

THE

# Independent

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

## Freedom Comes in Many Ways An interview with Kevin Gerdes

**Can you tell me what brought you to Freedom and what your life was like at that time?**

I originally came to Freedom Resource Center for some assistance in having my sister removed as my guardian. I had no idea how to do this and didn't know about court proceedings or where to go for help. One of my neighbors told me about Freedom Resource Center so I came here. At that time in my life, I knew for my own well-being that I had to learn about my options, as I was under so much stress with how things were set up.

**What is one of the particular moments that stands out to you?**

All of the doors that have opened up for me that I never knew about!

Before Freedom Resource Center, I pretty much didn't socialize outside of my apartment building. Since coming to Freedom Resource Center, I have been given information about other organizations in the area. One of them is A Place 2 Belong; where I am now a member and I volunteer there 4-5 days per week. I went through a food safety program and am now certified to prepare meals at A Place 2 Belong, which I enjoy greatly. Through Freedom Resource Center, I was able to go to The Minnesota Twins game. This was my first time ever going to a professional ballgame and it was a blast! I will never forget this day from riding on a coach bus, the delicious food, and of course the game. I also like all of the Freedom In Action events and look forward to what is happening the next month.

**Why do you continue to support Freedom?**

Since coming here, I have learned so much about the services in our area. However, I have learned so much about myself and all of 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 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. Freedom Resource Center is a good place, I have received a tremendous amount of support and I always feel welcome here. I have encouraged many people to talk to someone at Freedom Resource Center, because I know that they will get the help or support that they are looking for. I encourage everyone that if you don't know about Freedom Resource Center, then go down there and see all of the services that they provide to so many.

## FYI

### Save the Date

**Giving Hearts Day**  
Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024

**Spring Luncheon - Awards Event**  
Thursday, May 16, 2024

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## What's Inside

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# FYI

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## Freedom In Action

### FARGO

All Fargo events at FRC Office - 2701 9th Ave. South, Fargo. RSVP to [katehmv@freedomrc.org](mailto:katehmv@freedomrc.org) or [sarahw@freedomrc.org](mailto:sarahw@freedomrc.org) or call 701.478.0459

**Safety in your home and in your community**  
Presented by Fargo Police Department  
**Tuesday, Oct. 3 - 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM**

**Pumpkin Painting and Decorating**  
**Thursday, Oct. 26 - 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM**  
RSVP by Thursday, October 19

**Young Adult Gathering -  
Breakfast Pizza & Games**  
**Tuesday, Sept. 12 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM**  
RSVP by Tuesday, September 5

### FERGUS FALLS

All Fergus Falls events at FRC Office - 125 West Lincoln #1, Fergus Falls. RSVP to [joycew@freedomrc.org](mailto:joycew@freedomrc.org) or [leighl@freedomrc.org](mailto:leighl@freedomrc.org) or call 218.998.1799

**Game Days**  
**Tuesdays, Sept. 12 & Oct. 10 -  
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM**

**Art Exhibit**  
**Wednesday, Sept. 13 - 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM**  
Join us as we tour the Charles Beck Gallery at MState. Transportation provided; meet at the FRC office.

**Halloween Bingo Party**  
**Friday, Oct. 13 - 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM**

### JAMESTOWN

For Jamestown events, RSVP to [ashleyg@freedomrc.org](mailto:ashleyg@freedomrc.org) or call 701.252.4693

**Young Adult Gathering - The Vault**  
223 Central Ave. N, Valley City  
**Wednesday, Sept. 20 - 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM**

**Young Adult Gathering - FRC Office**  
300 2nd Ave. NE, Jamestown  
**Friday, Sept. 22 - 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM**



## Enjoy Autumn with an All-Terrain Track Chair

The program has expanded to 13 Minnesota state parks in August 2023. Track chairs are all-terrain, electric powered chairs that can be used on designated trails within the park. These chairs can help visitors explore areas of the state parks in new ways, often on trails that are not suitable for regular wheelchairs.

Track chairs are available year-round in some locations, and seasonally in others. To reserve a chair, call the park you plan to visit. Please call ahead to ensure a track chair will be available during your visit.

These chairs are available to anyone who has a need. You will be asked to sign a waiver when you check it out. No other documentation is required.

There is no charge to use the chair, but a state park vehicle permit is required for all vehicles entering the park. There are discounted vehicle permits if you have a vehicle hang tag for a disability.

Park staff are not available to help with transfer to or from the chair. If you need help with transfer, please bring someone who can assist you. Each location has a transfer board available. If you have additional transfer equipment that works with your personal chair, please bring that along.

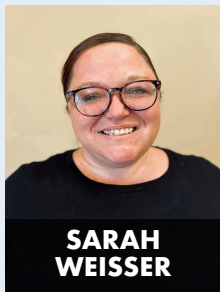
*Credit to Minnesota Department  
of Natural Resources*



## Disclaimer

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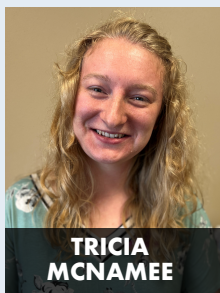
## Meet Our New Staff



**SARAH  
WEISSER**

**Sarah Weisser** is the new Clay County Independent Living Advocate for Freedom Resource Center. She looks forward to using her own personal experiences to empower others to find their voice and learn to advocate on their own behalf. She has a passion for helping others and is proud to say being an advocate is simply part of who she is. She loves

to spread her knowledge of resources and to do outreach to inform others on ways to become more independent. Her background is working as Direct Care Provider for over 10 years and assisting individuals to eliminate barriers to become self-sufficient. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her two boys and extended family. She describes herself as a lifetime learner and is always reading something. She loves being outside, making jewelry, trying new things pretty much anything besides swimming.



**TRICIA  
MCNAMEE**

**Tricia McNamee** has joined Freedom Resource Center's team as an Independent Living Advocate / MFP Transition Coordinator. She looks forward to working with consumers, and community members, in collaboration to help navigate their transition to independent living. Tricia works with the consumers within the Cass County area to help them set and reach

their independent living goals, by connecting them to information and resources. She believes in the independent living philosophy and that every person has the right to make choices on how they live. In her spare time, Tricia enjoys spending time with family, reading, and photography.

## Thank You

Freedom Resource Center would like to extend our sincere thanks to outgoing Board Members: Catherine Artac, President; Marc Holland, Treasurer; Krista Boehm and Alex Cyusa. Each of these individuals have shared their knowledge and expertise to further the mission of Freedom Resource Center. Thank you, Catherine, Marc, Krista, and Alex!

Board of Directors elections were held at the July Board Meeting. Tom Cassidy has been elected President; Draisey Wilson was elected Vice President; Milton Ota was elected Treasurer. Thank you for continuing to serve Freedom Resource Center.



## Roasted Vegetables

- 1 medium head cauliflower (2 pounds)\*
- 1 crown broccoli (1/2 pound)
- 1 medium red onion
- 2 medium sweet potatoes (1 1/2 pounds)
- 1 red pepper
- 1 yellow pepper
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning\*\*
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Adjust the oven racks for roasting 2 trays. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit.

Chop the vegetables: Chop the cauliflower and broccoli into florets. Chop the onion into 1/2-inch slices. Cut the sweet potato in half lengthwise, in half again lengthwise, and then cut each quarter into thin pie-shaped slices (see the photo). Chop the peppers into 1/2-inch strips, then cut the strips in half.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper (we prefer this to silicone baking mats because it results in crispier veggies). Spread the vegetables evenly onto each sheet. Drizzle half the olive oil onto each tray, then with half the seasonings onto each tray. Mix with your hands until evenly coated.

Place into the oven and bake for 20 minutes (do not stir!). Remove the pans from the oven, rotate them, and roast another 10 minutes (for 30 minutes total) until tender and lightly browned on one side. Transfer to a serving bowl or dish and serve immediately.

Cut all quantities in half to make 1 sheet pan for 4 people.

\*\*If you can't find Old Bay, substitute in 1 teaspoon paprika and 1/2 teaspoon celery salt.

*Credit to: [acouplecooks.com](http://acouplecooks.com)*



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



# What's Wrong with This Picture?

The access aisle and ramp to the sidewalk overlap, posing a safety risk and compliance barrier. The slanted surface can disrupt a person's sense of balance and may cause a wheelchair user to tip or slide away from the vehicle. Bystanders may perceive this space as having a slight elevation; however, landing on a sloped surface can easily lead to trips, falls, and other hazardous situations. Additionally, the lawful accessible signage is not present for either space.

