

THE

# Independent

A Publication of Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.

DECEMBER 2023

## Transforming Lives Together

As we approach the end of the year, we reflect on the incredible journey we've undertaken together at Freedom Resource Center, and we are excited to share our goals for the future as we celebrate our 35th anniversary in 2024.

For three and a half decades, we have been steady in our commitment to empowering people with disabilities. Guided by the principle "Nothing about us without us," coined by the esteemed Judi Chamberlin, we have dedicated ourselves to teaching essential skills and fostering personal growth, all with the goal of promoting independence among people with disabilities.

Our goals are ambitious but crucial: **to create communities where people**

**with disabilities can lead rich and fulfilling lives, complete with access to affordable housing, meaningful employment, satisfying relationships, and good health.** In partnership with individuals, families, and communities, we strive to develop innovative solutions to life's challenges, always committed to doing whatever it takes to help those we serve achieve success.

What sets us apart is the authenticity of our team. Notably, **51%** of our team, including both Board and Staff members, are individuals with disabilities. This ensures that our work is deeply rooted in a genuine understanding of the unique needs and challenges faced by people living with disabilities. **Together, we are a force for change, working tirelessly to empower individuals and equip them with essential skills for true independence.**

Imagine the impact of your partnership with us. By joining forces with Freedom Resource Center, you become a catalyst for change, enabling us to make a real difference in the lives of those we serve. As we set our sights on a bold mission for 2024, aiming to raise **\$35,000 in celebration of 35 years**, we invite you to be a crucial part of our success story.

Your generous contribution will directly support our efforts in the region, impacting people with any disability

and any age, free of charge. **Your support is not just a donation; it's an investment in creating a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.**

Now, let us share with you the words of those whose lives have been transformed by your support:

Diane joyously exclaimed, "It's just your joy of being that independent again; able to make my own decisions about my everyday life. Security and freedom need to go together! I get up every day and make my own decisions about my life, where I go and what I do, we got to have our freedom."

Since coming to Freedom Resource Center, Kevin shares, "I have learned so much about myself and all the things that I can do. Since my brain injury many years ago, I was told that I would not be able to do certain things, such as manage my own finances, choose where I live and who I can socialize with, at times I

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### FYI

#### ALL OFFICES CLOSED

December 22nd & 25th  
January 1st & 15th

#### Save the Date

Giving Hearts Day  
Thursday, February 8, 2024

Annual Spring Appreciation Luncheon  
Thursday, May 16, 2024

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# FYI

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## Freedom In Action

### FARGO

**Pie Day and Listening Session**

**Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024 - 1:30PM - 3:00 PM**

RSVP by Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. or Sarah - 701.478.0459

**End of Life Planning Presentation**

**Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024 - 1:30PM - 3:00PM**

RSVP by Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. or Sarah - 701.478.0459

**St. Patrick's Day Bingo & Prizes**

**Tuesday, Mar. 12, 2024 - 1:30PM - 3:00 PM**

RSVP by Tuesday, Mar. 5, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. or Sarah - 701.478.0459

### FERGUS FALLS

**Heart, Health, and Happiness is the theme for January, February and March. Please look for flyers with specific events, dates, and times. Feel free to pick one up in the office.**

**Gratitude Jars**

**Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2024 - 1:30PM - 3:00PM**

Register by January 3 to reserve your spot:

Call 218.998.1799

## Young Adult Gathering

### FARGO

**National Handwriting Day:**

**write a letter and play games**

**Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024 - 10:00AM - 11:30AM**

No cost to the event

RSVP by Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. - 701.478.0459

**Valentine's Day Games**

**Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024 - 10:00AM - 11:30AM**

No cost to the event

RSVP by Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. - 701.478.0459

**Let's Laugh Day:**

**Play games and tell jokes**

**Tuesday, Mar. 19, 2024 - 10:00AM - 11:30AM**

RSVP by Tuesday, Mar. 12, 2024

Contact Katelyn V. - 701.478.0459

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became very depressed and frustrated. Now, I know that I can advocate for myself and others and that we can choose to do things in our lives as we also have voices, thoughts, and feelings that we are allowed to share.”

Paul stated, “Everybody at Freedom is there to help. They are not afraid to be a guide. Freedom was helpful and gave me various phone numbers and resources that could help me.” Paul recently returned to Freedom Resource Center as a volunteer for the Peer Mentor Program.

Their stories are a testimony to the transformative power of our collective efforts. Together, we can continue to make a profound impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

**Please consider making a donation today and be part of our journey toward a more inclusive and empowered future.** Your support is invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to our mission.

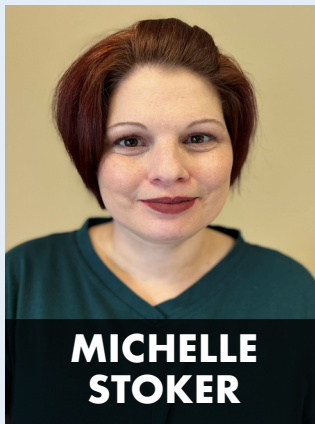
**You can make a difference by visiting our website at [www.freedomrc.org](http://www.freedomrc.org) and click on “donate” or by sending your contribution to 2701 9th Ave S, Suite H, Fargo, ND 58103. All 5 of our office locations will benefit.**

Thank you for being an essential part of the Freedom Resource Center family. Together, we will build a world where everyone has the freedom to thrive.

With gratitude,

Executive Director, Angie Bosch and Team

## Meet Our New Staff



**Michelle Stoker** is our new Independent Living Advocate MFP/ADRL Transition Assistant. She looks forward to helping individuals have as much of a peaceful transition as possible. She is a certified veterinary assistant by trade but has been working in the health care field as a receptionist/scheduler for the past three years. Her favorite part of the job was making patients feel as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever time is needed to make sure all their needs were met. She is looking forward to helping our consumers with the same dignity, respect, and care. She currently resides in Halstad, MN living with her little sister Jess, her three-year-old nephew Miles, two dogs named Mr. Pickles and

Avery and two cats named Sam and Bella. Michelle also has two dogs of her own, Harold and Daisy, but they were unable to accompany her on the move due to pet aggression from the resident dogs. She enjoys visiting them on a regular basis to make sure their bond stays strong. She also has a 22-year-old son named Orion who is living and working in Fargo. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, spoiling her nephew Miles or just staying home watching Netflix, relaxing and eating delicious foods!

# PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES

After just over a decade, the U.S. Access Board has published the final rule for Public Right-of-Ways in the Federal Register as of August 8, 2023. Initially, the *proposed* draft was published on February 13, 2013. This document provides minimum guidelines for making pedestrian facilities accessible, including but not limited to sidewalk access routes, pedestrian circulation paths, alternate pedestrian routes (during construction), pedestrian signals, crosswalks and transit stops. It also provides guidance for on-street parking in non-residential areas.

To learn more about these guidelines, visit the Access Board's website at <https://www.access-board.gov>



## Turkey Wild Rice Soup

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup onion, finely chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped into ½-inch pieces
- ¼ cup carrots, chopped into ½-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 cups cooked turkey, shredded or cut into ½-inch cubes
- ½ cup wild rice, uncooked
- ½ cup mushrooms, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon vegetable stock powder
- 1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper (or to taste)
- 5 cups water
- 1 teaspoon fresh parsley, finely chopped (for garnish)

## Directions:

You will also need a medium-large cooking pot or 4 qt. dutch oven.

Heat oil in a medium-large cooking pot (or 4 qt. dutch oven) over medium-high heat for 2 minutes until sizzling hot. Add onion, celery, carrots, thyme and bay leaves, and sauté for 5 minutes until the vegetables are soft and fragrant.

Add turkey, rice and mushrooms. Stir and cook for another 3 minutes. Add vegetable stock powder, salt, and pepper. Stir well to mix. Add water and bring soup to a boil, about 5 minutes. Cover the lid and turn down to medium-low heat. Simmer for 35 to 40 minutes until most of the wild rice is soft and popped.

Remove the bay leaves and serve in soup bowl.

*Credit to: AheadofThyme.com*

## Disclaimer

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"The premier leader of disability rights  
in the region for more than 30 years."



“ **NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.** ”  
-Judi Chamberlin-

Imagine the impact of your partnership with us.

By joining forces with Freedom Resource Center, you become a catalyst for change, enabling us to make a real difference in the lives of those we serve.

When you need an advocate or don't know where to find answers, call Freedom Resource Center.

Please consider making a donation today and be part of our journey toward a more inclusive and empowered future.

To donate go to [www.freedomrc.org](http://www.freedomrc.org) or scan the QR code.

