbinsville Games	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM
18-Apr	Wed	Robbinsville Seed Planting/Potting	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM
24-Apr	Tue	Robbinsville Cupcake Making/Baking	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM
27-Apr	Fri	Robbinsville Crafts	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM





Parketering			
DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
2-Apr	Mon	Day Program in Hamilton	Prog. Time 3:00 –5:00 PM
4-Apr	Wed	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
7-Apr	Sat	Hamilton Games	Prog. Time 1:00 -3:00 PM
9-Apr	Mon	Day Program in Hamilton	Prog. Time 3:00 –5:00 PM
12-Apr	Thu	Hamilton Pizza Making	Prog. Time 4:00 -7:00 PM
16-Apr	Mon	Day Program in Hamilton	Prog. Time 3:00 –5:00 PM
17-Apr	Tue	Hamilton Soup Making -Baked Potato	Prog. Time 3:30 to 6:30 PM
23-Apr	Mon	Day Program in Hamilton	Prog. Time 3:00 –5:00 PM
26-Apr	Thu	Hamilton Making Ambrosia Salad	Prog. Time 5:00 -8:00 PM
30-Apr	Mon	Day Program in Hamilton	Prog. Time 3:00 –5:00 PM





Lawrence Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
3-Apr	Tue	Massages	On sign up sheet
4-Apr	Wed	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
4-Apr	Wed	Lawrence Games	Prog. Time 4:00 -6:00 PM
6-Apr	Fri	Wellness Class - Cellulitis	Prog. Time 3-4:30 PM
9-Apr	Mon	Movie Monday	Prog. Time 2-4 PM
11-Apr	Wed	Blawenburg Band Concert Lawrence @7 PM	Bus Leaves PFR 5:30 PM
18-Apr	Wed	Nutrition	7 PM
19-Apr	Thu	Lawrence Pie Making - Grasshopper Pie	Prog. Time 4:30 -9:00 PM
20-Apr	Fri	Lawrence Pizza Making	Prog. Time 4:00 -7:00 PM
25-Apr	Wed	Wellness Class– Keep Calm & Color On	Prog. Time 3:00 -4:30 PM



Hopewell Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
4/3/18	Tue	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 PM to 3:15 PM
4/6/18	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno	3:00 PM
4/14/18	Fri	Hopewell Music Mountain Theater Grease Trip	Check with office
4/18/18	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM
4/24/18	Tue	Mercer County Youth Program: Careers in Judiciary and Law Enforcement	3:30 PM

How to Really See a Blind Person

By Brad Snyder Reprinted from The NY Times FEB. 28, 2018

I tell my story a lot. I tell the story of how I wasn't always blind. I tell the story of how I lost my vision while serving in Afghanistan, by stepping on an I.E.D. I tell the story of how I put my own injury into perspective by considering the greater sacrifice of my fallen comrades, and how I owed it to them to make the most of my escape from death.

I tell the story of how I did that by winning a gold medal in swimming at the Paralympics on the first anniversary of the loss of my vision. And after I tell it, people often thank me. They tell me that it's an incredible story, and that I'm a good storyteller. They tell me how inspiring it is to see how I've overcome my blindness.

But that's not my whole story. It's part of it, I suppose — in many ways, I have overcome my blindness. Five years after losing my sight, I have a rewarding job teaching leadership at the Naval Academy, a lovely house on a creek in historic Annapolis, Md., a loving family and a number of truly deep friendships. My quality of life is very high. Day to day, week to week, I don't find that my blindness is an obstacle.

What I haven't been able to overcome is how others perceive me and treat me differently not because of my blindness, or how I so often feel as if I'm on the outside listening in on the lives of others. I hear people talk about how beautiful the sunrise is, but I no longer see it. I hear them talk about "Game of Thrones," but cannot watch it because HBO doesn't have descriptive audio for its shows. I can no longer share these very common experiences

Maybe sighted people are (naturally) too focused on looks, but maybe it takes a better man than most of us are not to judge by appearances.

One thing I do often now is public talks about learning to navigate my new life without vision. But it's a one-way conversation. Afterward, I go to the airport where I'm reminded how hard it is to physically navigate a world not set up for people without vision. It's a pain to find assistance at the counter. It's a pain to get through security, which can't seem to distinguish dog food from explosives. It's a pain to get the airlines to move my seat to the bulkhead so there's room for my guide dog. Don't get me started on what a pain it is to find the bathroom for either of us.

I feel the looks of my fellow passengers, wondering what my story is, but too afraid to ask for fear of saying the wrong thing and offending me. I feel helpless, stared at like some sort of freak. In my former life as an explosive ordnance disposal officer, I traveled through airports all over the world, from Baltimore to Prague to Baghdad to Kandahar and back, quickly, easily and anonymously. But traveling as I do now, with a cane and a guide dog, is anything but anonymous. At times, it has beaten me down.

At home, the inability to join my friends in their chatter about "Game of Thrones" or memes on Instagram has caused me to pull back. I decline invitations out to avoid the same alienating experience I've had a thousand times before. Whether I'm at a crowded bar, restaurant, sports event or concert, I'll be a spectacle, isolated by my inability to join the conversations of those around me.

No, thanks. I'll just stay home, in the quiet, where I know exactly where the bathroom is. I'll stay there until I have to hit the road again to tell my story of how I overcame blindness. The irony used to make me chuckle.

A few years ago, after another frustrating trip through the airport, I settled into my seat bound for Dallas and did my best to disappear.

"That's an awfully nice watch you have there! I've never seen anything quite like it!" my neighbor said as she fastened her seatbelt.

A smile spread across my face. I love talking about my watch. It's a tactile timepiece that replaces traditional hour and minute hands with magnetic, rotating ball bearings so that blind folks like myself can literally tell the

time through touch. It's superbly designed and very sharp-looking, so it appeals to those with vision too. The timepiece — the Bradley by Eone — is actually named after me. It is accessible to people with or without disabilities. (I am a friend of the company's founder, Hyungsoo Kim, and receive a small percentage on sales of the watch.) I love explaining how the watch embodies the principles of inclusive design, which I am passionate about.

The conversation with my neighbor went on, and I explained how I lost my vision. I talked about how I had been able to adapt, how I try to maintain perspective and how I felt as though I had overcome my blindness. Then my neighbor shared her own fights. She had lost her husband a few years ago, and during her grief had gained weight. She had been struggling with her weight ever since, and it had begun to interfere with her quality of life. I told her how sometimes I felt isolated by my disability, and she relayed that she felt constrained by her weight. I shared how I sometimes feel that I'm an outsider, and she echoed the same.

For the first time in a while, I didn't feel like a spectacle or an outcast. I felt like a friend, and an important part of someone else's journey. I felt valued, needed and involved, and all it took was a conversation. I realized that I'm not alone in being alone.

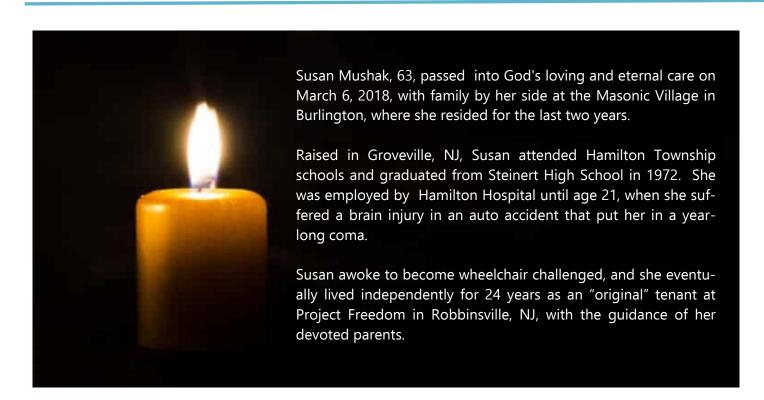
Sometimes people ask me what I want others to know about being blind. I want others to feel more comfortable having conversations with people whose experiences are different from their own. My watch has been a natural opener, and once that conversation starts, we usually discuss topics far beyond timepieces and disabilities. Through talking, we find humanity.

It seems like we could all use a little more humanity right now. I know it's tough for many to have conversations with people so different from themselves, to risk feeling uncomfortable or giving offense, to find common ground, to listen to another's struggles, to share your own struggles in return. But you might be surprised what you get out of it — and what you realize you've given in return.

How do we do it? It all starts with a conversation.

What's your story?

Brad Snyder, a retired Navy explosives ordnance disposal officer in Iraq and Afghanistan, has won five gold medals and two silver medals in swimming at the Paralympic Games.



Google Now Includes Accessible Routes

by Shaun Heasley Reprinted from DisAbility Scoop - March 16, 2018



With a new Google Maps feature, the technology giant is looking to make it easier for people with disabilities to get around.

Google said this month that it is adding information on its Maps platform to point people to accessible public transit stops in cities around the world.

The "wheelchair accessible" routes feature is rolling out initially in London, New York, Tokyo, Mexico City, Boston and Sydney.

The company said it plans to work with transit agencies in additional cities to expand the routes capability to other locales. "In city centers, buses and trains are

often the best way to get around, which presents a challenge for people who use wheelchairs or with other mobility needs. Information about which stations and routes are wheelchair friendly isn't always readily available or easy to find," wrote Rio Akasaka, product manager for Google Maps, in announcing the feature. "We're introducing 'wheelchair accessible' routes in transit navigation to make getting around easier for those with mobility needs."

In order to find an accessible public transit route, users can type in a destination on Google Maps, then select "directions" and the public transportation icon. Next, choose "wheelchair accessible" under "options."

"When you select this option, Google Maps will show you a list of possible routes that take mobility needs into consideration," Akasaka said.

This is not Google's first effort to add accessibility details to Maps. In 2016, Google Maps started including information on business listings indicating if a location is wheelchair accessible. What's more, the company said it is increasingly offering imagery of transit stations through its Street View capability so users can preview a site before visiting.





General Recreation Club Freedom Events Highlighted

1-Apr	Sun	Easter	Peace
2-Apr	Mon	Day Program at Hamilton	Prog. Time 3-5 PM
3-Apr	Tue	Equestrian Riding at Hopewell	Prog. Time Varies
5-Apr	Thu	Dine Out - Dinner - Red Robin	Bus Leaves PFR 4:30 PM
9-Apr	Mon	Day Program at Hamilton	Prog. Time 3-5 PM
10-Apr	Tue	Equestrian Riding at Hopewell	Prog. Time Varies
11-Apr	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
11-Apr	Wed	Blawenburg Band Concert Lawrence @7 PM	Bus Leaves PFR 5:30 PM
16-Apr	Mon	Day Program at Hamilton	Prog. Time 3-5 PM
17-Apr	Tue	Equestrian Riding at Hopewell	Prog. Time Varies
18-Apr	Wed	Mall Trip - Mercer 4 Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
19-Apr	Thu	Columbus Farmers & Flea Market	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
21-Apr	Sat	Trenton Thunder Baseball Game	Bus Leaves PFR 11:30 AM
23-Apr	Mon	Day Program at Hamilton	Prog. Time 3-5 PM
24-Apr	Tue	Equestrian Riding at Hopewell	Prog. Time Varies
25-Apr	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
28-Apr	Sat	Englishtown Flea Market - 5 Must Go	Bus Leaves PFI 9:30 AM
30-Apr	Mon	Day Program at Hamilton	Prog. Time 3-5 PM

April 4
Laurie Gallagher

April 8 Norman A. Smith

April 10 Maria Azcona Tim Birk Kathy Fuchs

April 15 Megan Paris

April 17
Salvatore John Mollica

April 18 Kathy Paris

April 20 Timika Cheek

April 22 Lillian "The Cake Lady"Totaro's 100th Birthday



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