

## FYI

**Fargo – Intro to Photography Class**  
**Wednesdays 7-8:30pm for four weeks**  
**beginning February 28, 2018**  
 Freedom Resource Center  
 2701 9th Avenue So., Fargo, ND  
 Call Diane or Abbey at 478-0459 to register

**Fergus Falls – Bingo**  
**February 20, 2017, 10:30-11:30 A.M.**  
 125 W. Lincoln Ave. Conference Room  
 #3, Fergus Falls, MN  
 You must register to save your spot!  
 Call Marie at 218-998-1799

**Art/Craft Create your own. Open House style – you pick what you make!**  
**March 23, 2018, 1:30-3:00 P.M.**  
 125 W. Lincoln Ave Conference Room  
 #3, Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
 You must register to save your spot!  
 Call Marie at 218-998-1799

**Jamestown – Meditation Flags**  
**February 15 & March 1, 1:30 – 3:30** at  
 419 5th St NE Jamestown, ND. Pre-  
 register by calling Beth at (701) 252-4693.  
**March 22, April 5 & 19 1:30 – 3:30**  
 Journal Class learning various styles of  
 journaling and make your own journal.  
 419 5th St NE Jamestown, ND. Pre-  
 register by calling Beth at (701) 252-4693.

**Wahpeton – Bingo**  
**March 15, 1-3pm** at the Hughes Shelter  
 1004 Hughes Drive Wahpeton. Pre-  
 registration requested by calling Joyce at  
 701-672-1648.

**Moorhead – Bingo**  
**February 16, 1:30** at Eventide  
 Community Room 1333 7th St So.  
 Moorhead. Pre-registration requested by  
 calling Tiffany at 218-512-1101.

## Freedom In Action Connects People and Community



Maddie Dunford

She had to go to Freedom In Action (FIA). They were making tile and sharpie coasters. She admitted to being anxious about the trip, which she would take by herself. During the last surgery she stopped breathing, and they had to do an emergency tracheotomy.

Maddie, 68, is raising her grandson, age 12. She has worked with Freedom numerous times in the past on school advocacy issues.

Having few family, Maddie appreciates the opportunity to go to FIA. She noted the Thanksgiving dinner, because it was like a family to her. “We get to try something new –

Maddie Dunford of Fergus Falls had one important thing to do before she left for Rochester for surgery on her throat for the fifth time.

everybody is in it together. We laugh about it, and everyone is friendly and supportive. It’s just been something I’ve really enjoyed. It’s all positive; the help I’ve gotten. It’s really good, helpful, and available.”

FIA is a monthly social and learning experience that takes place in each community where Freedom has an office. Various types of activities are held, many times at the specific request of the participants. Some classes, such as drawing and painting, are held for a few weeks in a row. The benefits are easy to see.



Christina Kast & Nate Hisek

Christina Kast, 19, and Nate Hisek, 22, are a couple from Wahpeton. They both felt the need to get out of the house more, meet people,

and be healthy. Christina had been going to FIA events for a while. She

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convinced Nate to go with. He says it has made him feel less depressed, where he used to just sit at home and watch movies.

They say FIA is a much more positive group than most. They are really looking forward to the two-part series making vision boards. Being involved with FIA has opened up the world and made them feel much more positive.



Cindy Flatt

Cindy Flatt of Jamestown has soon been living in the community for a year. She spent time in a nursing home before that, following a stroke. She lost

her ability to speak, and now uses an iPad for communication. Cindy loves FIA. It's a chance for her to meet new people. The best part for her is trying new things like container gardening, weaving, and photography. That one was her idea. She even made placemats for people for Christmas.

Cindy, 58, continues to make progress with her independence. "It's great to live in the community again," she said.



Mary Marshall

Mary Marshall of Moorhead is the best recruiter FIA ever had. She tells everybody about it in her Eventide Living Center. Mary, 74, has

her own apartment and drives around

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## From Where I Sit

### Staying Optimistic in the Midst of Adversity

My sister and I went out shopping just before New Year's Eve. We decided to play a little game: count the number of people who looked happy. In about two hours time we saw exactly two. That's it, and one of them was a teller at one of the stores who was probably being paid to look that way.

So here we all were, getting ready for one of the happiest and most optimistic holidays and everybody looks all gloomy. Did we look happy? Hard to say. It was really cold that day, and I don't do crowds very well. However, at least I was conscious of it. It's easy to get caught up in negativity. All we need to do is turn on the TV news or some talk show. Things seem out of our control. I can certainly dwell on my own issues, from a new wheelchair that came with parts I didn't order, to a van that once in a while decides not to work properly, to lingering health issues.

But one thing I did during this cold snap is simply to be thankful. I'm thankful that I have a nice warm house and plenty of food (and a bit of wine too.) I'm thankful for as many TV shows at my disposal that I would ever want to watch. I have friends I can call and pick up on conversations that have been going on for 40 years. I have enjoyable hobbies. My family is close and very supportive. I have wonderful coworkers and board members.

I've also been working on something called acceptance and commitment.



Nate Aalgaard,  
Executive Director

It's a theory of simply acknowledging that certain feelings or situations exist, without trying to solve or fix them. It's simply noting their presence. The other part of this is to decide what your values are and live them every day. It isn't easy, and I will admit to getting negative at times. But it is, I believe, helpful.

So how do we relate that to what we do here at Freedom? Many times our relationship with the people we work with starts with them telling their story. Sometimes that's all it takes, because nobody's ever really sat down and tried to understand where they're coming from. Then, simply acknowledge the way things are. Next, find out what's really important to that person and help her/him with options for how to accomplish that goal. There's something very powerful about being in control of your own decision-making.

So every turn of the calendar gives us hope and optimism that this year will be better than the last. Let's go out there and make it happen.

### Disclaimer

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# Meet Freedom's Board Members

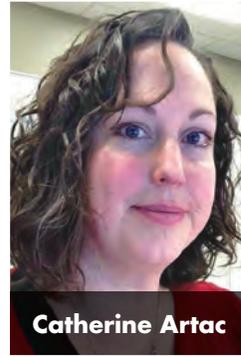


## Dan Holte

Dan is originally from Parkers Prairie, Minnesota. He and his wife, Sue, live in West Fargo. They have two daughters and three grand kids. He worked as a Barber/Hairdresser in Fargo for 22 years. He then worked as sales manager in furniture sales in Fargo until retiring due to disability in 2013.

Dan was introduced to Freedom through the Peer Mentoring Program, pairing people up with others who have or are going through similar changes. He said: "It's a very helpful program, helping individuals who are trying to deal with their new situations: (1) being disabled; (2) not working; or (3) getting a fresh prospective on their new life."

On why he is involved with Freedom: "The people are very helpful. They listen to me, and give me tools and ideas on how to deal with the new normal. Giving back to the community has always been important to me. Being on the board allows me to give back to the community in a unique and special way."



## Catherine Artac

Catherine, her husband Chuck, and children Elizabeth, 12, and Jacob, 9, live in Fargo. She works as an Instructional Designer and Technologist at MSU – Moorhead. She is originally from Alexandria Minnesota.

Catherine was recruited for the board by another member, Greg Toutges. "Greg and I are colleagues at MSUM where we are both founding members of our campus's Universal Design for Learning & Digital Accessibility Committee," she said.

"I appreciate that Freedom emphasizes empowerment. The focus of Freedom's networking and support is about helping people to know their rights and connecting them with services that help them to remain as independent as possible. We take a community approach to helping and empowering each other to better our community. Through serving on the Board I hope to help Freedom continue this mission - helping individuals and bettering the whole community. I also appreciate the friendships I am making in the process," Catherine said.

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town quite well. What she really likes is getting out and being with other people. She loves what FIA does. "It helps people communicate," she said. She is looking forward to bingo in the near future.

"Freedom is a very, very good program. I'm glad it's here," she said.



Marilyn Stensby, Lisbon, started working with Pam Foertsch about four years ago when the office first opened. She called for some information on a rent issue. Marilyn, 64, loves taking care of kids. She's also come to love FIA. She regularly works with Pam to plan events.

For several years, the people in Marilyn's apartment building didn't interact much. FIA has brought the

8 to 10 people per month together and helped them get to know each other. They now look forward to it. Marilyn said, "Freedom is real helpful. It's good to talk to someone. I really wish people would call more often."



Karen Wilson is the life of the party at Fargo FIA. Karen, 27, credits FIA with building her self-confidence and sense of security. "It's like a family--kind, nice to you, and welcoming here," she said.

Karen has participated in many different events at Freedom. Her favorite ones are anything about art, including an extended drawing class, and journaling. Karen has a couple different cleaning jobs. She also spends time hanging out with her friend Calvin, and buying and selling things at thrift stores, garage sales, and through eBay. She is looking forward to a trip to California to visit some relatives. Her hidden talent is stand-up comedy, where she goes by the name The Don.

FIA is not one of Freedom's required core services. However, it helps individuals achieve independence and community integration—Freedom's mission and vision. FIA is supported by community donations. It is a value-added program that is enhancing people's lives.



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*“Helping people with disabilities live  
more independently over 25 years”*

Go to [www.freedomrc.org](http://www.freedomrc.org)  
& click



**Make a difference** in your community! Help us increase independence for people with disabilities by donating to Freedom Resource Center on **Giving Hearts Day, February 8th** at [givingheartsday.org](http://givingheartsday.org).

## What's Wrong With This Picture?

The ramp may appear to be too steep. It is less than the 1/12 maximum slope allowable. The hand rail is not compliant with guidelines. There is no edge protection along the side of the ramp, and a step exists at the bottom. The top landing is not 60 inches long and doesn't provide 18 inches of space on the latch side of the door. There is no accessible route from the bottom of the ramp to a sidewalk or parking space.

