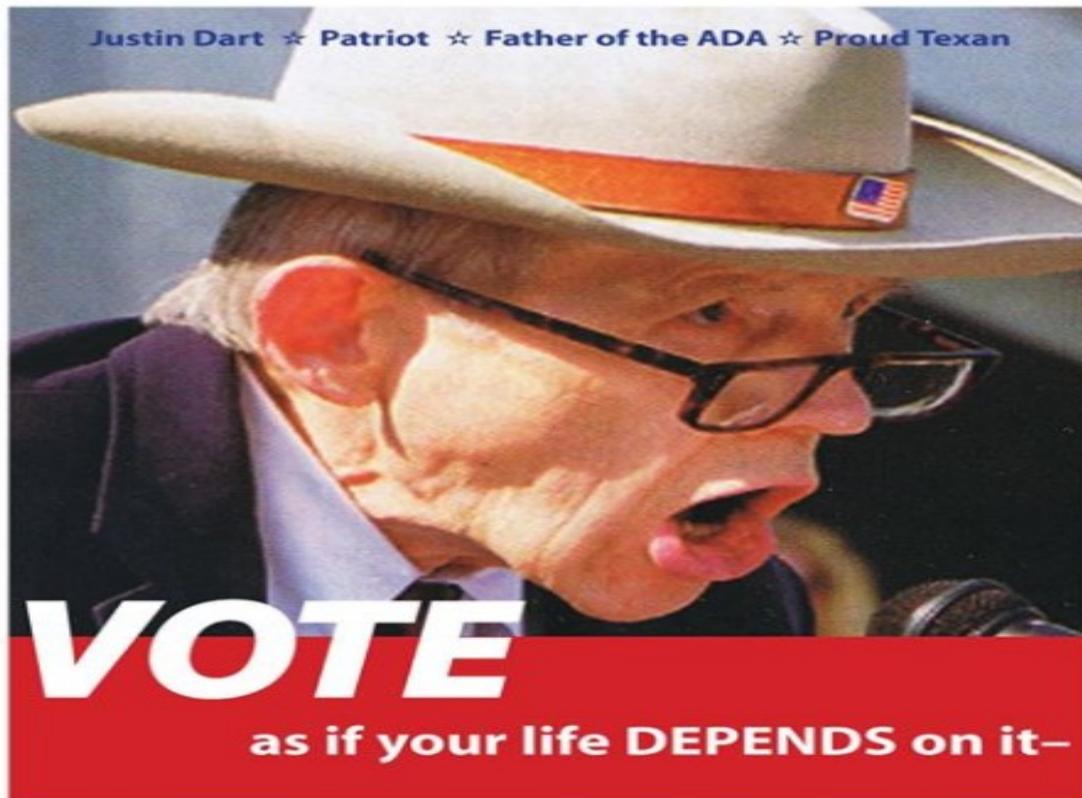




# UPWARDLY MOBILE



## JUSTIN DART, FATHER of the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT SAYS



### Because it DOES!

Blue Ridge Independent Living Center  
1502B Williamson Rd. N.E.  
Roanoke, VA 24012-5100  
[www.brilc.org](http://www.brilc.org)



## DMAS EXTENDS FLEXIBILITIES

Below are two updates regarding flexibilities that will **now continue until January 26, 2021** or until otherwise directed by Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS).

1. The flexibility for face to face requirements for Service Facilitators, Care Coordinators and Support Coordinators, regarding routine and supervisory visits, evaluations, assessments, re-assessments, risk assessments, person-centered planning meetings, annual level of care evaluations, VIDES, and SIS can continue to be done telephonically or through video-conferencing. If the health, safety or welfare of an individual necessitates the visualization of the individual and their surroundings, this can be done in person or through video-conferencing.

2. For parents of children under age 18 and spouses, the flexibility to continue providing personal care/personal assistance services for reimbursement will now continue through January 26, 2021 or until otherwise directed by DMAS. Please remember though, a parent or spouse cannot be in both roles of an Employer of Record and a paid attendant.



**UPDATING ADDRESSES** - As lives and circumstances may change, please remember to let your Service Providers and your local Department of Social Services know of any change in your address. Thank you.

## IMPACTED BY COVID-19?

Has COVID-19 impacted your ability to live independently?

Has your income been reduced due to COVID-19?

Are you unable to leave your house because of COVID-19?

Are you unable to pay your electric or other utility bills because of COVID-19?

Are you unable to get the groceries you need because you can't leave your house?

Have you been unable to get the support you need because of COVID-19?

Do the limited number of minutes in your phone plan keep you from staying in touch with your doctors, family and friends?

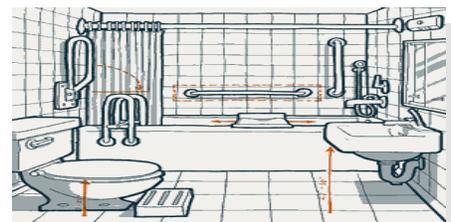
If you can answer, "yes" to any of the questions above, the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center might be able to assist you. Contact us at 540-342-1231 or VA Relay 711.



## HAVE A DISABILITY? NEED HOME MODIFICATIONS?

Are you a person with a disability? Would a home modification help you to remain independent in your home? BRILC might be able to assist you.

Want to learn more about this program? Contact us at (540)342-1231 or VA Relay 711.



## SUCCESS STORY

By Bill Duncan

I first met this individual in the Spring of 2017. He was an engaging, energetic gentleman who was proud of his service in Vietnam. He was also proud of his new home which had been acquired with the budget counseling, homeownership education and low-interest financing provided through another local non-profit. The only thing his new home lacked was an accessible bathroom. Due to spinal injuries, the effects of heart disease, and COPD, the consumer found it difficult to use his shower-tub combo without risk of falling.

He contacted BRILC about the Granting Freedom program funded by Virginia Housing. The consumer and BRILC staff began to work on a goal of the installation of an accessible low-step walk-in shower. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons this went on for one and one-half years. The biggest problem was finding a contractor who would accept the program restrictions and travel to Alleghany County to do the work. Understandably, the consumer became totally frustrated. He contacted us to cancel his goal, close his file, and vocally expressed his disgust with the process.

In the Fall of 2019 after developing a relationship with a contractor who would work under the program restrictions and in Alleghany County, BRILC staff decided that it was time to re-approach the consumer to determine if his needs had been met. Surprisingly, he was receptive to working on his goal. He said that he had some surgery scheduled and that the low-step walk-in shower would help him a lot. With a new contractor on board, we proceeded full-steam ahead. Unfortunately, then the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted those plans. It all took longer than expected. However, the project was funded and recently completed. The consumer reports that: "It suits me perfectly," adding, "I love it." It goes to show that sometimes good things come to those who wait!

As stated earlier, the consumer is a veteran of the Vietnam era. He was awarded numerous medals for his actions in combat. In fact, he continued to fight the enemy after being wounded. For that, he is under consideration for the Congressional Medal of Honor.



## BRILC YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM

We are currently looking for youth with disabilities between the ages of 17-24 who had an IEP and have completed high school. We will assist youth with transition from high school to college and/or employment by providing peer mentorship, goal planning, and providing a youth group support meeting. Please contact Shay Ruff, Youth Transition Coordinator, at (540) 342-1231 or VA Relay 711, or email: [sruff@brilc.org](mailto:sruff@brilc.org) for more information.



# ADA2020

## CELEBRATING **30** YEARS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

On July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. Blue Ridge Independent Living Center's (BRILC) Executive Director was there for the signing.

This landmark civil rights law prohibits discrimination by local and state governments, provides standards for public accommodations and commercial facilities, protects against discrimination in the workplace, and ensures equal access to healthcare, social services, public transportation, and telecommunications.

To recognize the 30th anniversary, BRILC reached out to the City of Roanoke and requested a proclamation. On Monday, August 3, Vice-Mayor Joe Cobb virtually presented the proclamation to BRILC and a handful of individuals with disabilities.

While we have come a long way as a country towards providing individuals with disabilities with the opportunity to live, work, and play in the community, there is much that remains to be done. Join us as we advocate for our rights!



## HEROES OF THE COMMUNITY

I had an experience on April 28, 2020 I thought would happen some day but dreaded it if and when it did. Ben eloped from the home. Ben is 16 years old and has down syndrome with very little verbal communication. Ben decided to try to leave the house on his bike, travel down our road and several blocks away. We were thinking he tried to find me and my friend who had just taken off for a neighborhood walk. Ben’s dad was at home and had just checked on him in the back yard. Things happen quickly. Ben took his bike on a journey.

Heroes like local residents and the Botetourt County Sheriff Department called our cell phones to find us. A good Samaritan stopped to assist Ben out of the road. It’s my understanding this family knew Ben from school.

Botetourt County Sheriff quickly accessed the school registry and found our phone numbers. My husband was called and he took off to meet Ben and a local Botetourt County Sheriff. What could have turned out very grim was very rewarding to know our Botetourt County Sheriff’s department not only responded but thought outside the box to find us and get Ben picked up. No scratches, no injuries, no alarm, community extending help to community needs.

Thank you one and all! I am forever grateful.



## WHAT TO DO WHEN DEBT COLLECTORS CALL

Learning about your rights can help to prevent problems and avoid scams during this stressful time. If you have outstanding debts, you can use the [When debt collectors call](#) tool from CFPB’s [Your Money, Your Goals](#) financial empowerment toolkit to be prepared to respond to debt collectors (see website address below).

The tool will help you to:

- Take action to verify whether the claim is valid
- Know how to dispute the claim if you do not owe the debt
- Know what to do next if you owe the debt



This information can help you be prepared to avoid scammers who may pose as debt collectors to get you to pay on debts that you don’t owe.

If you are experiencing a financial hardship, contact your lender to learn about your options. These programs may include allowing you to temporarily delay or adjust some payments. In some cases, you may be allowed to avoid interest charges. You may also be able to avoid negative credit reporting if you enroll before you become late on your payments. Your lender may also offer longer-term programs, such as work-out plans that allow you to pay back debt over a set period of time at a reduced interest rate. CFPB has more information on how to protect your credit from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, including new information on the CARES Act.

Many lenders are facing high call volumes because of the pandemic, so the wait time may be long. You can also check your lender’s website to see if they have information that can help you, ways to communicate electronically, or online applications for hardship programs or accommodations.

If you experience a problem with a financial product or service, you can submit a complaint with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), PO Box 2900 Clinton, IA 52733-2900, send all other correspondence to Consumer Financial Protection Bureau 1700 G St. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20552 or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau 1900 K St. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006, [www.consumerfinancial.gov](http://www.consumerfinancial.gov), or (855)411-2372.

## COME JOIN US BY ZOOM!!!

**B**RILC has a support group for all people with disabilities. Both men and women of all ages are invited to join us on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. We discuss issues or concerns that you might have, socialize, play games, and have outings to restaurants, picnics, movies, and more. The group is run by the members. We hope you'll join at the next meeting. If you have any questions, contact Jon Weems at (540)-342-1231 or VA Relay 711.



## NEED/HAVE EQUIPMENT

**B**RILC receives many calls from individuals who need equipment but do not have the resources to buy it. BRILC accepts donations of medical equipment that is in good repair and usable, adult briefs, commode chairs, rolling walkers, and transfer benches, shower chairs, walkers, and wheelchairs. If you have such equipment, please call BRILC at (540)-342-1231 or VA Relay 711. All individuals donating items will receive an acknowledgement letter that can be used for tax purposes. Thank you!



### For Your Contribution to BRILC

Dreama Ayers, Nancy M. Clark, Nancy T. Clemons,  
Terry J. Deacon, Mary Doering, Lonnie Gill, Charles Harlow,  
Dotty Hopkins, Ann M. Journell, Anita B. Kelly,  
Angela McCadden, Diana B. Sheppard, Patricia V. Smith,  
Linda Thurston, Joan Tyree, Grayson Thompson,  
Susan Williams



“If you're not hopeful and optimistic, then you just give up. You have to take the long hard look and just believe that if you're consistent, you will succeed.”

John Lewis

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EDCD Service Facilitator
- \* **Bill Duncan**  
Independent Living Coordinator
- \* **Jon Weems**  
Independent Living Coordinator
- \* **Shay Ruff**  
Youth Transition Coordinator



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