

New Horizons

Housing | nat Supports Independence



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Airlines Under New Mandate To Report On Wheelchairs They Break by Kellen Browning, Reprinted from McClatchy Washington Bureau/TNS | January 8, 2019



WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., was rolling up the airport ramp in her wheelchair after arriving in Chicago. She made it just a few feet, and then the chair collapsed underneath her. Sometime between boarding the plane in Washington and leaving the aircraft hours later, the airline staff had managed to snap a 1-inch titanium rod on her customized wheelchair clean in half. Then things got worse. “They kind of lugged me up the ramp and I sat in the waiting room area,” said Duckworth, an Army veteran who lost both legs when her helicopter was shot down in Iraq. Eventually, someone brought her a large, ungainly airport wheelchair that required someone else to push it.

All that happened in 2015. The next year, Duckworth was elected to the U.S. Senate. She found that no one had any idea how often these wheelchair problems happened. So last fall, she got a law passed requiring airlines to report to the Department of Transportation how many wheelchairs or motorized scooters they lose, mishandle or break. The reporting began last month, and disability advocates expect the reports to reveal a huge problem.

But Alison McAfee, a spokeswoman for Airlines for America, a lobbying group, said airlines “provide safe and comfortable air transportation to hundreds of passengers with disabilities daily” and are “committed to offering a high level of customer service.” Airlines and disability groups are working together to “reduce the number of wheelchairs damaged in air travel” by examining airlines’ handling and storage guidelines, training staff to handle wheelchairs and encouraging manufacturers to build wheelchairs suitable for airplane travel, McAfee said. Meetings between those coalitions, which are facilitated by the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, are ongoing.

Airline personnel have damaged Duckworth’s wheelchairs three times since 2013, including last month, when they jammed the wheel of her \$5,000 chair. The senator travels with a congressional staffer who knows what to do in such situations. But when airlines break the average traveler’s wheelchair — a problem that Duckworth and other disability advocates contend happens far too often — they’re stuck. “You sit there, and you are now immobilized,” Duckworth said. “They’ve basically taken away your legs.”

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“My Two Cents”

By *Tim Doherty, Executive Director*



So, last month I talked about the scams that are often put upon the disabled and senior communities, and would like continue that dialogue. By the way, these don't only apply to seniors and disabled, they apply to everyone, and they come in a variety of methods and modes.

Phone Calls: So, you may get a call from someone who says they are from Microsoft and have received an alert from your computer that you have a virus and so they want to get your password so that they can fix it. So, you give them your password and all of a sudden, nothing works on your computer or worse, they now have access to all your data on your computer...other passwords, maybe credit card numbers, social security info. Usually, legitimate computer agencies do not call you, YOU call them. Hopefully you contact the phone number of the real organization for help, which can be verified before giving out information. By you making the call, you helpfully have verified the legitimate contacts for Microsoft (or whoever) to address your problem. Furthermore, if you have been using your computer and haven't had any issues, chances are the call you got was bogus.

Also, Callers will say they are from IRS or some other company and that you are past due on your bill, and so they are willing to take a payment over the phone. Never give Credit Card numbers or information over the phone unless you have already verified the number and agency. IRS will NEVER call you, they do everything through the mail, so if someone says they are from the IRS, hang up immediately.

Computer messages: Again, you may get an email that looks like it comes from Apple or Microsoft and it may say that you have won a free computer and in order to get it, you just need to fill out an online form, which asks for your social security number, and a credit card number. Again, don't respond to this email, better yet don't open up any emails that you don't recognize the email address. This is again, another way to get personal information and or infiltrate your computer. Once in, they can manipulate and monitor your emails from afar, reading everything you send or get, via email. ONLY OPEN UP EMAILS THAT YOU RECOGNIZE THE EMAIL ADDRESS. Delete all the others.

Online Purchases: Today we all buy stuff on the internet, using our credit cards. For these purchases only buy from sites that you know, such as Amazon, or from major stores, like Best Buys or Walmart, etc. National brands will have secure website, and only use a credit card, NOT A DEBIT CARD. Credit cards offer some protection for your purchase for which you can dispute, or send back for a credit if not satisfied. Debit cards are like cash, once you purchase, it will be hard to get your money back, regardless of the reason. Credit cards have what is called, "Dispute Resolution" and will do an investigation about the purchase and usually will support you with any returns.

Finally, there is an old adage that says, "Whatever seems too good to be true, usually is (too good to be true) and therefore unrealistic and false. And always back away from anyone or anything that has to be done, right away or on the spot, these are usually scams. Legitimate vendors will be glad to let you think about a purchase before making it. Most purchases can be held off until the next day, so that you have time to do some research and think about the issue.

From Norman's Desk



Thousands of people with disabilities turned to YouTube and Facebook at 3:00 pm on January 15 this past month to watch history. A piece of civil rights legislation reintroduced on that day to the 116th Congress to fight for the independence of all people, but especially people with disabilities and senior citizens.

The Disability Integration Act — originally introduced in 2016 by Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., and F. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis. — prohibits states or local governments that provide institutional placements for individuals with disabilities who need long-term assistance, and prohibits insurance providers that fund such long-term services, from denying community-based services that would enable such individuals to live in the community and lead an independent life.

Without this in place, people who are eligible for services could be forced into nursing homes or other institutions by their insurance. This legislation ensures that disabled Americans have a right to live and receive services in their own homes. It prevents people with disabilities from being forced into expensive institutional settings because of government regulation.

The Disability Integration Act also requires public entities to address the need for affordable, accessible, integrated housing that is independent of service delivery.

Watch parties were held at Centers for Independent Living and other advocacy groups throughout the nation. One was held in my office. We came together with excitement and a tremendous determination to get the D.I.A. passed in the 116th Congress.

A little historical perspective. The D.I.A. was crafted from 25 years of work dating back to the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The original legislation was first introduced by Speaker Newt Gingrich (R, GA). Yes, the stalwart of Conservative value and fiscal policies first introduced the basis of today's D.I.A.. Gingrich saw the value of keeping people with disabilities and seniors out of nursing homes.

Unfortunately, today's Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D, CA), has ignored requests for two years to become a co-sponsor of the D.I.A. Yes, this champion of Liberal ideas and fiscal policies and her immediate party subordinates have shamefully not responded to the disability community's requests. This is the same person who lauded people with disabilities who put their bodies on the floor to stop the repeal of Obamacare.

My point is the Disability Integration Act cannot be looked at through Liberal or Conservative perspectives. It has an elements of both because it saves taxpayers and insurance company's money while keeping people living with both freedom and support.

So far, three of New Jersey's congressional representatives have signed on as co-sponsors. They are: Sen. Cory Booker, Rep. Donald Norcross, and Rep. Donald Payne. I hope to name more next month as I use my personal Twitter account to "recruit" co-sponsors from our state.

There is great expectations that the D.I.A. will pass this year. I expect passage in the House but not in Senate this time, but we shall determine if grassroots advocacy by people who cannot walk, talk, see, or hear works again!

Norman A. Smith,
Follow me on Twitter @normansmith02



The mishandled-wheelchair numbers, broken down by airline, will be publicly available online as part of the Transportation Department's monthly Air Travel Consumer Reports. Proponents say the increased transparency will give consumers another measure to compare airlines, the same way flyers can view the number of flight delays or consumer complaints. The numbers will "show how pervasive this problem is," said Stanley Brown, a quadriplegic Army veteran who was paralyzed in a car accident while on duty in 1996. Brown, president of the St. Louis chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, said he has had four or five frustrating experiences where airline personnel damaged his wheelchair or failed to strap him into a chair used to transport to the plane seat, causing him to fall onto the tarmac. At one point, he was forced to duct-tape his wheelchair together while waiting a week for a replacement.

Brown said many people with disabilities will drive for days to get to their destinations because they refuse to fly. Others have been bedridden for days after being hurt by rough handling or uncomfortable airport wheelchairs, he said. McAfee declined to comment on those problems.

In 2016, the Obama administration ruled that airlines had to start reporting statistics by Jan. 1, 2018. But in 2017, the Trump administration agreed to lobbyists' requests for a delay, which lasted until Duckworth's provision took effect last month. Delta Air Lines and Airlines for America asked for the delay because the airline industry was "facing challenges with parts of this regulation and needs more time to implement it," according to the Transportation Department. McAfee said airlines used the extra time "to resolve several technical challenges," but would not say specifically what they were.

Duckworth has a different interpretation for the requested delay. "They don't want people to know how bad they are," she said. She hopes the new law will incentivize airlines to avoid damaging wheelchairs and better train staff on how to handle them, because "consumers will vote with their dollars."

Duckworth also expressed some cautious optimism based on her conversations with Suzanne Boda, a senior vice president at American Airlines. "She has said she's committed to making sure that they set the whole (disability) training program, not just for their employees but for their contractors as well," Duckworth said.

Boda said American has begun emphasizing better training and "very high-standard audits" over the last few months to ensure the company is meeting the expectations of customers with disabilities. "Hopefully, we just continue to get better in this area," Boda said. "Our goal is to ensure equality for all customers."

***Did You Renew Your Club Freedom
Membership? Don't Miss Out On The Trips***

Dues for the year were due In January

***Call 609-448-2998 if
you are interested***





Lawrence Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
1-Feb	Fri	Lawrence Appetizers Making	6:00 -8:30 PM
5-Feb	Tues	Valentine Cookie Making	3:00-6:00 PM
6-Feb	Wed	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
6-Feb	Wed	Massages	Sign up
7-Feb	Thu	Lawrence Valentine Wreath Making	4:00 -6:30 PM
9-Feb	Sat	Lawrence Valentine Games	12:30 -3:00 PM
13-Feb	Wed	Nutrition	7:00 PM
20-Feb	Wed	Lawrence Soup Making	4:00 -7:0 PM
21-Feb	Thur	Movie Day	2:00 PM

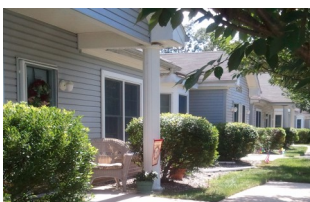


Lori making sugar free brownies



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
6-Feb	Wed	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
8-Feb	Fri	Chinese New Year's Crafts	Prog. Time 5:00 -8:00 PM
9-Feb	Sat	Valentine Games	Prog. Time 4:00 -6:30 PM
22-Feb	Fri	Mardi Gras	Prog. Time 5:00 -8:00 PM
23-Feb	Sat	Valentine Games	Prog. Time 1:00 -3:00 PM



Robbinsville Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
6-Feb	Wed	Chinese New Year's Crafts	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:00 PM
13-Feb	Wed	Valentine Party	Prog. Time 5:00 -7:00 PM
21-Feb	Thu	Movies	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM
28-Feb	Thu	Baking with Dana	Prog. Time 6:30 -9:00 PM



Hopewell Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
2/6/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 PM to 3:15 PM
2/8/19	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno and Wellness Presentation	3:30 PM:
2/14/19	Thur	Valentine's Day Tenant Movie	2:30 PM
2/20/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM

Hospital Heroines Make For a Hearty Holiday!

On Wednesday, December 12th, Project Freedom at Lawrence held their annual tenant holiday party. Thirty tenants plus guests enjoyed a night of fun, music, gifts, food and laughter. With the generous help of volunteers from Notre Dame and Somerville High School, Gene and Michele Menges, Deborah Heart and Lung Hospital and many anonymous supporters, the event went off without a hitch!

As the tenants gathered in the entrance, many were sneaking peeks at the tables filled with gifts, anticipating the auction. After enjoying a delicious dinner from Chiarellos, and getting halfway through the Chinese Auction, the star of the night showed up! Santa escorted by his elves from the Slackwood Firehouse came in ringing bells. Santa made sure to stop at every table and take pictures with every tenant! The photos show laughing, smiling and pure bliss. All photos were printed out and delivered to each tenant's front door to keep the memory of such a joyful evening. One tenant, began to cry as she expressed to Santa that his visit warmed her heart and lifted her spirits.

As Santa completed his rounds becoming clearly over heated by his attire, he stated how deeply moved and honored he felt to be a part of this special evening. Santa said he could go on forever visiting with our tenants as his heart was warmed by the smiles on their faces.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity and selflessness of **Deborah Heart and Lung Hospital!** For the third year, the nurses and aides at Deborah have gone to extreme lengths to make a significant difference in the lives of so many. The hospital staff members not only donated gifts but also their time to help our tenants have an amazing and memorable holiday season. Staff and tenants at Project Freedom would like to thank these angels for all they do.



Playing the Online Dating Game, in a Wheelchair

By Emily Ladau Reprinted from The NY Times / Sept. 27, 2017

The first time I forayed into online dating, I let my wheelchair show just a little in my photos. The good guys, I hoped, would be so taken by my clever profile and witty banter that they'd be able to look beyond my disability, if they even noticed it at all.

I eagerly began swiping, quickly matching with an attractive man whose profile picture showed him sporting an enormous iguana on his shoulder. Thinking that would make for an easy conversation starter, I messaged him. A few minutes later, he replied, but instead of responding to my reptilian inquiry, he asked, "Are you in a wheelchair?"

I kept my answer simple and told him that yes, I do use a wheelchair, but I was much more interested in the back story of the iguana. Unfortunately, he wasn't interested at all, messaging back only to say: "Sorry. The wheelchair's a deal-breaker for me."

His blunt reply stung, but the feeling was nothing new. Because I was born with my disability — Larsen Syndrome, a genetic joint and muscle disorder — I'd already gathered a pile of romantic rejections seemingly big enough to fill an Olympic swimming pool by the time I downloaded Tinder. This particular rejection, however, unleashed a wave of panic within me.

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A few months before my initial swipes, I'd gone through a messy breakup with a man I dated for over two years. I truly believed he was the person I'd marry, and that I'd never have to worry about rejection again. When I found myself newly single, I turned to online dating in the hopes of easing my fears that no one else would ever accept me as I am, that lightning doesn't strike twice.

Not one to be deterred, I persevered, downloading every possible dating app and creating accounts on various dating sites. But I became skittish about revealing my disability, because in an already shallow dating culture, I believed my wheelchair would cause most men to write me off without a second thought. So I decided to hide my disability completely. I cropped my wheelchair out of my photos. I eliminated any mention of it in my profiles. In this virtual world, I could pretend

my disability didn't exist.

I kept up with this facade for a while, messaging matches who were none the wiser. Once I thought I'd spoken with a guy long enough to establish his interest, I'd choose a moment to strike, telling him about my disability. I'd send a long-winded explanation divulging my wheelchair use, reminding him that it didn't make me any less of person and ending with reassurance that he could ask me questions, should he have any.

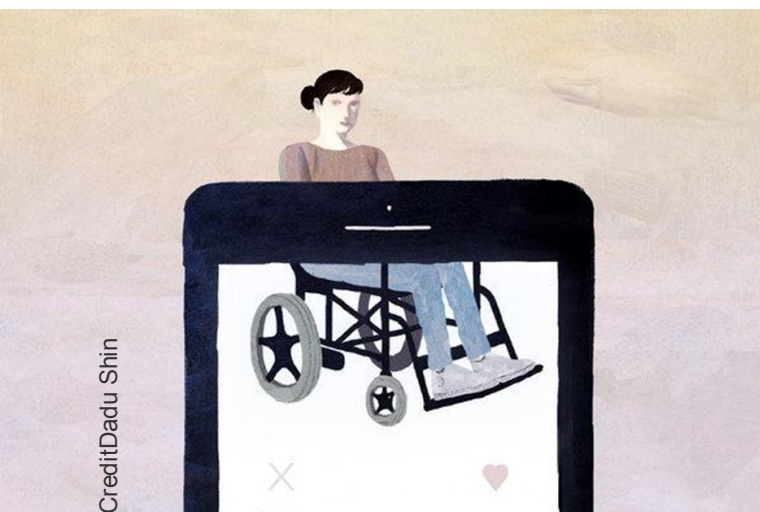
After dropping the "wheelchair bomb," I'd have to brace myself for their reactions, which were always a mixed bag, often ranging from indifference to ghosting. Occasionally, I'd receive an accepting response.

One man that I connected with on Coffee Meets Bagel was incredibly apologetic when I first told him about my wheelchair, as though it was the most tragic thing he'd ever heard. I shut that down by explaining that my disability is part of who I am and it's nothing to be sorry for. I ended up going on one date with him, and then another. For the second date, my bagel suggested a painting night (a social event that involves paintbrushes, canvases, acrylics and, usually, wine) since I'd told him how much I enjoy them. He found a Groupon and I researched a location, picking out a restaurant in New York City that was supposed to be wheelchair accessible.

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As it turned out, the restaurant was accessible, but the painting class was happening in a room upstairs. So, we spent our entire date sitting directly below the painters, eating dinner and making strained conversation with wine-fueled laughter and painting instruction in the background. I was mortified. Following that disaster, I promised

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my date I'd get his money back. As soon as the company refunded our tickets, I never heard from him again.

It was painful to realize that the hard part isn't over once someone learns that I'm disabled. Going on dates with me can be a crash course on disability, and I recognize that's not always easy for non-disabled people to process. But I wasn't helping the situation by keeping the existence of my disability concealed, springing it upon people only when I thought it felt right. In retrospect, this served only to contribute to the stigma I usually work so hard to fight.

I felt like a hypocrite. In every other area of my life, my disability is front and center. I write and speak endlessly about being a proud, unapologetic disabled woman. It is part of my identity, shaping everything I do and everything I value. But in the online dating world, my disability was my secret shame.

So I decided it was time for a change. I started gradually, making references to my disability throughout my profile, then adding photos in which my wheelchair is clearly visible. I tried to keep things light and humorous. For instance, OKCupid asks users to list six things they can't live without; one of mine is "the invention of the wheel."

Still, I found myself having to make sure that potential matches had actually picked up on the trail of clues I'd left. I grew tired of feeling like I needed to deceive men into being interested because society instilled in me that my disability makes me undesirable. Finally, I took the leap I'd been so afraid to make, opening up about disability to strangers whom I hoped would appreciate my honesty and perhaps send me a message. Prominently in my profile, I wrote: "I'd like to be very upfront about the fact that I use a wheelchair. My disability is part of my identity and I'm a loud, proud disability rights activist, but there is so much more that defines me (you know, like the stuff I've got in my profile). I realize some people are hesitant to date a human who experiences the world sitting down. But I'd like to think you'll keep reading and dive a little deeper. And you're welcome to ask questions, should you have any."

Once I added that paragraph, I felt liberated, relieved that anyone I spoke to would have a clearer picture of me. There have been plenty of matches that haven't worked out, and whether that's actually because of my disability, I'll never know. But I had a nearly yearlong relationship with a man I met through OKCupid, so I know it's possible for lightning to strike again. My dating life remains a comedy of errors, and I still struggle every day with the feeling that my disability means I won't find love, but at least I'm being true to myself. I'm putting myself out there — my whole self — and it feels good to be proud of who I am.

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Valentine's Day

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a popular Valentine's Day item.

ADMIRER	COUPLE	FLOWERS	LOVERS
ADORE	CRUSH	FONDNESS	PARTNER
AFFECTION	CUPID	FOREVER	PROPOSAL
ATTRACTION	DARLING	FRIENDSHIP	RELATIONSHIP
BEAU	DATE	GIFT	RESTAURANT
BELOVED	DEAR	GIRLFRIEND	ROMANCE
BOYFRIEND	DEVOTION	HEARTS	ROSES
CANDLES	FANCY	JEWELRY	SENTIMENT
CANDY	FEBRUARY	LIKE	SUITOR
CHOCOLATES	FLAME	LOVEBIRDS	SWEETHEART





February General Recreation Club Freedom Events Highlighted

3-Feb	Sun	Robbinsville Super Bowl Party -\$5 to Eat!	Doors Open at 5:30 PM
4-Feb	Mon	Day Program - Hamilton	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
11-Feb	Mon	Day Program - Hamilton	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
13-Feb	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
14-Feb	Thu	Columbus Indoor Farmers Market	Bus leaves PFR 9:30 AM
18-Feb	Mon	Presidents' Day - PF Offices CLOSED	
21-Feb	Thu	Mall Trip Moorestown 5 People Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
25-Feb	Mon	Day Program - Hamilton	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
27-Feb	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM



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FDA To Finalize Ban On Shock Devices Used On Those With Special Needs

by **Michelle Diamant** | Reprinted from Disability Scoop December 17, 2018

Two years after proposing a ban on devices used to administer electric shocks on people with developmental disabilities, federal regulators say they intend to move forward with the plan.

The Food and Drug Administration will finalize a 2016 proposal to bar so-called electrical stimulation devices, according to Scott Gottlieb, the agency's commissioner. "We believe these products present an unreasonable and substantial risk to public health that cannot be corrected or eliminated through changes to the labeling," Gottlieb wrote. The devices use electrodes attached to the skin to deliver electric shocks in order to condition individuals not to engage in self-injurious or aggressive behaviors.

For their part, ADAPT said it is pleased to see that federal regulators plan to move forward, but will keep up the pressure until a ban is in place. "We must continue to press the FDA to move forward as quickly as possible with this ban because — everyday — disabled people are being tortured in the name of "treatment," the group said in a statement.