

Happy  
New  
Year

January 2019

# New Horizons

Housing that Supports Independence



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## Gibbsboro Ground Breaking

Project Freedom broke ground last month on Freedom Village at Gibbsboro, a 72 unit affordable apartment community for families in Gibbsboro, N.J. The property will offer 18 housing units for special-needs residents.

The development will feature four L-shaped, three-story buildings and a community center, constructed on a seven acre tract on S. Lakeview Drive, Cnty Route 561. Ten units will be set aside for developmentally disabled residents, and eight apartments are tabbed for residents who are mental health care service consumers. The remaining 54 apartments are designated for families with low-to-moderate incomes up to 60 percent of the area median income.

Msgr. Louis Marucci, pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Church, gave the invocation to begin the ceremony. The church, which is located next door to the new complex, hosted the ceremony and luncheon.



Gibbsboro Mayor Edward G. Campbell, III, welcomed Project Freedom to his town located in Camden County. Mayor Campbell spoke about how the town was committed to serve people with disabilities who needed affordable and accessible housing.

The one- to three-bedroom apartments will be wheelchair accessible and will incorporate wider doors and hallways, an open-floor design and accessible kitchens. Some bathrooms will have bathtubs, and some will feature roll-in showers.

Donna Renderio, Chief of Administration for NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) said that Freedom Village at Gibbsboro represents the ninth project for which NJHMFA has furnished Project Freedom financing. Taken together, the projects have brought more than 500 affordable units to Mercer, Ocean, Burlington, Camden and Salem Counties.

The development site is encircled by the Gibbsboro Greenway and is within walking distance to businesses and amenities.

NJHMFA awarded the \$19.1 million development competitive 9 percent federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, anticipated to generate \$13.3 million in private

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# “My Two Cents”

By *Tim Doherty, Executive Director*



My son recently became a financial consultant for Edward Jones, and as part of his service offerings, he is to conduct various seminars, free, on various topics that can affect one financially. His latest offering addressed the issues of financial scams which are often directed at the elderly and disabled, but also to people like myself.

The scam usually begins with an email or phone call to grandma or grandpa, stating that they are a friend of our grandson or daughter, who is in some kind of trouble, and needs \$2,000 or \$3,000 for bail or to repay some kind of debt, before they can leave the foreign country. The person on the phone claims that they are calling on behalf of our grandchild because they are not able to make the call. So, wanting to help your grandchild, you will send the money, usually through a money order, to an address that the caller gives. They also ask you not to tell the child's mother or father, since they don't want to get in trouble with their parents, because of their actions. They also insist that you take immediate action and send the money right away.

These people are very believable. In many cases, the grandmother or grandfather will follow through and send over the funds. Later it is learned that the child wasn't out of the country or in any kind of an accident, or trouble, and that they were home all the time. Once the money has been sent, it's too late to change course and get it back. You've just been had.

The other type of scam is when you go on-line and purchase goods, especially large ticket items, which are supposed to operate in a certain manner or provide some kind of health relief for an ailing back or that will cure a certain condition. These items are usually sold by a "reputable" company which can give many customer testimonials, as to the quality of the product and that the product far exceeded the customer's expectations. When you get the product at home, and find out that it doesn't do what has been advertised, and you call to return or get your money back, you are told that all sales are final, and that the item can't be returned. Money gone again, and you are stuck with a product that doesn't work as advertised.

So, what can we do when faced with this kind of situation. First off, call your relative or friend and explain what is being asked of you. If this involves a family member ( grandson or granddaughter ) call a family member to check out the story—Is she really out of the country, or in trouble? Wait. Don't be so anxious to send any money to any one you don't know. If the issue involves a purchase of furniture or equipment, purchase on a credit card, which will provide you with Dispute Resolution Services, just in case you need to cancel or make a return because the item doesn't live up to what has been advertised. Better yet, call someone who has purchased this item before, or who has dealt with this particular firm in the past, who can vouch for their reputation. If purchased through a third party like Amazon, or Ebay, you may have more leverage to resolve your problem. Also, large retailers such as Walmart or Home Depot are usually good about returns. Remember, if it is too good to be true, it usually is.

## ***From Norman's Desk***



The return of an El Niño weather pattern will have a significant influence on the winter season.

Mild air will linger in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic before cold weather takes hold in January and February. Some Interstate-95 cities will notice a significant temperature dip compared to last year.

Once again, El Niño will influence the winter weather across the Northeast, mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes.

The season will start out mild for much of the region before colder weather digs in its heels in January and February.

“New York City and Philadelphia may wind up 4 to 8 degrees colder this February compared to last February,” AccuWeather Expert Long-Range Forecaster Paul Pastelok said.

In the mid-Atlantic states, a few big snowstorms are likely. Most of the action will dodge the far Northeast, however.

New Jersey is not considered the “far Northeast” and may get hit with a few more storms coming from the Southeast or infamous nor’easters.

**Learn from Super-Storm 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.

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## ***To Find Jobs For Those With Intellectual Disabilities, Parents Get Creative*** by Josh Kovner Reprinted from Hartford Courant/TNS | November 30, 2018

SIMSBURY, Conn. — Noelle Alix and her daughter, Cate, 21, had been all over Simsbury, looking for a job for Cate. “We put out job applications all around town,” said Alix, a lawyer and author. “Little City Pizza was the one business that gave her a job interview.” Noelle and Tim Alix weren’t going to squander the opportunity. They hired a job coach who went to work with Cate for three months to make sure she mastered the routine. The job worked out, but the couple still has concerns that every family like them shares: Is a more meaningful job within reach, one that she could have for as long as she wants, in an environment that is heavy on support and learning and growing?

Marina Derman, of Westport, is familiar with this story. A mother of two young men with autism, she has tried for years to find steady work for her older son. “The job market isn’t doing much to actively hire our folks,” said Derman, a special education advocate who helps other parents navigate the bureaucracy. “Some businesses, certainly, have gotten the message, but there is still ignorance out there, and there is worry about the cost, the training, the performance and even the effect on the rest of the workforce.”

What Alix and Derman and an expanding group of parents and investors are learning is that there is a better way. It is an approach that involves great commitment, and taking matters into one’s own hands, and risk. Alix and her husband have teamed with Susan Johnson and her husband, Steve Tarca, and Kim and Scott and Morrison, the owners of the New England Pasta Co. in Avon, to create a coffeehouse and cafe called BeanZ & Co., inside the Morrisons’ spacious location. BeanZ would have dedicated equipment and a separate storefront and entrance. People with intellectual disabilities would make up 50 or 60 percent of the workers. Kim Morrison, whose daughter Meghan, 21, has Down syndrome, said she is shooting for a grand opening in early January. Johnson and Tarca, whose son, Harold, 21, has cerebral palsy, have started a nonprofit group, called Be Thoughtful, to raise money to help support the effort.

Derman, nine other parents and a human resources specialist, have joined together in a quest to start a three-screen movie theater in downtown Westport where people with intellectual disabilities will make up 60 percent of the workforce. Derman’s group, called CAPE, for Creating Acceptance Through Purposeful Employment, has drawn interest from a developer. The group is looking at several locations, and their plan is to create a space that can also serve as a community gathering spot, with private, catered parties, and themes inspired by the movies that are playing.

Parents and family members are also running, or are a driving force behind, several established businesses, including Roses for Autism in Guilford; Woofgang and Co., a dog biscuit bakery and gift shop in Fairfield; Wilton Swag, which sells items with a Wilton theme; and The Prospector Theater in Ridgefield. In Norwalk, The Crum Together Bakery is opening, begun by three parents and a beloved woman, Freida Hecht at Temple Beth Israel.

And a few young adults are running their own businesses after receiving an initial boost from their parents. Nick Glomb, 30, of Ellington, has owned and operated a hot dog cart for two years, mostly setting up at special events around the state. “It’s a great source of pride for him,” said Walter Glomb, Nick’s father and the executive director of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. “And he’s learning the reality of it, beyond the fun parts — keeping the books, paying the taxes, filing with the state. ... It took two years to pass the state food-handler’s exam. He got no breaks on it. It was the same test everyone else took.” Nick is a sole proprietor, and he’s tireless. Most other people with an intellectual disability need a supportive environment to prosper.

“The truth is, in a competitive job situation, their jobs would always be in jeopardy,” said Pam DonAroma, executive director of an agency, Futures Inc. It has, with strong support from grateful parents, established a successful clothing and gift shop in Berlin, called Good Cause Gifts, and two commercial bakery kitchens in Middletown.

Futures is a nonprofit agency that runs a school, a learning kitchen and other programs. It has successfully parlayed legislation passed in 2014 that created social enterprises, which shields businesses with a social mission from lawsuits filed by stockholders or suitors.

Derman said there is one unassailable rule among all parents involved in running their own enterprises: “We’re not here for pity sales,” she said. “Buy from us, patronize us because we are offering a good product.” We’ve gotten calls from people asking about our game plan, our blueprint, because this idea can be taken to other communities and duplicated.”

The ARC of Farmington Valley, known as Favarh, will help identify and place the young adults who will be working at BeanZ, said Stephen Morris, the executive director. The agency is also building apartments, and he said a job and a place to live go a long way toward fostering an independent life. “You know, we have all benefited from the pioneers before us that pushed our kids into the mainstream in schools,” said Noelle Alix. “The next barrier to overcome is unemployment. That’s our fight to fight.”

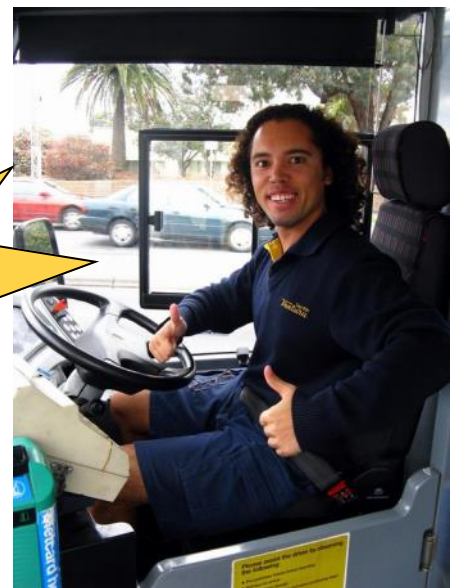


## Lawrence Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
2-Jan	Wed	Lawrence Winter Games	Prog. Time 4:00 -6:30 PM
2-Jan	Wed	Nutrition	7:00 PM
3-Jan	Thur	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
9-Jan	Wed	Lawrence Baking with Dana	Prog. Time 6:00 -8:30 PM
10-Jan	Thur	Coloring	3:00– 4:30 PM
16-Jan	Wed	Nutrition	7:00 PM
17-Jan	Thur	Lawrence Soup Making	Prog. Time 4:00 -7:30 PM
17-Jan	Thur	PCIL Game Night	6:00-8:00 PM
23-Jan	Wed	Lawrence Tie-Dye Football Pillows	Prog. Time 4:00 -6:00 PM
24-Jan	Thur	Movie	2:00 PM
31-Jan	Thu	Lawrence Wellness Class	Prog. Time 4:00 -5:30 PM



Do You Know Anyone Who Has  
a Passenger CDL License and  
Would Like to Volunteer to  
Drive for Our Various Rec  
Programs?





## Hamilton Happenings

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
3-Jan	Thur	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
4-Jan	Fri	Hamilton Wellness	Prog. Time 5:00 -6:30 PM
10-Jan	Thur	Hamilton Winter Games	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:30 PM
18-Jan	Fri	Hamilton Special Craft for Winter	Prog. Time 5:00 - 8:00 PM
25-Jan	Fri	Hamilton Tie-Dye Football Pillows	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:30 PM



## Robbinsville Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
3-Jan	Thur	Robbinsville Winter Games	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM
11-Jan	Fri	Robbinsville Wii Games	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM
16-Jan	Wed	Robbinsville Soup Making	Prog. Time 4:00 -7:30 PM
25-Jan	Fri	Robbinsville Tie-Dye Football Pillows	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:30 PM
30-Jan	Wed	Robbinsville Wellness Class	Prog. Time 6:30 -8:00 PM



## Hopewell Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
1/9/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 PM to 3:15 PM
1/11/19	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno	3:00 PM
1/15/19	Tue	Active Day Hosting BINGO	3:30 PM
1/23/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM

## ***IRS Reminding People With Disabilities About New ABLER Account Rules***

by Michelle Diamant Reprinted from Disability Scoop | December 13, 2018

With a change taking effect this year, individuals with disabilities can save more money than ever before without losing out on Social Security, Medicaid and other government benefits.

The Internal Revenue Service is reminding people with disabilities who are employed that for the first time they can deposit extra money into their ABLER accounts.

Annual contributions to ABLER accounts are currently capped at \$15,000. However, under a law passed late last year, people with disabilities who work can now accrue at least some of their wages as well.

For 2018, those living in the continental United States can deposit an additional \$12,140 in income, the IRS said in a notice this month. That means that workers with disabilities can potentially save \$27,140 in an ABLER account this year. The allowable extra savings rises to \$13,960 for those living in Hawaii and \$15,180 for Alaska residents, officials said. In addition, the IRS indicated that workers with disabilities who have ABLER accounts can now qualify for a Saver's Credit, which can reduce their federal tax bill.

Aside from the new provisions for those who are employed, the IRS said it is now possible to roll over money from traditional 529 college savings plans into ABLER accounts. This change is designed to help families that set up college savings plans before learning that their child had a disability.

ABLER accounts, which were established under a 2014 federal law, allow individuals with disabilities to accrue up to \$100,000 without risking eligibility for Social Security and other government benefits. Medicaid can be retained no matter how much money is in the accounts.

Individuals must have disabilities that onset prior to age 26 to qualify.

At present, 39 states offer ABLER programs, many of which are open to people with disabilities nationwide.

## Microsoft Spotlights Adaptive Device In Holiday TV Commercial

by Michelle Diamant Reprinted from Disability Scoop | December 11, 2018



Microsoft is touting one of its latest adaptive offerings with a national television advertisement featuring a boy with a disability and his friends.

The one-minute spot dubbed “Reindeer Games” shows kids running through a snow-filled neighborhood racing to see their friend Owen, 9, defeat a video game using Microsoft’s Xbox Adaptive Controller.

Owen has Escobar Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that leaves him with some physical challenges that make using a typical game controller difficult, according to his family.

Microsoft introduced the Xbox Adaptive Controller earlier this year. The \$99.99 device is designed to enable gamers with disabilities to play with whatever abilities they have through their hands, feet, mouth, head or otherwise.

“What I like about the adaptive controller is no matter how your body is or how fast you are, you can play,” Owen said.

Microsoft indicated that it worked with its internal accessibility team and an Americans with Disabilities Act expert to ensure an authentic portrayal in the commercial featuring Owen and his real-life best friend Gunnar.

The advertisement will air on broadcast TV until Christmas Day, Microsoft said.

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equity. Additional funding comes from TD Bank, Federal Home Loan Bank and Investors Bank.

Funding also came from the Camden County Homeless Trust Fund, and Camden County Freeholder Susan Shin Angulo spoke about the county's support for Project Freedom's first foray into the county.

Also speaking during the ceremony were Emily Chin, V.P. of Origination for the National Equity Fund; Maurice Coleman, Senior V.P. for bank of America.



Beautiful Christmas decorations made by tenants in Dana's recreation programs.





## January General Recreation Club Freedom Events Highlighted

1-Jan	Tue	Happy New Year! PF Offices Closed!	
7-Jan	Mon	Day Program - Hamilton	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
9-Jan	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
14-Jan	Mon	Day Program - Hamilton	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
16-Jan	Wed	Parx Casino - Philadelphia - 5 Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
17-Jan	Thu	Columbus Indoor Farmers Market	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
21-Jan	Mon	PF Offices Closed - MLK Day	
23-Jan	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
24-Jan	Thu	Mall Trip Moorestown 5 People Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM

plenty to do



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## ***Uber Promises More Timely Accessible Rides*** by Kristin LaFratta, Reprinted from MassLive.com/TNS | November 27, 2018

BOSTON — A new business model by ride-hailing company Uber means quicker pickup times for passengers in wheelchairs in several U.S. cities. Uber's Chief Executive Officer Dara Khosrowshahi announced this month that customers in the Greater Boston area can now access wheelchair-accessible vehicles through Uber with an average pickup wait time of 15 minutes or less.

The announcement comes months after Uber partnered with MV Transportation, a Texas-based company and one of the largest privately-owned passenger transportation firms in the country. The partnership gave Uber access to MV's fleets of drivers and wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Uber has historically relied on its driver workforce to supply their own cars, which have meant there are few cars that can accommodate wheelchairs. "There simply aren't enough people who personally own WAVs who also choose to drive with Uber," Khosrowshahi said in a statement. He added that in many cities, paratransit options require booking far in advance and long wait times as passengers are picked up and dropped off in various locations.

Uber hopes to change that model by allowing those in wheelchairs to get around as quickly as all passengers. The company says it is investing millions in these services because accessible transportation is a priority. "We'll likely invest tens of millions of dollars into this partnership in the first year," said Uber spokeswoman Alix Anfang. The improved service by Uber is available in Greater Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Chicago and Toronto.

**The company hopes to implement improved wheelchair access in San Francisco and Los Angeles this year. The eight cities combined make up for half of all Uber trips in North America, according to Khosrowshahi**