



FREED PRESS

FREED CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Summer Issue 2006

FREED Center for Independent Living

Serving people with disabilities in Nevada, Sierra, Yuba, Sutter and Colusa Counties



A disability resource center for people of all ages



www.freed.org

Grass Valley: 272-1732

Marysville: 742-4474



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From The Director, Ann Guerra.....

Dear Friends,

The 16th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act is July 26, 2006. The Act is simply words on a page unless they come to life through diligence on the part of people with disabilities and the entities affected.

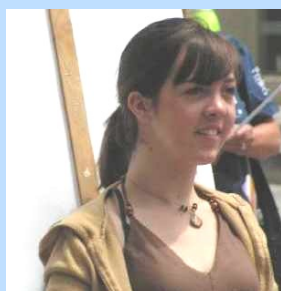
In September, FREED will host 2 ADA trainings in Grass Valley. They will take place over 2 days and will focus on Titles II and III of the Act.

Title II covers employment and Title III covers public accommodations which include hotels, restaurants, retail stores, offices of health care providers, hospitals, art galleries, day care centers, health clubs and more. The training is provided by **Marilyn Golden** who is a Policy Analyst at the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), our nation's foremost national law and policy center on disability civil rights, with offices in Berkeley, California and Washington, D.C. She has been closely involved with the Americans with Disabilities Act throughout all the stages of its proposal and passage and now during its implementation. A highly lauded ADA trainer, she has directed and led numerous in-depth programs on the ADA which have given thousands of people comprehensive knowledge on how to make this law a reality. She is the principal author of the DREDF publication The ADA, an Implementation Guide (the "Bluebook"), DREDF's highly-respected ADA curriculum.

Space is limited for each of these valuable trainings so please call now to reserve your space. Participants will receive a solid overview of these two parts of the ADA and are expected to complete a reading assignment prior to the start of the class. There is no charge for the workshop or for materials which include a copy of the "Bluebook."

(continued on page 7)

FREED Advocates at Capitol Action Day—June 1st 2006—more photos inside



The First HAVA Election

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA), passed in 2001, required for the first time that voting in its entirety be accessible to people with disabilities for this June 6th election. In most counties in California, voters with disabilities for the first time had the opportunity to vote independently and privately. In Sutter, Yuba, and Colusa Counties, voters with disabilities voted on new accessible voting systems at their polling place. In Sierra County, while the entire county votes using mail only ballots, the county had an accessible voting system for voters at the registrar's office with a second unit for the Loyalton area planned for use in November. Unfortunately Nevada County was one of approximately 8 Counties in California that did not have accessible voting systems.

~ by Ana Acton— Systems Change Advocate



Good Access is Good Business

California Access laws have been around for over 30 years and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) for over 15 years yet people with disabilities still face access barriers on a daily basis. As an organization that advocates for the rights of people with disabilities, people contact us on a routine basis regarding access barriers that they encounter when going out to eat, going shopping, riding public transportation, trying to get a job, etc.

In response to the lack of access, FREED, in collaboration with community members, has formed the Nevada County Equal Access Team (NCEAT). NCEAT is concerned with the wide spread non-compliance with the ADA and California's Title 24 in Nevada County. The NCEAT are people with disabilities, including seniors, who are committed to ensuring full access to public and private services throughout our community through ad-

Continued column 2

herence to disability rights laws and code enforcement through advocacy, education, and action.

What access barriers have you encountered in your community? If you are interested in starting an access team in your community, want to join NCEAT, or want to learn more about your rights to equal access in the community contact Ana at FREED, 272-1732.

~ by Ana Acton— Systems Change Advocate



Assistive Technology Listen Up - It's Talking to You Speak Up - It's Listening

Devices using voice input and output are now realistic alternatives to using our eyes and fingers. Simple aids like a talking thermostat, clock, body temperature thermometer or caller ID helps those who cannot see a visual screen or use manual controls. An electronic communicator can help speak for those who cannot. One can just tell lights to turn on and off without touching a switch. Using a voice activated or talking cell phone helps those who cannot dial or see the phone book list. Any phone can be used for reading newspapers, sending and receiving email and even browsing the internet. Voice input for computer entry has also become more practical in compensating for certain disabilities.

If you think devices with voice input or output could help you, please contact Jeff at FREED, 272-1732. And, if you have experience using a program like Dragon Naturally Speaking and would consider tutoring a new user, also contact Jeff.

~ by Jeff Samco - Assistive Technology Advocate
In Grass Valley office

EAGR Program Winding Down

Exterior Access for Rentals

The EAGR program (Exterior Accessibility Grants for Renters) is winding down to a successful close in Nevada County at the end of June. We have been able to increase the accessibility to several of the large apartment complexes in both the western and eastern parts of the county by installing new entrance doors and automatic door openers. We have built ramps and installed handrails for individual renters with the assurance that the accessibility improvements will remain in place. Other EAGR funded projects include common area modifications, installation of lever door handles and Braille signage. The grant funds were made available to us through voter approval of Proposition 46.

*~ Melissa Blackwell, Fix It Program
Coordinator*

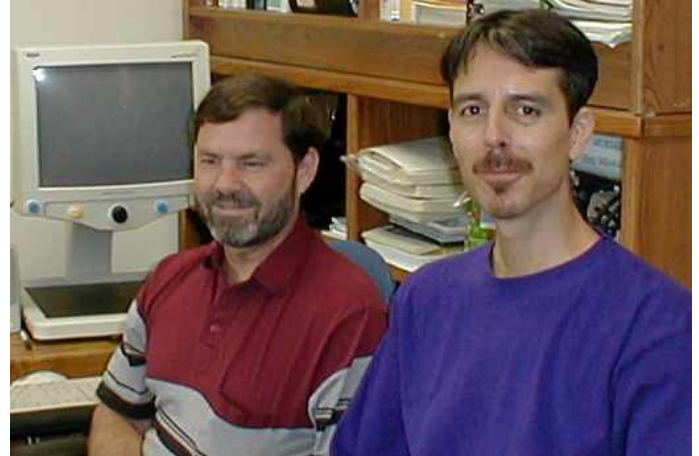
Examples of EAGR Projects



Handrails above, Ramp and Railing below



Meet the New Staff in Grass Valley



Jeff Samco and Tim Hughes

Tim Hughes:

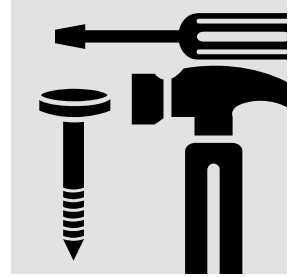
Originally from Oakland, California, I moved to Grass Valley with my wife in the spring of 2004. I bring experience in education, violence-prevention, community radio, and political activism. During my free time I enjoy vegetarian cooking, hiking at Empire Mine, practicing Yoga, and traveling. I'm also interested in the healing arts, history, politics, and music. I feel fortunate to be part of a great organization like FREED.

Jeff Samco:

I am very pleased to have joined FREED's dedicated staff last March as the Assistive Technology Advocate. It is exciting to watch the continual improvements in old technology and the advent of new technology to assist us in daily living. I am gratified to be part of the process when people benefit from any device which helps free them from serious barriers to more independent living.

In 1996, our family moved to Nevada County after living 20 years in Yosemite and working as a national park ranger. I live with my wife Mary and two teenage children. I am legally blind with a childhood form of macular degeneration. I think this is a great time to be alive with the many aids for those of us with vision or other disabilities.

Marysville Branch to Provide Fix-It Program



Are you a senior aged 60 plus and/or a person with a disability living in Yuba or Sutter counties? Do you have a home repair problem you cannot resolve? Does the problem threaten your health and safety? Do you need a wheelchair ramp or grab bar?

Do you want to volunteer to assist people to remain in their homes and be part of a vital program that is so needed?

If the answer is yes, Fix-It may help!

Starting July 1, 2006, the Marysville's FREED office will provide a Fix-It Program. This program is focused on addressing the health and safety needs of seniors and people with disabilities with simple home repair and maintenance needs. This program is funded by Area 4 Agency on Aging and Yuba City Community Development Block Grant.

A skilled volunteer will visit your home and evaluate the problem at no charge. The volunteer may perform

minor repairs. The homeowner is expected to pay for parts and materials.

FREED also maintains a list of reputable contractors for larger projects. Payment for contractor services shall be the responsibility of the homeowner.

Fix-It volunteers are offered the opportunity to perform a wide variety of services, such as installation of grab bars, minor plumbing, repair to steps and building ramps. You determine the amount of time you are able to give to the program and can refuse any job that you would prefer not to do. You will be the recipients of immediate gratitude from the consumers who might otherwise have to let necessary home repairs go undone. You will be reimbursed for your mileage to and from assignments.

For further information, please contact Claudia Hollis at (530) 742-4474

~ by Claudia Hollis, Branch Manager of Marysville Office

Continued, column 2

The AT Gazette: There is a new on-line effort to help anyone obtain or recycle assistive technology (AT) needs. Now you can access the AT Gazette--a state-wide network where you may find free or affordable used and new equipment. This would include wheelchairs, walkers, lifts for vehicles and other mobility aids; computers, AAC communication devices and other hi-tech; talking clocks, cassette players and other aids for the blind; amplified phones and other aids for the deaf; and much, much more. Consider recycling equipment you no longer need by posting it in the AT Gazette to donate it to someone or to sell it at an affordable price. All transactions are between the individual parties.

To access the AT Gazette, go to this website: www.ATGazette.com.

Sincere Thanks to FREED's End of 2005 & 2006 Donors :

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 Weiss Brothers Nursery
 Wooden Spoon
 Yabobo

*We make every effort to keep accurate records
 and apologize for any errors or omissions.*

From the Director, from page 1

The Nevada County Community Health Plan is planning a golf tournament to support the Nurse Call Center, a valuable health resource for the community. The Community Health Plan is involved with various activities designed to increase health awareness and increase access to health services. More information on the tournament is found inside this newsletter. We hope you'll encourage your golfer friends to participate in this event.

FREED goes to the fair! Look for our tables at the Yuba Sutter Fair which takes place August 2 – 6 and the Nevada County Fair's Day for People with Disabilities which will take place on August 11.

Wishing you a great Summer and Happy ADA Anniversary.

~ Ann Guerra, Executive Director

Heartfelt Thanks to Veranda Party Donors & Volunteers

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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| Briarpatch Community Market | Pak & Save & Safeway |
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\$250 \$100 \$50 or \$ _____

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Address: _____

In memory of: In honor of:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Should we notify someone of this gift? If so, Who?

Name: _____

Address: _____

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FREED, 900 E. Main St, Suite 201

Grass Valley, CA 95945

Sierra Nevada Community Health Plan
2nd Annual Golf Classic
 Sunday August 27, 2006
 Alta Sierra Country Club
 For more information please call
 Cherie at 530-271-3225 or
 Visit the website at
www.e-mbainc.com
 to download a registration or
 sponsor form.
 The Tournament raises money for the
 Nurse Call Center which offers free
 and confidential access to registered
 nurses who can answer health related
 questions. This health advice line is
 free and open to all. Golfers sign up to
 support the Nurse Call Center!

More FREED Advocates at Capitol Action Day 2006





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Grass Valley, CA 95945

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Grass Valley Office:

900 East Main St, Suite 201, Grass Valley, CA 95945
Voice: 530-272-1732
TTY: 530-272-1764 Fax: 530-272-7793

- Ann Guerra, Executive Director
- Melissa Blackwell, Fix It Coordinator
Program Manager
- Jeff Samco, Assistive Technology Advocate
- Tim Hughes, Independent Living Specialist
- Gary Peterson, Benefits Specialist
- Pam Matteson, Service Team Coordinator
- Ana Acton, Systems Change Advocate
- Jeannie Darling, Operations Manager
- Judi Kirkpatrick, Receptionist/Data Entry
- Irita Warner, Financial Manager

Marysville Office:

508 J St., Marysville, CA 95901
Voice & TTY: 530-742-4474
Fax: 530-742-4476

- Claudia Hollis, Branch Manager
- Angie Paras, Administrative Assistant
- Carl McCrary, Assistive Technology Advocate/
Independent Living Specialist
- Gina Yang, Independent Living Specialist
- Daniel Crawford, Fix It Program Coordinator

Member,



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