



## Enhancing Disability Independence

### Services Animals and Emotional Support Animals: What is the difference?

by Emmanuel Parage

Service and Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) can greatly increase the ability of people with disabilities to live more independent lives. Nowadays, working animals can provide a much wider spectrum of services to a much larger variety of disabilities. Service Animals are no longer limited to guide dogs for people who are blind or have low vision. As training techniques have progressed, so have the tasks entrusted to service animals. Dogs can help supplement a failing sense such as smell, vision or hearing and can also help detect critically low blood sugar for people with

diabetes, and help keep their handler safe in case of seizure or psychiatric episode or help a person with low mobility have greater independence.

The growing population of working animals has also brought confusion and raised questions about the differences between Service Animals and ESAs. How do their rights and protections differ, what type of animals can they be, where can they go and so on, are frequent questions.

It is important to distinguish between Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals (also called Therapy or Companion Animals) as they are not the same thing and the rights and protections for each are different and covered under different entities.

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**If you would like to receive the digital copy of this newsletter, email [aa@tilinet.org](mailto:aa@tilinet.org)**

## Are you looking for meaningful, fulfilling work *with* benefits? We have it!

### Outreach/Volunteer/ Youth Coordinator - Full-time, regular

Outgoing, highly organized, self-starting “people person” sought to initiate and operate programs for: outreach, volunteers and youth with disabilities. Compensation: \$14—\$16/hr. DOE.

### Office Manager -Temporary

Manages day-to-day Human Resources and administrative operations. 4 days/32hrs wk through Sept. 30, 2019, with the possibility of becoming a regular position

*Excellent medical, dental, sick leave, vacation and holiday (12 + 2 floating) benefits.*

*For information on how to apply, application and position descriptions go to:*

*[www.tilinet.org](http://www.tilinet.org)*

**OPEN UNTIL FILLED**

**People with Disabilities strongly encouraged to apply.**

Alternative format will be provided upon request. EOE.

## Assistive Technology Spotlight

by Juliannah Harris

# Leash Luggage



Do you find yourself without enough pockets to carry all your service dog equipment? Leash Luggage might be the answer for you. This handy bag will “Velcro” to most leashes or harnesses with ease. The small pocket has room for an identification card and keys. The large pocket fits treats, clickers, and other necessary service items. There is also a poop bag dispenser

built in the large pocket which works with most pick-up bags. The bag is priced at \$15-\$18 plus shipping and handling and can be purchased online at <https://www.leashluggage.com/> .For more information about this or other

**Assistive Technology items, please contact Assistive Technology Coordinator Juliannah Harris at (707) 445-8404 or email [juliannah@tilinet.org](mailto:juliannah@tilinet.org)**

Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed two new employees – **Caroline Cox** – who is now the first smiling face you will see at TCIL. Caroline has assumed the position of Administrative and Program Support Specialist after we sadly had to say goodbye to **Ignacio Bilbao** who left to return to school and eventually start his own business, but who has just joined the TCIL Board of Directors. *Photo of Caroline*



**Charlie Bean** and **Elizabeth Stebbins** have both been out on extended leave. Elizabeth returned to the office January 22<sup>nd</sup> - with new baby pictures! She has resumed her duties as the AT Assistant.

To help us get through Charlie and Elizabeth's leave, **Brian Pike** has joined the TCIL team temporarily. He has been assisting Juliannah with AT and whatever else was needed around the office. Now that Elizabeth has returned, Brian has moved into the advocacy position until Charlie's return and will continue to help out however needed. *Photo of Brian*



Also leaving us is **Emmanuel Parage**, our incomparable Outreach/Volunteer/Youth Coordinator who is moving onto greener pastures. We wish him *bonne chance!*

We are currently recruiting to replace Emmanuel and fill a temporary Office Manager position so we hope to introduce you to new TCIL staff in our next newsletter!

## New Board Officers

Thanks and congrats to the outgoing and new officers of TCIL's Board of Directors: **Donnice Hildreth** - outgoing President, **Kevin O'Brien** - incoming President and outgoing **Vice-President**, **Devva Kasnitz** - incoming VP, **Scott Baker** - continuing Secretary and **Joannah Harris** - continuing Treasurer.

## Governor Gavin Newsome's First Proposed Budget: Impact on Disability Related Issues



On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, California's new governor Gavin Newsom released his first proposed budget. Every new governor announces in January of their first term what they intend to do with the budget. During the first two weeks of May, usually a "Revised Budget" comes out. Between January and May, there are hearings on almost all the issues/cuts that are proposed in the Governor's first budget. It is during those months, that we can make our issues heard loud and clear.

Below are a few highlights from this year's proposed budget; a complete summary of the proposed budget can be found on the Governor's website at <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2019/01/10/governor-newsom-proposes-2019-20-california-for-all-state-budget/>

**In-Home Supportive Services Program** - This budget would permanently restore the 7% cut to allotted hours. Previously, for example, if

you received 80 hours a month of IHSS services, the 7% cut took away 5.5 service hours.



*Official picture of newly elected Governor Gavin Newsom*

### **Electronic Visit Verification "EVV" -**

Due to the federal mandate for all states to have EVV by January 2020, the budget proposes an increase in monies to fund changes necessary to put EVV in place in California. This includes enhancements to California Case Management, Information, and Payrolling Systems. (Currently, the estimated caseload in the program is 564,000 recipients).

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Legislative Update

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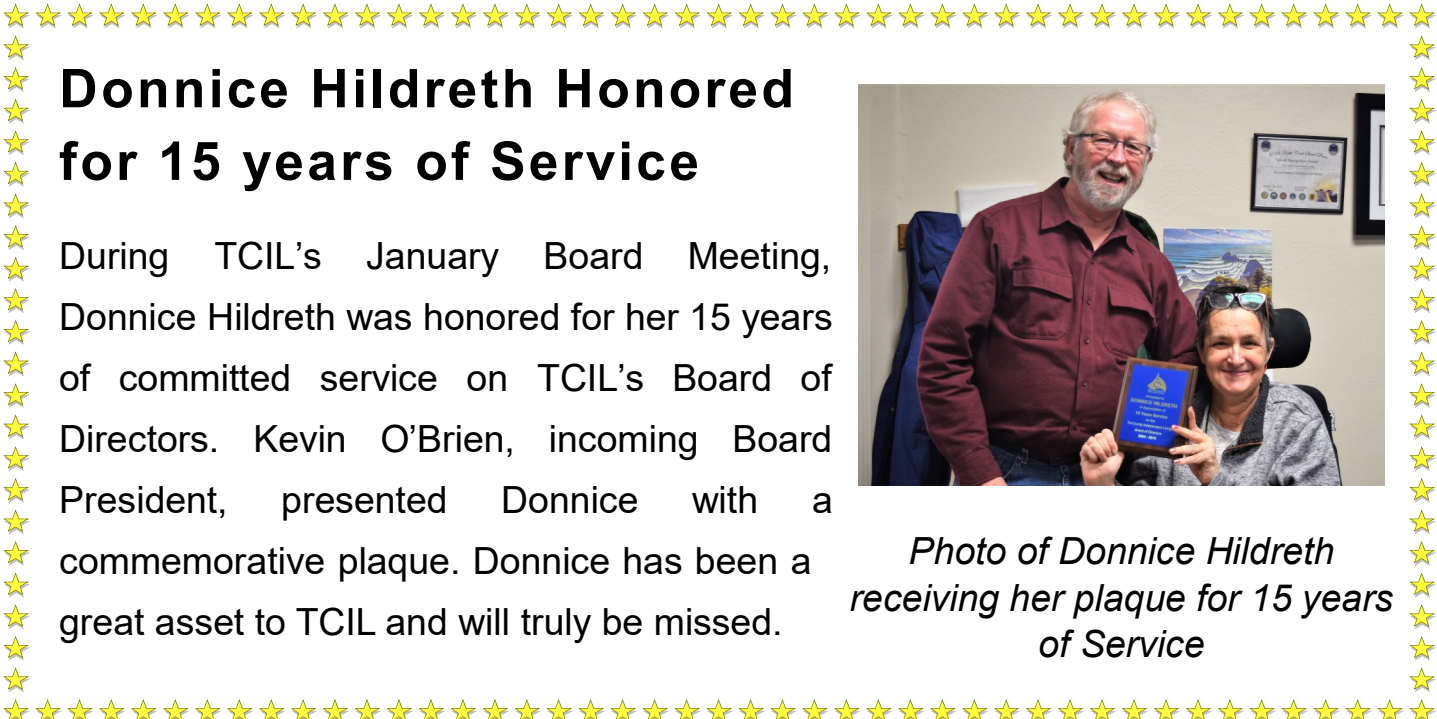
**Full-Scope Medi-Cal Expansion for Undocumented Adults** - The budget proposes to expand full-scope Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented adults, resulting in additional costs of \$3 billion.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** – This budget does not include any increase in SSI for recipients. Neither does it restore cuts made to the benefit amount in 2009. However, the budget does make the “Hold Harmless” program permanent. This program was established so that SSI recipients may also receive SNAP benefits.

**Mental Health** - the budget proposes additional funding across various

programs to establish enhanced mental health services. The additional funding includes \$500 million to build emergency shelters and supportive housing for homeless mentally ill persons.

Mid-February is the deadline for new bills to be introduced. TCIL will be posting any new bills that present issues affecting the disability community on its Facebook page as part of its community education and collaboration efforts. If you know of a bill that affects the disability community that you would like us to inform people of, please **contact Cindy at (707) 445-8404 or Cynthia@tilinet.org.**



**Donnice Hildreth Honored for 15 years of Service**

During TCIL’s January Board Meeting, Donnice Hildreth was honored for her 15 years of committed service on TCIL’s Board of Directors. Kevin O’Brien, incoming Board President, presented Donnice with a commemorative plaque. Donnice has been a great asset to TCIL and will truly be missed.



*Photo of Donnice Hildreth receiving her plaque for 15 years of Service*

## Guest Opinion

## What are your Elected Representatives Doing for you?

by Steve Coach, Guest Contributor and a disability community advocate

California's seniors and people with disabilities have some serious political concerns, and they vote. I have come to expect that it is often not popular to champion these Americans. They do not often garner a great deal of media attention. But every year an increasing number of Americans become retired as seniors, and every year there are new Americans who are unfortunately added to the ranks of the disabled.

While matters of housing, personal rights, safety, quality of life, and economic survival and security are daily matters of concern to these Americans, they seem too often to get swept behind more highly visible issues of media concern.



*Photo of a young woman amid a dispersed crowd holding a sign: "Feel the power of the disability vote"*

government they deserve," make sure that you deserve to be well and properly represented. After all, isn't that what we elect our representatives for? If our elected representatives will not concern themselves with California's senior and disabled populations, who will?

Every year I look to see if our elected leaders are taking seriously the needs of *all* of their constituents, and not just the ones that get the most media attention.

In the upcoming elections, vote for people that have shown a real interest in your concerns and who have done something about them.

Make sure you have really looked out for your best interests. The next time you hear, "People get the

## Humboldt County Community Disability Resource Guide *Now Available*

TCIL has a new approach to a directory - designed specifically to address low vision, dyslexia, ADD, cognitive, or other impairments that impact being able to access a traditionally formatted directory. Our new, updated Humboldt County Community Disability Resource Guide, which lists Humboldt County organizations offering resources for people with disabilities, services description and contact information, is now available.

TCIL has begun distribution of this Guide throughout the county including Eureka, Arcata, Fortuna, Ferndale, Garberville, Willow Creek and Hoopa. Plans are underway to distribute to all Humboldt County libraries (Reference Section), most Senior and Family Resource Centers in the county and locations in Redway, Rio Dell, Blue Lake, McKinleyville and Orrick.

Do you have a disability that makes it difficult or challenging to use a traditionally formatted directory to programs and services? Do you work with people who do? If so, TCIL's new Resource Guide is available electronically on the TCIL website at [tilinet.org](http://tilinet.org), at the Department of Rehabilitation, Area 1 Agency on Aging, United Indian Health Services, the Willow Creek Resource Center, the K'ima:w Medical Center or come by our office at 139 5th St., Eureka to pick up a hard copy.

### COMMUNITY DISABILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

HUMBOLDT COUNTY



[tilinet.org](http://tilinet.org)

FIRST EDITION

*Photo of cover of TCIL Resource Guide*

## Upcoming Events

**February 20th, (Wednesday) 1pm to 3:00pm - Building Bridges.** TCIL brings together up to 30 different organizations in a roundtable collaborative, networking event to share information on their respective programs that serve people with disabilities. Limited to professional representatives of local organizations. For registration and more information, contact [HUDSON@tilinet.org](mailto:HUDSON@tilinet.org).

**January through May (weekdays)** College of the Redwoods offers free Living Skills Classes for people with disabilities, such as Basic Computer Skills, Life Management and Career Preparation, Functional Money Skills, Community Resources and Social Opportunities. Classes are held in Eureka Downtown. Easy registration on site or call 476-4520 or email [adult-ed@redwoods.edu](mailto:adult-ed@redwoods.edu) for information.

**February - Variety of free monthly events** for various sensory abilities and organized by Family Advocating Autism Now (FAAN) Eureka:

**Open Swim** at the Arcata Community Pool starting on February, 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Open Gym** at HealthSport Fortuna Gym starting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Sensory Screening** at Broadway Cinema Starting February 10<sup>th</sup>.

Contact FAAN for more information by email [info@humboldtfaan.org](mailto:info@humboldtfaan.org) or visit their Facebook page for all the events: [facebook.com/faaninfo](https://www.facebook.com/faaninfo)

\*\*\*\*Please DO NOT contact the venues regarding these private events\*\*\*\*

**Free Baby Sign Workshops offered every second Saturday of each month** at the Humboldt County Library, 1313 3rd Street, Eureka, from 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM.

## Upcoming Holidays at TCIL

The TCIL office will be closed the following holidays:

**Lincoln's Birthday** - Tuesday, February 12th

**President's Day** - Monday, February 18th

**Caesar Chavez Day** - Monday, April 1st

### OFFICE HOURS:

Mon—Fri

8:00 am – 4:30 pm.

Closed for lunch

12:00 – 12:30 pm.



## Joannah and Tilden's Happy Story

By telling my story, I hope to share my experiences working with a guide dog and inspire others with low vision. I have been low vision all my life, I was born 3 months early and the oxygen they gave me to survive damaged my eyes. I view my world through a fuzzy lens, and I can't see the details others take for granted. Through my years of experience in this "low vision world," I have learned to trust guide dog Tilden and let him take the lead when appropriate.

I was in the middle of finishing my undergraduate degree when my vision began failing. I found myself running into things, missing curbs when I traveled. It took



*Photo of Joannah, smiling and standing, and Tilden, sitting, looking at each other*

time; eventually I learned to rely on a white cane. However, I always felt this was such a difficult way to get around - constantly bumping into the world and having to discover what lay afoot.

A year later my sister got a guide dog and I was amazed. She floated gracefully down the street and weaved effortlessly around obstacles and people. Then, on a cloudy Humboldt day, she let me "test drive" her dog on a walk around the block. I was hooked. A seeing-eye dog was definitely in my future. Within the week, I had my application into Guide Dogs for the Blind. It would be a year wait, but my blonde surprise was worth it.

My surprise would come in the form of a 60-pound yellow Labrador retriever named "Tilden." Tilden has an angelic face, sleek round belly, and his eyes look like they have mascara on them. I quickly fell in love with my new companion but learning to trust my new partner came with its challenges.

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I remember one of my first days training with Tilden at the Guide Dogs campus. The instructor gave me a blind fold to wear on a walk. I was paralyzed with fear. I just got my dog, how would I trust him? Also, I wanted to use the vision I did have to get around and wasn't it silly being blindfolded. When the instructor came around to Tilden and I, my heart leapt. I took a deep breath put the blindfold on and told Tilden "Forward." I walked what seemed endless blocks when to my amazement we made it back to where we started! I was shocked with no vision at all I had made it back. I stared for a long time at Tilden proudly wagging his tail in triumph and knew despite what vision challenges I faced I would not face them alone. I would have my four-legged friend close by. Over the years he has allowed me to have the confidence to do many new things that my sight would have otherwise hindered.

Tilden also inadvertently got me involved in advocacy. As a handler, it is important to be well educated on access rights. In the few instances when I have been refused service, 90% of the time I have

been able to resolve the issue through education.



*Photo of Tilden looking up to the photographer seemingly happy*

Currently, I am pursuing my master's degree in mathematical computation at John's Hopkins University and hope to teach at the university one day. In my free time, I serve as a community advocate and Treasurer on TCIL's Board of Directors. As Treasurer, I help manage the budget, *I am a numbers gal after all*, and most importantly I give a voice to the low vision community. As Tilden and I look forward, I see nothing but great things as we conquer our next chapter in life.

# Building Bridges



Tri-County Independent Living is hosting its collaborative gathering, *Building Bridges*, for local service organizations who work with people with disabilities, on Wednesday, February 20th, at the Sequoia Conference Center Annex. In Eureka.

This will be the fifth year TCIL has held this event. In a friendly roundtable environment, a representative from each of the 30 organizations in attendance will present a two to three minute summary of their programs and services for folks with disabilities, and/or changes and accomplishments over the past year.

Tables will be available for participants to share their organization's brochures, literature and materials with others.

Each participant will be provided at the event with a Building Bridges Directory

published by TCIL that includes a one page description of each of the participating organizations including the organization's mission, services and new programs. This directory will also be provided electronically to each participant and will be published on TCIL's website. We have been told by many they find this to be a "go-to" resource for them.

This is a great opportunity for the agencies involved because we rarely have the time to meet with each other face to face and network. If you are a local organization that works directly with people with disabilities, we have a few seats still available and would love for you to participate!

**To RSVP, or for more information, please email [HUDSON@TILINET.ORG](mailto:HUDSON@TILINET.ORG) or call (707) 445-8404.**

## Service Animals

The new ADA rules define “service animal” as “any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability”. Service Animals are usually professionally trained to help people with disabilities by performing a certain task such as seeing, hearing, mobility assistance and many other services. Service Animals are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).. However, Service Animals are not required to be professionally trained; even their handler can be the trainer.

In addition to dogs, miniature horses have become legal service animals as well. No other animal, by law, is considered a Service Animal. An animal in training to become a Service Animal is not yet considered a Service Animal; it must be trained before it is taken into public places unless local law permits.

A Service Animal must be under its handler’s strict control by voice, hand

gestures or any other means, at all times. A Service Animal must be on a leash, harness or tethered, unless doing so would interfere with its ability to perform its task or work, or if its handler’s disability prevents using a leash or a harness.



*A person with low vision having a walk with their service dog*

With few exceptions, Service Animals are allowed to go in any public place their handler goes – restaurant, theater, arena, shop, school, hospital, handler’s place of employment or residence, campus, gym, train, bus, airplane, etc. – anywhere except a religious establishment unless State law provides otherwise. .Service Animal access to planes is governed by the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA), not the ADA .

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Only if admitting Service Animals would fundamentally alter the nature of a service or program, or if the animal is out of the handler's control or not housebroken, can Service Animals be prohibited. If the Service Animal is being disruptive or is out of control and the handler does not effectively control the animal, staff can ask that the animal be removed.

If it is unclear whether a dog or miniature horse is a Service Animal, in a public place where animals are not allowed, an employee of the public establishment can ask: 1) Is the dog or horse a Service Animal that is required because of a disability? and 2) What work or task has it been trained to perform? The employee cannot ask that the animal demonstrate its task(s), inquire about the kind of disability the person has or request documentation about the dog or horse. There are individuals and organizations that sell Service Animal "certification" or "registration" documents online. These documents do not convey any rights and cannot constitute proof that the

animal is a Service Animal.

*A person with low vision is navigating an airport thanks to their guide horse*



### **Emotional Service**

#### **Animals (ESAs)**

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) describes animals that provide comfort just by their presence. As they have no special training to perform a specific task they are not considered Service Animals. Although not Service Animals, ESAs are not considered pets either. They assist people who have mental health or emotional disabilities, or who have emotional components to serious physical conditions. ESAs are therapeutic pets, usually prescribed by a licensed therapist, psychiatrist or doctor that helps a disabled person with emotional difficulties or with loneliness. They may include various types of animals.

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Generally, business owners are entitled to refuse to allow ESAs to enter their business. Under the ACAA, airlines are required to let passengers travel with their ESAs without requiring the animal be placed in the cargo area, as long as the owner provides their doctor's written verification that the patient needs the animal for emotional or psychiatric support. Likewise, under the Fair Housing Act, ESAs are allowed in housing even when a no-pet policy is enforced. The ESA's owner cannot be charged extra for the ESA.

The topic of Service and Emotional Support Animals is vast, the questions are numerous and the exceptions can be misleading. If you would like more information or to read further about the difference between Service Animals and ESAs and their respective rights and protections, visit our website at [tilinet.org](http://tilinet.org). You can also come talk to us at TCIL's office, 139 5<sup>th</sup> St., Eureka.

## Personal Assistant Services

by Donalyn Sjostrand

Sometimes the difference between independently living in the community or living institutionally is having a Personal Assistant (PA). A PA can assist a person with a disability do all of the things necessary to live independently from cooking, shopping and cleaning to personal hygiene care, dressing and ambulation.

It can be difficult to find a PA in Humboldt County, especially when on a limited income. TCIL is working to change that. Until now, requests for referrals for PAs by clients has been on a one-on-one basis. TCIL is changing its services in

this arena into a structured and comprehensive Personal Assistant Referral Services Program.

The new program will have three basic components:

**Education:** TCIL will offer trainings and resources to persons with disabilities who desire to obtain the services of a PA, referred to in this Program as the "Employer", on how to evaluate, interview, check references and background information, select, hire, pay, manage, supervise and terminate a PA.

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**Personal Assistant Services**

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TCIL Ready-to-Use Employer Packets will be available for potential Employers which will contain guidelines, resources, and examples of a Code of Ethics, application, contract, timesheet, letter of termination, 1099 form and other tax forms to aid them in the PA hiring and management process. TCIL will also offer inter-active educational workshops on PA topics for potential Employers. We have already added to our Lending Library books that can be borrowed now for free on selecting, hiring and managing PAs. Referrals to training opportunities will be available for PA candidates who want to acquire, or increase, personal assistant skills.

**Registry:** Through the TCIL PA Referral Registry, Employers and PA candidates will be able to connect with each other. TCIL will build the Registry by actively seeking applications from potential PAs who will be required to submit an application, resume and a completed background check in order to be considered for placement on the registry. Initially, this service will be available through the TCIL office in

Eureka. However, the plan is to eventually have the registry available online to serve Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity Counties.

**Support:** TCIL staff will be available to support employers through all stages of the process - to answer questions, direct them to resources or assist them with communication or conflicts. Employers can also choose to meet with potential PA candidates and interview them at the TCIL office to afford them a neutral location and access to support from TCIL staff during the process.

TCIL plans to add a new section to its TCIL website on Personal Assistant Services that will offer an array of resources - both links and downloadable articles, guides and forms.

TCIL's staff and Board are diligently working on the details of this exciting Program. If all goes well, we hope to launch it within the next 90 days. If you have immediate need for resources on the topic of PA services, call us at (707) 445-8404 and we can tell you about the resources we have now that we can make available to you.

**Tri-County Independent Living**  
139 5th Street  
Eureka, CA 95501



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**Eureka, CA**

**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

This newsletter is intended for persons of all ages with all types of disabilities, their families, caregivers and others interested in issues related to independent living.

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Donalyn Sjostrand

RespectAbility—published quarterly  
by Tri-County Independent Living

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