



New Directions, June 2025 Newsletter



The four Day Services on the Genil campus in Maynooth, came together recently to celebrate St John of God week with a Multicultural Day, turn to page 4 to hear all about it!



We cannot keep up with the group who attend Uaisle Day Service, always on the go...



The individuals from Leap Day Service checked out a new expo at The Point Village!



Service Users from Las Granadas enjoyed a Tina Turner singalong recently at the theatre.

This month we focus on a very important support which underpins New Directions, we look at **'Support for Personal and Social Development'**.



Here is a detailed breakdown of what is meant by Personal and Social Development;

Personal Development: **Self-awareness-** Understanding one's own emotions, thoughts, and characteristics. **Self-esteem and confidence-** Developing a positive view of oneself and one's abilities. **Independence and self-regulation-** Learning to manage one's own needs, make choices, and handle challenges. **Personal values and goals-** Forming a sense of personal values, morals, and aspirations.

Social Development: **Social skills-** Learning how to interact with others, make friends, and cooperate in group settings. **Emotional understanding-** Developing the ability to recognise and understand both one's own emotions and the emotions of others. **Empathy-** Understanding and sharing the feelings of others. **Social responsibility-** Recognising one's role in society and contributing positively to the community. **Relationships-** Forming and maintaining healthy relationships with peers, family, and others. **Communication-** Effectively communicating needs and ideas, and listening to others. **Conflict resolution-** Learning how to handle disagreements and conflicts in a constructive way.

Introducing Hans Widmann (Staff Member) & Jamie Jones (Service User)



Hi, my name is Hans Widmann, I have been working for SJOG in Kildare Day Services for the past 15 years. Currently, I'm based in Pathways in Maynooth. When I started in SJOG, I had some experience with the concept of Social Farming and I was very happy that I was supported by SJOG to bring Service Users from Horizons to my friend Vincent's organic farm in Co. Meath. Supporting people to go to an environment where they can experience nature, animals, good food, a chat and a singsong seemed to be a good idea! One of the first Service Users to come along was Jamie Jones.

Jamie loves farming so much that he is still going, after 15 years. Jamie loves all the animals, dogs, pigs, Shannon the donkey and especially the cows, and he gives a great hand caring for all the livestock. Jamie's farming experience is a great example of what can be achieved by supporting people in a person-centred way. When Jamie is on the farm, he is in exactly the place he wants to be. In work, I am passionate about our music project, gardening and supporting people to go for a cycle on our Trishaw. Outside of work, I like spending time with my family, reading, writing and going busking with my trumpet.

Multicultural Day



The four Day Services in Maynooth got together to celebrate St John of God week by hosting an amazing Multicultural Day, on Wednesday 18th June. At the Genil Campus, there are staff and service users from a total of 11 different Countries.

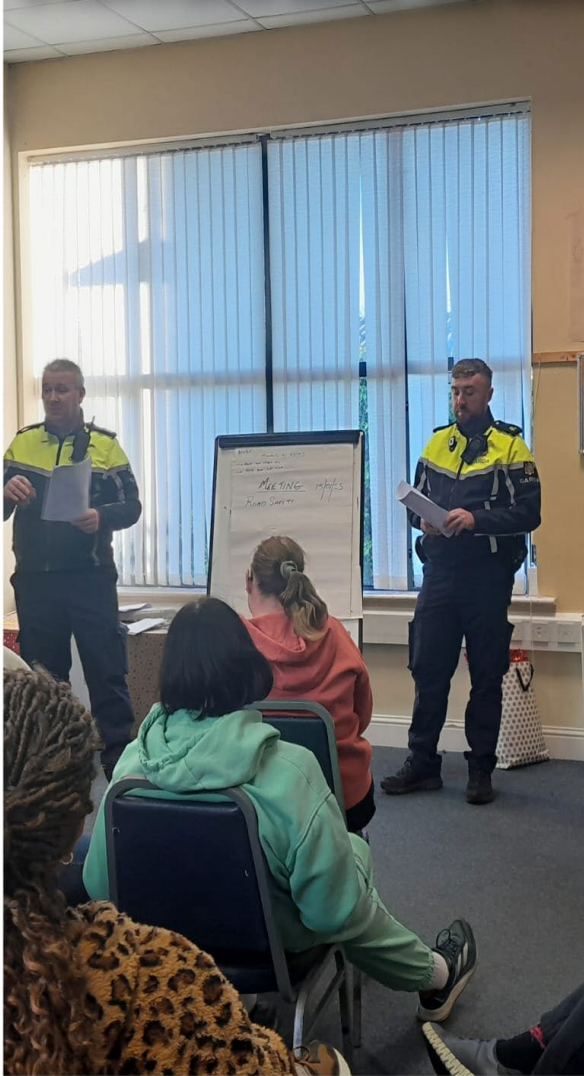
The group celebrated Ireland, The Philippines, Croatia, Poland, Sudan, Germany, France, Nigeria, Romania, India and Malawi.

Rise staff member Daisy said “We are like a big happy family from all around the World and we all presented food from our countries to share our cultures and traditions. The weather was amazing but the food was even better.”

Thank you Daisy, I think my invitation got lost in the post 😊

Maple Walk Day Service

COMMUNITY GARDAI VISITING MAPLE WALK



The local Crumlin Gardai popped into Maple Walk Day Service in Walkinstown recently to host a talk on Community Awareness and Safety. The duo received a very warm welcome and the Men and Women enjoyed their presentation, there were plenty of questions at the end. Well done on linking in with your local community for more education and awareness.

Thursday 3rd July 2025

CHOICES CAKE SALE



MUSIC BY GER & ANN-MARIE FURLONG FROM 11.30AM



IN AID OF THE IRISH CANCER SOCIETY



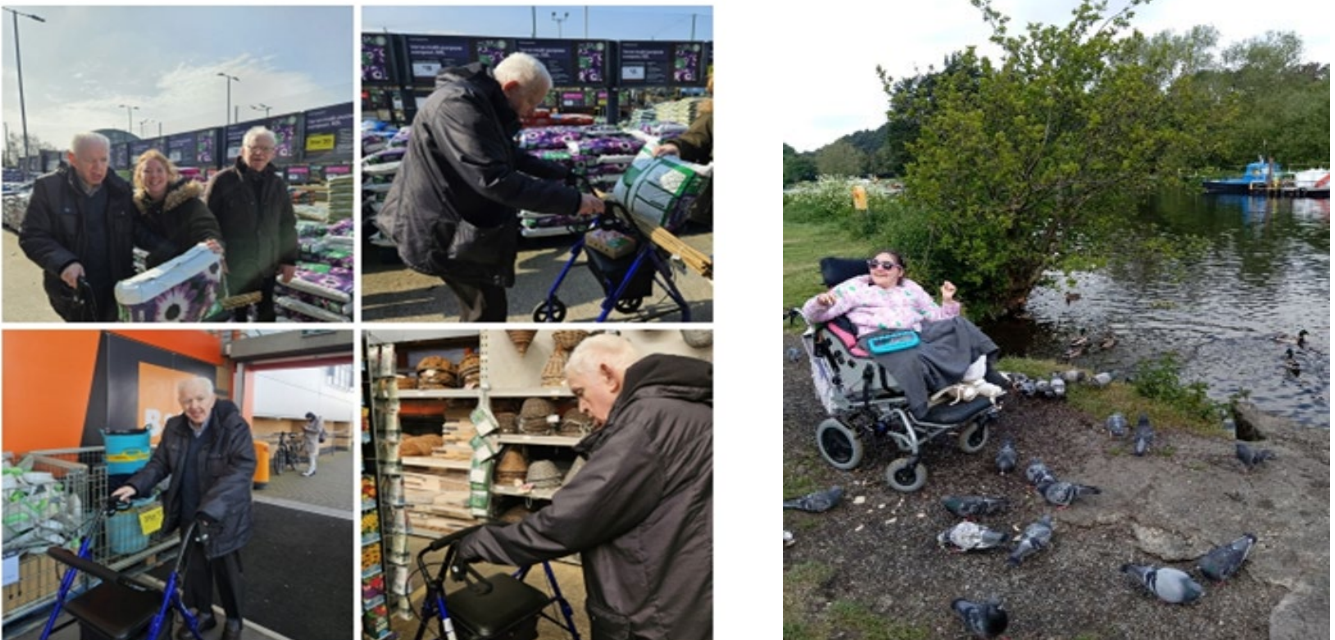
Choices Day Service W23 R594

10.30AM - 13.00PM

Uaisle Day Service



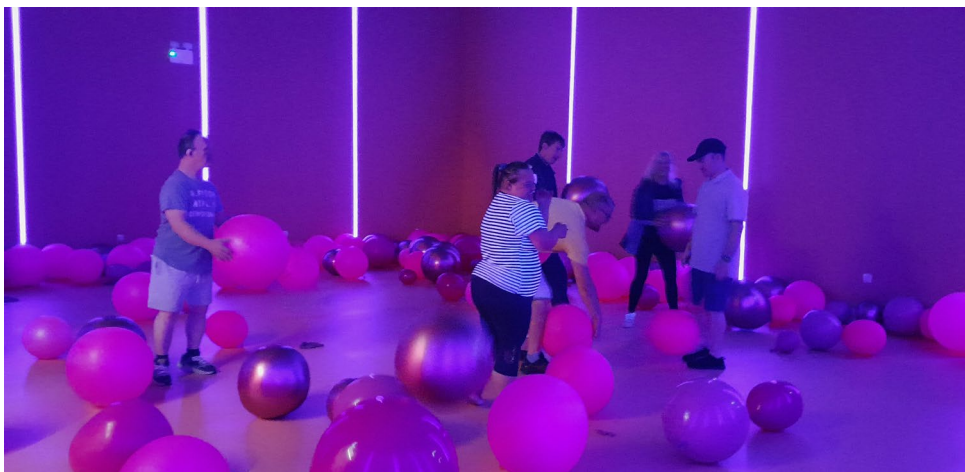
Summer calls for community excursions and those who attend Uaisle Day Service have definitely embraced these warmer months. The group in Ballyfermot continue to use public transport as much as possible. Recently they visited the botanical gardens, war memorial grounds, a local community centre, they went shopping for gardening supplies from local garden centre and had lunch in a Dublin 12 café ([Ian's Kitchen by Mateo](#)) in Crumlin.



Leap Day Service



Dream Point the Experience recently landed in Dublin and some of the Men and Women who attend Leap Day Service in Maynooth, went along to check it out. The event has 5 different big rooms and each room is carefully crafted to create unique experiences that will transport you into a world of imagination. There is a Balloon Room, Projection Room, Ball Pit Room, Inflatable Room and a Glow in the Dark Corridor... For more information, please visit dreampointexperience.ie



Las Granadas Day Service



A group from Las Granadas attended the recent Tina Turner Show at the Bord Gais Theatre on June 12th and went for dinner afterwards at the Old Mill in Tallaght.

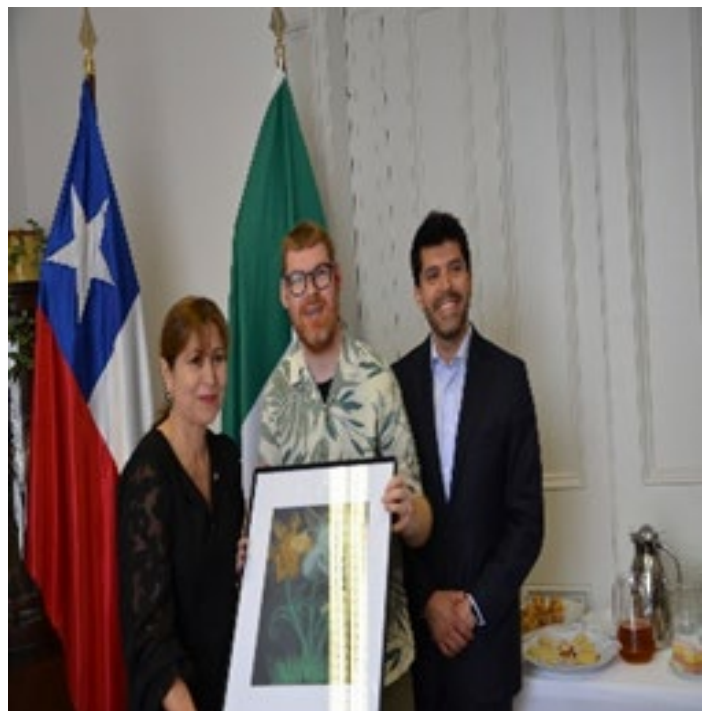
The rain did nothing to deflate the mood of the group as they had so much fun and found the show to be magical, brilliant, everything you could want in a theatre production.

All who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thomas Barry had a 40th Birthday and wanted to celebrate with peers, he picked the show and asked his peers if they wanted to go along. Awesome idea Thomas!





Las Granadas staff and Service Users had another amazing day out recently, a group visited the Chilean Embassy in Dublin. The outing aimed to promote community inclusion and during the visit, the group learned about the role of an Embassy, the importance of Diplomacy, and the geography of Chile.



Art Vision Day Service

Community Spotlight: Making a Difference. One Bottle at a Time

Meet Daniel, a familiar face in our local community (Celbridge) who's been turning small actions into big impacts. Over the past few months, Daniel has taken on a meaningful mission collecting and returning plastic bottles using the reverse vending machine at the local supermarket.

What began as a simple activity has grown into a daily routine filled with purpose. Armed with a reusable bag and a keen eye for recycling, Daniel has taken it upon himself carefully picking up discarded plastic bottles around the Day Service in Art Vision. His dedication not only helps keep our environment to be cleaner but also inspires others to think twice before littering.

The smile on Daniel's face shows that he enjoys what he is doing and also likes keeping the place tidy. Staff members have noticed the difference not just in the Day Service, but in Daniel's growing confidence and sense of pride. His initiative demonstrates the value of inclusive community engagement, where everyone has something positive to contribute.

Returning bottles may seem like a small act, but for Daniel, it's a powerful way to be part of something bigger. He's showing us all that sustainability and inclusion go hand in hand. Daniel has begun to replicate this activity at home and takes great pride in collecting the bottles at home with his dad at the weekend and returning them to the local supermarket.

Thank you, Daniel, for your continued efforts and for reminding us that every bottle counts.



Love is Love in Maynooth



Doris Delaney and myself travelled to Maynooth earlier this month to present to a group of Service Users from two Day Services on the Love is Love presentation. The group were so engaged and accommodating as we discussed topics such as gender, identity, acceptance and feelings. If you would like to book us in to present in your location, please email me on Donna.hughes@sjog.ie



Windmill Day Service



Windmill opened their doors to families on 6th June for a coffee morning. Donna Hughes presented a piece on New Directions with a focus on goals for person centred plans and ensuring that the service users voice remains central in all we do. Patsy Fitzsimons presented a piece on Assisted Decision Making. Patsy also provided information flyers and booklets for everyone on the day. The feedback was very positive from families. Aoife McGovern joined us to catch up with parents and see some of the great things happening at Windmill.

Chisom and Megan created a lovely slideshow of all the experiences, trips, projects, education, certificates from colleges and competitions e.g. Trinity College Cancer Research Project Poster, in which Aileen, Morgan and Ken were finalists. Vivian made very tasty Nigerian snacks for everyone. Hannah was on refreshment duties. Ken and Aileen were our fashion models on the day, wearing their creations with support from Erika.

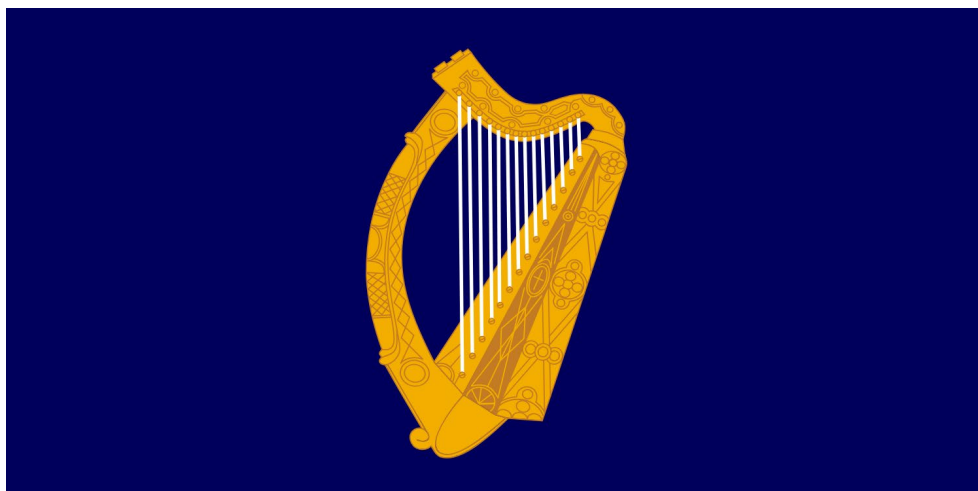
Thanks to all staff in Windmill for all the preparation and hard work on the day. A very warm welcome was extended to everybody, and a great time was had by all.

Thank you to Paula Whelan for writing this piece.

Hazelwood Day Service



Thank you to Collette Quinn, a staff member from Hazelwood Day Service for sending in this wonderful photo. A group attended a garden party with the President of Ireland and his wife this month, it was a Blooms Day Party. This is Niamh Fortune and Nicola Browne from Hazelwood with Collette in the photo.



Elvira Day Service

Some of the Service Users from Elvira Day Service in Bluebell recently attended an Ashton Drum Session. These pictures look like it was a seriously fun jamming session and I hope to hear more about it the next time I visit. Great job everyone at Elvira.



Menopause Event



SJOG recently hosted a Women's Wellbeing event at Tessa House, on June 4th. The inclusive Health & Wellness Information Day focused on menopause and breast health, created especially for women with intellectual disabilities, their support staff, and families. Together, we shared stories, asked questions, and created a safe space where every woman felt heard, informed, and supported. A huge shout-out to Lisa Condron from the Callan Institute and Shirley Conlon from St John of God DSE, who along with myself, were able to make this event happen. 💜

Special thanks to our inspiring speakers: Laura Dowling, Pharmacist & Women's Health Advocate [fabuwellness](#), Paula Smith, [Breast Cancer Ireland](#) and Dr. Amy Johnson, Clinical Psychologist, St Michael's House. Everyone has the right to understand their body and make informed choices. This event was about making that right become real for everyone. Thanks to our generous sponsors for the goodie bags and refreshments: [Evergreen Healthfoods](#), [Offbeat Donuts](#), Rathmines Pharmacy and Sales Cosmetics!

This is just the beginning of many more similar events so please watch this space....

Reach Day Service



This June, Reach Day Service in Celbridge is proudly supporting Pride Month! A time to honour love, diversity and the right to be yourself. Cuinn and Alan are representing the young men and women who created this beautiful Pride poster, showcasing their artistic talents and belief in inclusion for all.

This month we are reminded that everyone deserves to be seen, heard and celebrated. Their work is displayed in our community space, sparking important conversations and bringing colour and joy to all who see it. Happy Pride!

Thank you so much to Holly for sending this in and well done to Cuinn, Alan and all at Reach, this article really lifted my heart <3 The write-up ties in well with our newsletter theme this month around Personal and Social Development. Well done to all!

Pathways Day Service

A big congratulations to Florina Conroy from Pathways Day Service in Maynooth, she recently celebrated moving into her new house in Celbridge and absolutely loves it there. Wishing you many happy memories in your new home Florina, you look so happy in your photo 😊



Tessa House Event



The Day Services in Tessa House (Ash Tree, Mountain View and Hazelwood) had a collective BBQ recently when the weather was extremely good. There was a great spread of burgers, hot dogs, salads, ice cream and plenty of lemonade to wash it down on the day. Huge thanks to all the staff for their hard work and the atmosphere created by the Service Users, over 50 people showed up. Tunes were banging out loud on the day! A big thank you to Vivian for the write-up and photos.



Our Place Next Step

We are delighted to share that our Our Place project has also been awarded a grant from Rethink Ireland!

This exciting project will run in partnership with Carlow Arts Festival and Delta Services. Its aim is to support people with lived experience of disability in creating their own Sound Art pieces, telling their stories through sound, music, and creativity. These sound pieces will be exhibited at Carlow Arts Festival for everyone to experience.



Even better, this project includes paid employment for up to 5 people supported by St John of God Community Services, who were co-artists last year. They will be hired as co-facilitators and co-designers, helping to lead the project. Some of these individuals were co-artists in the first Our Place project. Now, they are stepping into new roles to support others, share skills, and build independence through creative arts.

This is a great example of how arts and culture can help people grow in confidence, build their skills, and participate in community life.

We're proud to see people becoming leaders, artists, and co-workers. This project shows that when people are given the chance, they can take on strong roles and support social inclusion and independence for others too.

We can't wait to hear the sound pieces and see this amazing project come to life!

Big News Digi Coach Project

We are excited to share that we have been awarded funding from Rethink Ireland to hire 12 DigiCoaches.

This means we can grow our DigiCoach programme over the next nine months. We will work with our partners, Fighting Blindness and Skills for Life Kerry, to train more people with lived experience of disability to become DigiCoaches. A DigiCoach is someone who helps others use technology to support digital inclusion. They help people learn, stay connected, and be more independent.



Some of our DigiCoaches have been working in **primary schools**. Our DigiCoaches have been working with students and teachers to make classrooms more **accessible**. They show how digital tools like Osmo and Book Creator can help everyone learn in a way that suits them.

By working in schools, DigiCoaches are taking on real leadership roles. They are showing others what inclusion looks like and helping young people understand that technology can make learning easier for all.

This work is a great example of how people with lived experience of disability can help build a more **inclusive and independent** future.

Thank you to all our DigiCoaches – you are making a big difference!

Marie Keating Celebration Day

We are proud to share that Patrick Fitzgerald, chairperson of Liffey Voice, was invited to the Marie Keating Cancer Research Celebration Day. This was a special event where people talked about cancer, health, and how to look after your body.

Understanding your health is an important part of being independent. When we learn more about our health, we can speak up, make choices, and take care of ourselves. This helps us take stronger roles in our own lives and the community.



The team at Marie Keating Foundation were very impressed with Patrick's work and ideas. They have kindly agreed to visit one of our Liffey Voice meetings soon to give a talk about health, cancer, and how we can stay well.

We are looking forward to learning more, asking questions, and building our knowledge together. Well done, Patrick, for showing leadership and helping others understand that health matters for independence!



The Next Men's group will occur on Wednesday, the 23rd of July 2025.

If you have any questions or ideas of things we can do, please email Patrick.Fitzgerald@sjog.ie

If you are interested in joining, please sign up using the QR code below.

<https://forms.office.com/e/WhYFxfbbyz>

Mens Group Registration



Liffey Voice Website

We're excited to share some great news – our new Liffey Voice website is live!

- The website is a space to learn about your rights, find out what's happening at self-advocacy meetings, and build your skills to speak up for yourself. This helps everyone in Liffey Services become more independent and take on essential roles in the community.
- You can attend our monthly meetings in person or on Zoom. Everyone is welcome!
- If you care about something related to your rights, please tell us. We want to hear from you. We work together to make things better.
- The website was co-designed by self-advocates and supporters: Karl (our intern), Kehinde, Amy, Patrick, Doris, and Fatima.



Liffey Voices

Self Advocacy group from St John of God Liffey Services



Engage with self-advocacy and empower yourself



Connect with advocates

Diverse advocacy content

Resource library

Engage with advocates

Register



LiffeyVoice Team

Diverse advocacy content

Resource library

Engage with advocates

Explore our Team



Campaign

Empowering advocacy sessions

Resource library

Connect with advocates

Our Campaign

Liffey Voice Meeting



24th July – Online and in-person

28th August – Online and in-person

25th September – Stillorgan – All together

30th October – Online and in-person

27th November – Online and in-person

18th December – Celbridge – All together

Liffey Voice Registration



Thank You for Reading...

One last note, I wanted to let you all know that my 'What is New Directions?' Online Engage sessions will be happening on Thursday, 3rd July at 10am and again at 1.30pm. We will be focusing on the New Directions support around 'Support for Health and Wellbeing'. Thank you again for reading!



I would love if everyone could please continue to send all your good news stories to me, we like to celebrate all the successes happening across Liffey Region's Day Services.

Get in touch

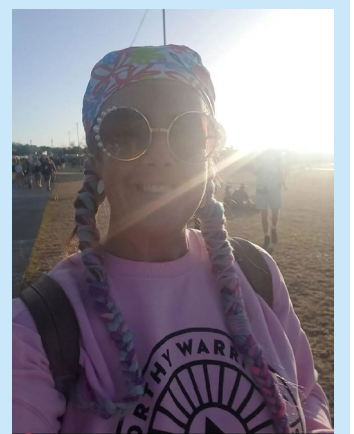
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**st John
of God** 
**Intellectual
Disability Services**

This newsletter about New Directions information was made by Donna Hughes.