

# New Horizons

Housing That Supports Independence



**Norman A. Smith**  
Editor  
**Judith A. Wilkinson**  
Co-Editor

**Tim Doherty**  
Executive Director

**Norman A. Smith**  
Assoc. Executive Director

**Stephen J. Schaefer**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Tracee Battis**  
Dir. of Housing Development

**Frank Sciarrotta**  
Compliance/Property Manager

**Robbinsville**  
**Jacklene Elswiny**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Judy Wilkinson**  
Office Manager

**Hamilton**  
**Jacklene Elswiny**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Melinda Sciarrotta**  
Office Manager

**Lawrence**  
**JoAnne Sherry**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Brianne Devlin**  
Office Manager

**Freedom Village at Woodstown**  
**Sammi DeMaris**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Arlene Sims**  
Office Manager

**Freedom Village at Hopewell**  
**Cecilia Funk**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Jennifer Applegate**  
Office Manager

**Freedom Village at Toms River**  
**Laurie Solymosi**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Joyce Cocco**  
Office Manager

**Freedom Village at Westampton**  
**Dara Johnston**  
Social Services Coordinator

**Savanna Green**  
Office Manager

## Surge In Voters With Disabilities May Influence 2020 Election

by Michelle Diamant | Reprinted from Disability Scoop / July 16, 2019

Significantly more people with disabilities cast ballots last year, according to a new report suggesting that this demographic is poised to have a big impact in the 2020 presidential race.



About half of all citizens with disabilities voted in the 2018 midterm elections, up 8.5 percentage points from the 40.8 percent who did so during the 2014 midterms.

Those are the findings from a report out this month from Rutgers University analyzing data from the government's Current Population Survey Voting Supplement.

In 2018, 14.3 million people with disabilities cast ballots, more than the 11.7 million Latino voters that year and nearly as many as the 15.2 million African-American voters.

What's more, the report found that an additional 10.2 million voters last year were people who live with someone who has a disability. When these voters are added to those with disabilities, that means that 20 percent of all voters in the 2018 midterms came from what the researchers called "disability households."

Among people with disabilities who did not vote last year, individuals were most likely to cite illness or disability, disinterest, transportation or scheduling conflicts as reasons for not making it to polls.

Researchers behind the report said their findings suggest that people with disabilities could be especially active in next year's race for the White House. "Going into the 2020 elections, these results show that the disability community is likely to be very politically engaged," said Douglas Kruse, a professor at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations who co-authored the report. "How candidates deal, or fail to deal, with disability issues may greatly affect the votes of the millions of people with disabilities and their friends and families."

## **We are Proud to Announce Our Latest Gala Sponsors**

### **Event Sponsors**

Costanza Builders  
National Equity Fund, Inc.  
V.J. Scozzari & Sons, Inc.

### **Angel Sponsors**

First Commerce Bank  
Joseph F. McKernan Jr. Architects & Associates  
Nottingham Insurance

### **Patriot Sponsors**

Bank of America  
Fusion Employer Services  
FWH Associates, P.A.

### **Freedom Sponsors**

Dumont & Watson, P.C.  
Investors Bank  
NJM Insurance Group  
Novogradac & Company, LLP  
PS&S Engineering, Architecture, Environmental Services  
Sea Bright Solar  
Security Dynamics Inc.  
Solid Cast Contracting

# “My Two Cents”

By *Tim Doherty, Executive Director*



As many of us do today, I do like to visit and talk with friends on Facebook and share pictures of vacations and the like. Of course there are lots of advertisements and many people making political statements, etc or espousing some kind of philosophy. Everyone is entitled to their beliefs, so that kind of thing comes with the territory. There is an old saying, that with friends, you don't discuss politics or religion, since those discussions tend to get folks into arguments, and if you want to remain friends, it is best to stay away from such topics.

This led me to think about other “words of wisdom” I have heard over the years, especially when I read the statement, “If you could give someone one piece of advice, what would that be”? I thought for a while about some of those trusted and true idioms. Like the Golden Rule: Do unto other what you would have them do unto you, which means basically to treat everyone like you would want to be treated.

Another good one is “never a borrower or lender be”, which one of my neighbors years ago, didn't seem to live up to, since he was always in my garage, borrowing a tool or using something I owned. I didn't mind him borrowing tools however what I didn't like is that he never brought them back. I would be looking for my rake, then remember that he had borrowed it and then have to march over to his house to get it—I wasn't a happy camper at that time.

However perhaps the best advice I can think of is a very simple one: “Mind your own business”. It seems that whenever I have offered my advice on a particular subject, if it is something the asking party really cares about, if my advice is NOT what they want to hear, no matter what the outcome, the person somehow resents my opinion. Even though my intentions are good, not intended to hurt or disparage anyone, it seems to always turn out unappreciated. People get mad or hurt feelings, regardless of my intentions.

I see that situation a lot with our tenants and apartment living. The closeness of living in apartments, means that we are constantly seeing our neighbors coming and going, so that there is limited opportunity for privacy. Not saying Hello or offering a wave, is sometimes mistaken for rudeness, when in fact it is just people, “minding their own business”. Sometime, people just want to be left alone, and not have to explain where they have been or what they are doing. Respecting one's privacy should be something we all can understand.

The other time honored idiom is to “never gossip about someone” or to repeat gossip, especially if you don't know the truth. It is so hard to take back something that is said, and repeated, which disparages a person's reputation. Spreading that misinformation is very easy to do, yet very hard to fix...so better “having nothing to say, than to say something at all”.



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

Despite strong bipartisan support, federal legislation that would entitle people with disabilities access to community-based services and outlaw waiting lists appears to be stalled, according to DisabilityScoop.com

Groups had hoped to secure passage of the bill known as the Disability Integration Act in the U.S. House of Representatives before the 29th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act last month. Instead, they say it's languishing in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, awaiting a hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The bill, H.R. 555, which was introduced in January by Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., would give people with disabilities who are eligible for institutional care the right to those same services in the community. Additionally, states and insurers that pay for long-term services and supports could not limit costs, impose policies or have waiting lists for community-based services in ways that differ from institutional care.

"It would make living in the community a civil right. That's why we think it's so important," said Kelly Buckland, executive director of the National Council on Independent Living. "There's a lot of people who are locked away with all their civil rights taken away and this would free them."

So far, 236 lawmakers in the House have signed on as co-sponsors, and nearly 900 groups ranging from the Autistic Self Advocacy Network to the American Civil Liberties Union sent a letter of support for the legislation to House leadership last week.

Advocates blame the delay on committee chair Rep. Frank Pallone, D-N.J., who has not called for a hearing even after months of pressure. One grassroots disability rights group, ADAPT, even visited his home to demand a hearing. Pallone's press secretary did not respond to requests for comment.

The 11 other House members from New Jersey and its two US. Senators have signed on as co-sponsors. Pallone remains the lone holdout despite having people with disabilities camped in his D.C. Office and outside his condo in the Washington area.

Despite frustration over the pace, advocates said they are confident the legislation will ultimately come to a vote in the House.

"It's a question of when," Buckland said. "We don't believe the legislation is going to die, not with that many co-sponsors."

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

Follow me on Twitter @normansmith02

Follow us on Twitter @TheFreedomGuys

"Like" us on Facebook.com/ProjectFreedomInc





# ***Trump Signs Law Improving Disaster Planning For Those With Disabilities***

by Michelle Diamant | Reprinted from DisAbility Scoop June 26, 2019

The federal government will be required to do more to consider the needs of people with disabilities when hurricanes, fires and other disasters strike under a new law signed by President Donald Trump.

The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act, which was signed by the president this week, calls for the creation of a national advisory committee specifically focused on disaster planning for those with disabilities.

Comprised of government officials, health care professionals and people with disabilities, the committee will be tasked with reviewing federal policies and making recommendations to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are properly factored in disaster planning.

“No American should ever feel like they might be left behind or forgotten when disaster strikes,” said U.S. Rep. Jim Langevin, D-R.I., who proposed the advisory panel and who has a disability himself. “By including people with disabilities as advisors during disaster planning and policy development, this bill ensures that the unique needs of this vulnerable community will be included.”

The establishment of the so-called National Advisory Committee on Individuals with Disabilities and Disasters is part of a larger law enhancing the government’s ability to respond to natural disasters and public health emergencies. It comes as multiple government reports in recent months have exposed flaws in the nation’s disaster preparedness for people with disabilities.

Earlier this month, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office issued a report finding that people with disabilities and individuals over age 65 “faced particular challenges evacuating to safe shelter, accessing medicine and obtaining recovery assistance” during the 2017 hurricane season. Investigators said that changes are needed at the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, to better accommodate this population.

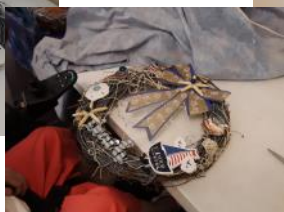
Separately, a report out last month from the National Council on Disability found that people with disabilities are often unnecessarily institutionalized during and after disasters because of conflicting federal guidance and inadequate access to services, among other issues.





## Hamilton Happenings

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
8/7/19	Wed	Shuttle to Walmart	Bus leaves 9:30 am
8/14/19	Wed	Shuttle to Shoprite	Bus leaves 9:30 am
8/28/19	Wed	Shuttle to Shoprite	Bus leaves 9:30 am



Day Program attendees made summer wreaths and beautiful candles recently.



## Lawrence Events



DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
8/6/19	Tues	Massages	as scheduled
8/7/19	Wed	Nutrition Class	7 pm
8/8/19	Wed	Adult Coloring	3-4 pm
8/22/19	Thur	Meg Hansen Happy Hour concert	4-6 pm





## Robbinsville Events



DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
8/1/19	Thur	Bristol Meyers Squibb volunteers working on grounds	9-3 pm
8/9/19	Fri	Ice Cream Social in Community Room	3:00 pm



## Hopewell Events



DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
8/7/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 pm to 3:15 pm
8/9/19	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno	3:00 pm
8/14/19	Wed	Northfield Banking Hosting Checking and Savings made Simple Presentation	3:30 pm
8/21/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 am to 11:30 am
8/29/19	Thur	Hopewell Twp Hosting Local Wildlife change of Season Presentation	11:00 am and 3:00 pm





# Caregiver Roommates Offer Housing Alternative For Adults with Disabilities

by Blythe Bernhard | June 28, 2019



Dinner is prepared at a L'Arche home in Decatur, Ga. where people with disabilities live together with typically-developing individuals. (Hyosub Shin/The Atlanta Journal-Constitution/TNS)

In a growing trend toward inclusion, young adults with disabilities now have more opportunities than ever to live with typically-developing peers who double as their caregivers.

A lack of safe and affordable housing is the number one issue for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, according to Shawn Ullman, senior director for national initiatives at The Arc.

"There's a real crisis," Ullman said. "People are having to get creative. The old way of doing things is not sustainable."

Most adults with developmental disabilities who are no longer living with family members reside in group homes with other people with disabilities or

live independently with assistance from service providers who come to the residence for support and therapy. But there is a national shortage of care providers, and group homes often have long waiting lists or are not compatible with jobs and transportation, Ullman said.

A Minnesota-based company has responded to the crisis by creating a roommate matching service for people with and without disabilities.

Since launching last summer, the new service, Rumi, has paired 12 sets of roommates who have signed long-term leases. The program matches people with disabilities who have Medicaid waivers with a compatible caregiver based on shared interests and needs. The pairs live in homes or apartments in the community just like typical roommates and the caregivers are paid for whatever level of services they provide, which can range from overnight supervision to around-the-clock support.

The benefits for people with disabilities are having a choice in where to live, who to live with and the level of support. For caregivers, the advantages are tax-free salaries compared to direct care jobs outside the home and helping people live more independently.

Rumi is run by Bridges, a company that provides housing, employment and other services to people with disabilities. The company conducts background checks, helps locate housing and assists with lease agreements and ongoing management.

The matching service can address not only the housing crisis but the shortage of caregivers, said Blake Elliott, Bridges' vice president of disability services.

"We tell our caregivers, 'We can't promise you that it's never going to feel like work, but our hope is that a lot of it doesn't feel like work,'" Elliott said. "You're getting paid to provide this support to somebody with some shared interests."



Under IRS guidelines, the income of caregivers providing disability services in their own home is tax-free. The level of care provided can range from supplemental to full-time support, and caregiver roommates can be paid for overnight supervision. Bridges offers substitute caregivers for illness or vacation along with any additional support therapies needed. The program's directors said they hope to expand beyond Minnesota in the future.

The concept of integrated housing is believed to have been started in the 1960s by the late Jean Vanier, whose roommates with intellectual disabilities had previously been living in institutions in France. Vanier's mission developed into L'Arche, a nonprofit network of integrated homes. Each of the dozens of homes across the U.S. has four or five residents with developmental disabilities and three live-in assistants without disabilities.

A similar program, Friendship House, grew out of the L'Arche model and is often affiliated with Christian colleges. In this model, typically-developing students live with young adults with developmental disabilities who have moved out of their parents' homes.

Friendship Houses are located at the Western Theological Seminary in Michigan, Duke Divinity School in North Carolina, Vanderbilt University in Tennessee and George Fox University in Oregon. A fifth Friendship House is planned for Fayetteville, N.C. to bring students studying for health care careers together with people with disabilities.

Several colleges such as George Mason University in Virginia also have programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities that allow for inclusive experiences in dorms and classrooms.

Ullman, of The Arc, said the idea of fostering friendships among people with and without disabilities is a bonus on top of the housing opportunities. With the right protections in place, the new programs can provide continuity and independence to young adults who have only known a culture of inclusiveness, she said.

## Club Freedom Memberships Now 1/2 Price



## ***For Individuals With Special Needs, Horses Make Sense In Therapy***

Reprinted from The Detroit News/TNS | June 25, 2019  
by Gregg Krupa

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — At 12, Kristi Dolot's son Steven began working with the horses and staff of Therapeutic Riding when they were in stables at Bingham Farms.

Despite his autism and intellectual impairments, Dolot said, Steven's confidence and self-respect have grown throughout 17 years on horseback, nearly half of the 35-year-history of the program, which offers what is known scientifically and medically as equine assisted therapy.

"What we see with him is that this is very good with his self-esteem, because he has a lot of challenges," she said. "Over time, he's been able to steer a little bit now, and he enjoys it.

"When you look at these horses, they're huge. And I think it takes a lot of courage for these people to get on and ride them.

"So I think just being able to do that and go around an arena is great for their self-esteem," said Dolot, who lives in Belleville. "And then I think that the trust you build with the people who are helping you, the staff and volunteers, as well.

### ***Want to Try Horseback Riding?***



Project Freedom is accepting applications from tenants interested in horseback riding at  
**Mercer County's Equestrian Center in Pennington, NJ.**  
It is an 8 week program and applicants must attend each weekly session. Transportation will be provided.  
Wheelchair users welcome.  
There will be no cost for this program.  
For additional information, please contact  
Esther Hohmann at 448-2998.



**19<sup>th</sup> Annual Project Freedom Labor Day Picnic**  
Monday, September 2nd, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM  
Robbinsville Project Freedom  
223 Hutchinson Road, Robbinsville  
All are welcome to join in the "OUT OF THIS WORLD" fun as we gather from around the *galaxy* for a summer picnic that take us to outer space and beyond!



**COMING SEPTEMBER 2nd**  
**Picnic in Robbinsville**  
**11:30-1:30**

**Provided by**  
**Resurrection Lutheran Church**

**All Invited but no**  
**transportation provided**

**Call Esther 609-448-2998**



# August

## General Recreation

### Club Freedom Events Highlighted

8/3/19	Sat	Aquatics	Bus leaves 11:30 am
8/5/19	Mon	Day Rec program in Robbinsville	Program 2-4 pm
8/6/19	Tue	<b>Pt Pleasant trip—5 people necessary</b>	<b>Bus leaves 9:30 am</b>
8/7/19	Wed	Shuttle to Walmart	Bus leaves 9:30 am
8/10/19	Sat	<b>Trenton Thunder Baseball</b>	<b>Bus leaves 5 pm</b>
8/12/19	Mon	Day Rec program in Robbinsville	Program 2-4 pm
8/13/19	Tues	<b>Parx Casino trip</b>	<b>Bus leaves 9:30 am</b>
8/14/19	Wed	Shuttle to Shoprite	Bus leaves 9:30 am
8/15/19	Thur	<b>Trip to Columbus Farmers/Flea Market</b>	<b>Bus leaves 9:30 am</b>
8/17/19	Sat	Aquatics	Bus leaves 11:30 am
8/19/19	Mon	Day Rec program in Robbinsville	Program 2-4 pm
8/21/19	Wed	<b>Air Show Atlantic City- 5 people necessary</b>	<b>Bus leaves 9:30 am</b>
8/22/19	Thur	Meg Hansen Happy Hour in Lawrence	Bus leaves 3 pm
8/23/19	Fri	<b>Trenton Farmers Market &amp; Halo Farm</b>	<b>Bus leaves 10 am</b>
8/26/19	Mon	Day Rec program in Robbinsville	Program 2-4 pm
8/27/19	Tue	<b>Crabbing at Seaside – 5 necessary</b>	<b>Bus leaves 9:30 am</b>
8/28/19	Wed	Shuttle to Shoprite	Bus leaves 9:30 am
8/31/19	Sat	<b>Trenton Thunder Baseball</b>	<b>Bus leaves 5 pm</b>

Project Freedom Inc.  
223 Hutchinson Road  
Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Non-Profit  
Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Trenton, NJ  
Permit #1083

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

## Apple, Google Adding Disability Emoji

By Shaun Heasley / Reprinted from Disability Scoop | July 24, 2019

A slew of new icons representing everything from wheelchairs to service animals are coming to smartphones soon.

Apple said it will add 59 emoji including many representing the disability experience to iPhones and other devices as part of a software update this fall.

Google indicated that the new disability-related symbols will be among 65 emoji released later this year with its Android Q operating system.

The additional icons were released by the Unicode Consortium in February. The organization is responsible for standardizing the emoji that device makers include in their keyboard selections.

Apple proposed the new disability-related icons in 2018 in an effort to “provide a wider array of options to represent basic categories for people with disabilities,” the company said at the time.

The icons depict people using manual and power wheelchairs, a service dog, a hearing aid and prosthetics, among other special needs. Some of the emoji have male and female versions and variants for skin tone.

Apple said the adoption of the new icons will “help fill a significant gap in the emoji keyboard.”

