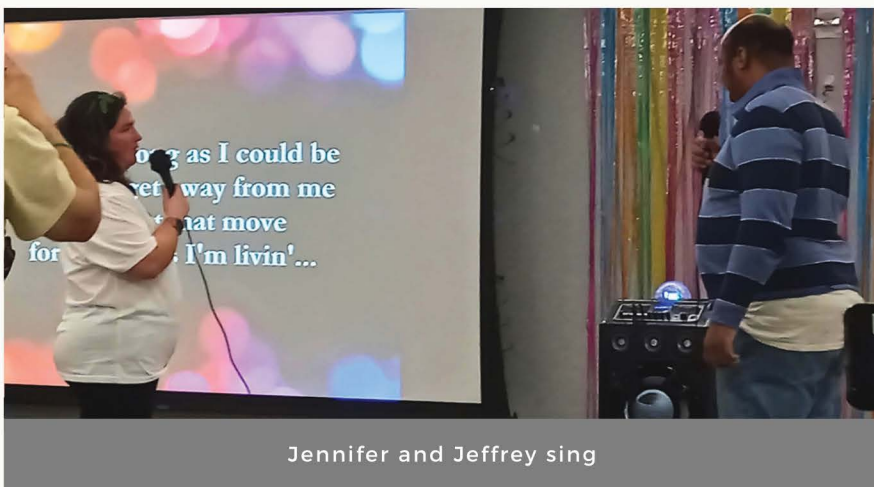


SELF ADVOCATES NEWSLETTER

DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, BE ABOUT IT

KARAOKE AND DANCE PARTY

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD



Jennifer and Jeffrey sing

On Friday March 15th, I went to a Karaoke and Dance Party at the YAI Headquarters in New York City. I took a seat and waited for them to call on me to sing my karaoke song. I met my friends at the party. The karaoke and dance party host is Timothy Allen. I have a disability, but I used my guest pass to scan in before I went to the karaoke party and paid my \$7. I sent my information to my friends for text messages about the karaoke party. They had pizza, snacks and drink at the karaoke and dance party. They said to bring my best singing voice and dancing shoes for the karaoke and dance party. My song is One Love by Bob Marley. I had a good time at the karaoke and dance party from YAI Connections.

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Quentin (left) and Kenneth (right) pose at the Karaoke Party

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JAVITS CENTER

BY JENNIFER NAFTELOWITZ

My article is about the Javits Center. Rene and I went to the Javits Center on Sunday, January 28th to hang out because they were having lots of stuff like the boat show, plus the traveling world, and dog breeds. So Rene and I met up at 1:30 at the 34th Street and 8th Avenue station and we took the M34 bus to the last stop on 12th Avenue. When we got to the place it was like a madhouse going there because it was so crowded, but we got in. When they checked us in they told us to go to the ticket booth and we told them that we just wanted to see different types of traveling things so we asked them how much does it cost. But since we got there late, they gave it to us for free so we just took it and brought it over to the security guard and they scanned us in. After they scanned us in then I told Rene that he could walk around but just try to meet up with me later. So I went over to the tables that I like. I went to see the MSC cruises and the Atlantic City tables so when I got there, I said that you have nice stuff, so I asked them questions. Rene and I had so much fun that we stayed for the whole thing until it was time to go home. So when they were getting ready to close up around 4:00 that is when we started to leave. Rene and I had such a great time together that we said goodbye and we went our separate ways. He went back to Inwood on his train and I went back to Sheepshead Bay on my train.

3 DOMINICANS WITH DISABILITIES REPRESENT

BY ISMAEL NUNEZ

This year, Dominicans and other Latin Americans celebrated the latest addition to the Baseball Hall of Fame, as Adrián Beltré joins fellow Dominicans Juan Marichal, Pedro Martínez, and Vladimir Guerrero, Sr. in Cooperstown, New York. Along with African American History Month, January-February is also Dominican Heritage Month. “We shall overcome” was the anthem of the Civil Rights movement. Here are three Dominicans who have overcome disabilities. *Pa'lante y Adelante!*

Jillian Mercado

As the website BOLDLATINA reported: “Afro-Dominican model and actress Jillian Mercado, who has spastic muscular dystrophy, has blazed a path for other badasses who just happen to have a disability. She has graced the covers of Teen Vogue, Glamour UK, and The Untitled Magazine. She made her New York Fashion Week runway debut for The Blonds, and has appeared in ads for Oil of Olay, Diesel, Target, and Nordstrom. As an actress Mercado has been a part of several productions, including playing Maribel on ‘The L Word: Generation Q’.” To add, CFDA.COM reported that she also appeared in Beyoncé’s merchandise campaign for the ‘Formation’ tour.

Mercado stated proudly in the same article, “I am what I am, and I can’t remove that from myself.” She added, “Take it or leave it, but I’m staying, making it known, and leaving behind my legacy.”

Pablo Taveras

When the USAID online publication did a profile of Pablo Taveras, they stated, “He’s a leader, a brother, an artist, and above all, an advocate for empowering the Deaf community in the Dominican Republic.” Taveras described his struggles in the article: “My parents saw that I was unhappy because I could not use sign language. Luckily, they found another school that did use sign language and enrolled me in there.” After he switched schools, his parents proceeded to learn sign language, providing Pablo and his deaf sister full access to language and information in their household. Pablo learned to give back and help out his community: “I participated in the fight for the rights of young deaf people, to [help them] become leaders and channel their talents to promote various organizations!” He added “Deaf people are capable of being important collaborators in society. We can do anything. We just want a world without barriers.”

Cristina Francisco

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems reported on a proud self-advocate who is also Dominican: “Cristina Francisco is the head of the Disability Alliance for Our Rights (ADIDE), an organization in the Dominican Republic that advocates for disability rights and connects other civil society groups.”

In March 2019 Francisco was awarded the “Everyday Heroines” award from the National District of the Dominican Republic, “in recognition of her work promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and the progress made by the ADIDE-IFES project in sensitizing Dominicans to disability issues. One might say it’s almost like winning the Nobel Peace Prize for peace.” In the same article she was asked, “What project or work are you most proud of?” She answered: “What made me most proud about this project is that we could bring together 32 young people with different disabilities and we were able to interact and develop the activities while taking into account the needs of each of them based on their type of disability – physical, visual, auditory, intellectual or cognitive and invisible disabilities.”

So along with cheering Dominicans when they hit home runs or dance to the tunes of Romeo Stantos and Juan Luis Guerra, let’s also acknowledge the many who give back with pride!

FAMILY CRUISE LINE

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD

We went to Family Cruise Line on Wednesday August 23rd to Thursday August 31st, 2023 last summer from Carnival Cruise. I have a disability, but my mother gave me my passport to travel the world. I learned to take everything out of my pocket before I scan in at the Carnival cruise line. They have movies, club dance, bingo, parties, dining restaurant, concerts, comedy club, swimming pool, arcade games, water slide, gym, free food at the cafeteria, casino, basketball court, performance and spa at the Cruise Line. We went on a Tropical Cruise to Grand Turk, Half Moon Cay and Nassau, Bahamas 🇧🇸. We went to Goldie's Restaurant for lunch in Nassau, Bahamas on Monday August 28th, 2023. We went to the White Clothes Party on the Cruise Line on Sunday August 27th, 2023. I have disability, but I did my bust-a-move and I breakdanced at the party and club dance from Carnival Cruise. I enjoyed myself with my family on the Cruise Line Vacation last summer.



Selection of photos of Kenneth and his family on their Cruise

PRESENTATION AT 150 AMSTERDAM

BY ROBERT CARDONA

Today, several of the self-advocates, myself, and Tim Allen, did a self- advocacy presentation at 150 Amsterdam Avenue at the MSA school on West 66th Street. This was my 1st-ever advocacy speech I everrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr did in this facility. I basically spoke about my earlier schooling years in the general education schools I went to for elementary and high school in Brooklyn- and-the physical and verbal abuse I went through on account of my developmental disability. However, on Saturday, June 4th 1988 I graduated from my general high school with a mainstream high school diploma. I overcame insurmountable odds to get to the level of success I'm at! It's a miracle I survived and got through it.

DOMINICAN HERITAGE MONTH

BY ORLANDO JUAREZ

One of longest events at the beginning of the New Year is the observance of Dominican Heritage Month. It was begun in 2016 by Governor Andrew Cuomo. This event was celebrated this year from January 21st to February 27th. This is a chance for Dominicans to enjoy their food, music, dancing, and fashion events.

The Dominicans began this event with the feast of “La Virgen de la Altagracia” which translates to “The Virgin of Altagracia.” The Dominicans honor The Blessed Virgin Mary as the protective and spiritual mother of The Dominican People. Later, on January 26, they celebrate Juan Pablo Durate’s Birthday. Duarte was the founding father of the Dominican Republic. Duarte founded a rebel group and led the Dominican war of Independence at Haiti from 1844 to 1856. In Queens, The Dominico-American Society of Queens and Caranaval De la Cultura Latina host a celebration for Heritage month. I believe the Dominicans have done well not only in the Dominican Republic but also here in New York. Everyone works together as a community. I am proud of them because I’m also part Dominican.



Orlando shows a Dominican celebration

MY SOON-TO-BE EX-NEIGHBOR

BY ROBERT CARDONA

I'm writing my article on my soon-to-be ex-neighbor of the last 20 years. I reallyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy don't want her to move next month on Feb. 28th- my former super and her family- Caroline Petties!

The day I moved to the building where I currently live at in Flatbush, Brooklyn 20 years ago on Sunday, Oct. 31st, I first met my new neighbor and her family. The day I met her family, they seemed like they had trouble accepting me at first because of my developmental disability, but, after a few short years, the family got used to me. Caroline stuck her neck out for me 16 years ago when the original building management wanted to kick me out of the building because they didn't want to rent out any more apartments to individuals with disabilities. She mentioned that in terms of my relationships with the tenants in the building, that I was- and still am- getting along with everyone and that I didn't bother anyone. She also did birthday parties for me in the back yard of the building.

They are moving out of the building next month on Feb 28th. I DON'T WANT THEM TO MOVE OUT. AND WITH ALL OF THE ISSUES I'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH IN MY HOUSE, AND STILL AM, I ALREADY TOLD THEM-TAKE ME WITH YOU WHEN YOU GUYS MOVE- BECAUSE THE BUILDING IS GONNA BE BORING AS HECK WITHOUT YOU ALL! I WON'T HAVE ANYONEEEEEEEEEEE TO GO TO FOR EMERGENCIES AND I WILL BEGIN TO GET EVEN MOREEEEEEE DEPRESSED AND BEGIN TO BAWL- AS I WILL NOW!

Guys- make sure to not only have friends and family on your side, but develop relationships with whomever-you never know when you may need them!

BLACK PANTHERS: AND THE DISABLED

BY ISMAEL NUNEZ

The Black Panther Party! The Black Panthers were created in October 1966 in Oakland, California. At first it was called “Black Panther Party for Self Defense.” The name was changed to “The Black Panther Party,” usually called just The Black Panthers. Everyone remembers them wearing the leather jackets, the berets, carrying weapons, law books, and their famous saying “Power to the people!” The Panthers provided free breakfasts for children/adults, provided free education class, tenants’ rights help, and at other times when they saw mistreatment of all people of color, LGBT. Whenever there was a rally you knew Panthers were going to be there.

Yet one area no one talks about is the Panthers’ role with Disability Rights.

The website “Independence Now” states “As part of our Independent Living History series and in recognition of February being Black History Month, we recognize a group of unsung heroes in Disability History – The Black Panthers! DISABILITY SOCIAL HISTORY PROJECT reported: “In April 1977, disability activists around the country held protests to fight for the passage of Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act.”

What’s more, Section 504 of the Act states: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, ...will be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”

It was reported that “The 26-day sit-in, the Black Panther Party played a leading support role in providing food for the demonstrators. Over and over again, the disabled protesters credited the BPP with literally sustaining their struggle.”

As one person put it, “(they have been) keeping us alive body and soul.” Corbett O’Toole, a queer disabled activist who participated in the 504 sit-in with other disabled activist stated, “The Black Panthers saved the 504 sit-in!”

The Panthers released a statement on April 8, 1977 on their support and solidarity:

”Along with all fair and good-thinking people, The Black Panther Party gives its full support to Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and calls for President Carter and HEW Secretary Califano to sign guidelines for its implementation as negotiated and agreed to on January 21 of this year. The issue here is human rights – rights of meaningful employment, of education, of basic human survival – of an oppressed minority, the disabled and handicapped. Further, we deplore the treatment accorded to the occupants of the fourth floor and join with them in full solidarity.”

It’s interesting that former FBI Director J Edgar Hoover in 1968 said the Black Panther Party “without question, represents the greatest threat to the internal security of the country.” Then Vice President Spiro Agnew called them ““completely irresponsible, anarchist group of criminals.”

Yet the USA Gov’t had no comment or concern on the disabled! One can see this continues today.

DAD'S BIRTHDAY

BY JENNIFER NAFTLOWITZ

My newsletter is about celebrating my late dad's 77th birthday this Saturday with my mom and our friends. Even though my dad is not here to celebrate, we wanted to do something that he always likes doing. So I had a talk with my mom and our friends last Friday at the bowling alley, and I said why don't we go to a night at the races this Saturday for his birthday? My mom and I agreed to go with our friends and the people from the bowling alley. It was fun and I'm just glad to have people around to celebrate him.

YU-GI-OH 25TH QUARTER CENTENARY

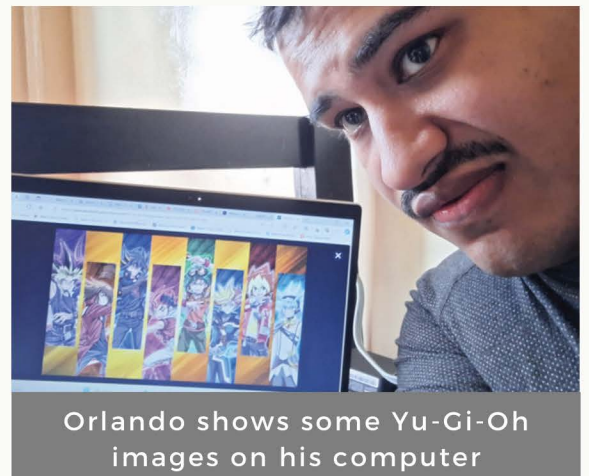
BY ORLANDO JUAREZ

It's time to duel! This year is the 25th anniversary of Yu-Gi-Oh, a famous anime series, popular for being the best trading card game throughout the world. Yu-Gi-Oh has been popular for 25 years when it was first a manga series made by Kazuki Takahashi in Japan. It became famous in anime while it aired in Japan in April 2000. It became even more popular in America in September 29, 2001 when it aired in English. With 224 episodes for 5 years it had 7 more sequels.

In 1999 in Japan, Konami began publishing the trading card game based on the anime game known as "Duel Monsters". They then published the game in America in March 2002. Konami moved on to selling video games, merchandise, and

hosting trading card game tournaments, hosting a world championship event once a year. The world championship event this year will be coming to Seattle, September 7 and 8, with 3 events including an undisputed Championship Tournament and a marathon of the anime series. From February 16th to 18th, during a celebration, Konami hosted a charity sweepstake event to support the "medecins sans frontieres" also known as "Doctors without Borders" a non-governmental organization of French origin that provides humanitarian medical care.

It was such a shame that Kazuki Takahashi was unable to see this event, for he passed away in July 2022, but I know that he's proud that the fans continue to like Yu-Gi-Oh and support his creation. I should know because I enjoyed Yu-Gi-Oh when I was in middle school, in fact my 7th grade teacher gave me a Yu-Gi-Oh booster pack as a gift even after middle school I still enjoy them. Hopefully, the fans will continue to enjoy Yu-Gi-Oh as I do. If I'm lucky, I might make a special Yu-Gi-Oh group and with their help, to have a chance to make and host my own Yu-Gi-Oh event which would be either a tournament, an art gala, or an auction for donations.



Orlando shows some Yu-Gi-Oh images on his computer

CIUDAD TRUJILLO: TENSIONS, BASEBALL STARS, AND A DICTATOR

BY ISMAEL NUNEZ

The year was 1937, A year earlier “THE YANKEE CLIPPER JOE DIMAGGIO made his rookie debut, Lou Gehrig continued his string of continuous games played, the New York Yankees would win the World Series in 1936, leading the way to win three more, 1937, 1938, 1939. In the Dominican Republic Baseball along with Dictator Rafael Trujillo was the talk of the town.

As Callum Hughson stated in his article “Ciudad Trujillo Baseball.” “Like in Cuba, Baseball became a national obsession. He (Trujillo) needed the game to win the hearts of the people.” Yet here are some facts one should know about Trujillo: he was no gentleman! Rafael Trujillo was one of the worst dictators of all time! He was openly racist, especially towards Black Haitians. To add, in 1937 he ordered the massacre of 20,000 to 30,000 Haitians living on the border of Haiti. This performance still continues the dispute between Haitians/Dominicans to this day. Trujillo thought the island/country was his baby! As Writer Averell “Ace” Smith stated from his book on the team “THE PITCHER AND THE DICTATOR” (I recommend the book, great piece of history) “He started naming places after himself. He created a Trujillo province and made his birthplace, San Cristóbal, its capital. Next he had the capital city, Santo Domingo renamed Ciudad Trujillo. He even had the highest mountain in the country rechristened Pico Trujillo” He had complete control of everything business in DR: Just name it --- tobacco, salt, newspapers, sugar, beef, milk. It was reported by the year 1958 his wealth was \$500,000,000! WOW!

To add, Brotha Malcolm J. Pointed out clearly in his article “And let’s not forget that he established quotas that targeted Haitian immigrants by limiting how many could cross the border, and the same year when he’s looking to put this dream team together, he not only supported several of their state-sanctioned killings but even directly ordered the largest mass-murder of Haitians and Afro-Dominicans of Haitian descent in the history of the Caribbean.

Now suddenly, the same man who wanted absolutely nothing to do with blackness, and was willing to eradicate an entire culture of people over the color of their skin and their heritage to preserve some false sense of purity in his nation, would have to place everything—his bid for reelection, his dreams to conquer baseball, basically his chance at total supremacy—in the hands of what he hated the most. He had to turn to black baseball players.” Reminded me of Governor Abbott in Texas, a person with a disability launching anti immigration quotes, yet the best players in Texas Sports teams are people of color! Abbott himself uses a wheelchair!

One can see the only thing Trujillo had no control over was Baseball! Like always he wanted the best. Since he knew the way to get the vote was by showing the love for the sport of Baseball, he went out and got the best. Thom Loverro in his article “WILD PITCHES IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: IN 1937 HE decided to change that. In order to field a team that would be champions of Dominican Baseball League, he raided the Negro Leagues for some of its biggest stars.” He sure did!

As Baseball Reference reported “The Dragones de Ciudad Trujillo were one of the most notable Dominican League teams of the 20th Century. Existing for one year, 1937, the team was sponsored by dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo.” Look at the names of the players! Many of whom are now in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Among them “ Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, James Cool Papa Bell and Perucho Cepeda(the father of Baseball Hall of Famer Orlando Cepeda) Many say it was the greatest baseball team ever assembled.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Their opposing team “Aguilas Cibaenas” also had several notable Baseball Hall Famers: Among them Horacio “Rabbit” Martinez, a shortstop From Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Bats right, throws right. A fine defensive shortstop, average hitter, he had gifted speed, fine bunting. Many who saw him stated, “When you see HALL OF FAMER OZZIE SMITH, Future HALL OF FAMER OMAR VIZQUEL, AND HALL OF FAMER PHIL RIZZUTO who was known as great bunter.”

Martinez was doing the same thing fielding, and

bunting for years.”Martin “El Maestro” Dihigo” Cuban- Bats Right, Throws Right-Considered by many to be the best all around player in the Negro Leagues and in Major League Baseball. Hall of Famers Satchel Paige and Buck Leonard have stated he “He was the greatest player in the Negro Leagues and MLB! He’s the only Ballplayer elected to the American, Cuban, Mexican, Dominican, Venezuelan, and Latin American Baseballs Hall of Fame.

Luis Tiant Senior-Pitcher Throw’s Left was a gifted pitcher. Father of Star pitcher Luis Tiant “who stated he was a much better pitcher than me.” Baseball Hall of Famer and Negro League all star Monte Irvin, “He could’ve been all star pitcher in Major League Baseball.”

Other notable players: Tetelo Vargas he was called “El Gamo” He was called “The Dominican Deer”. Not only fast was also a consistent hitter. As Averell “Ace” Smith reported “In 1953 at the age of 47 that year playing baseball in the Dominican Republic he won the batting title hitting .355! Wow! Vargas is enshrined in the Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican and Latin American Baseball Halls of Fame. Smith stated proudly “He also belongs in the American Baseball Hall of Fame As for the 1937 season: Alan Klein stated in his book “Sugarball(fine book on Dominican Baseball) talking to a Dominican writer who stated “We wound up killing professional baseball here. Although we continued to play amateur ball we spent many years without professional baseball.” In reality a disability! A proud/sad history that never should be forgotten.



The 1937 Dragons de Trujillo

PUPPIES

BY JANICE MCPHILLIPS

Blue Path is an organization that trains dogs to become therapy dogs for children with autism. Since 2016 they placed 50 dogs with families and facilities. The dogs bond to children with autism and help keep them from running away in public places if they get scared. The dogs are also their friends.

They have become partners with the pet supply company Chewy. Two 10 week old puppies, Blue and Luca who are labradors are going to be in Chewy’s corporate office in Boston. Two employees will be foster parents for about a year and a half. The dogs will learn skills like obedience, house manners and how to socialize with people. They will also get to ride the T. (Boston’s subway).

After a year and a half the dogs will go through more training with Blue Path’s professional trainers. They will learn real service dog skills.

The dogs will be placed with families after they are 2 to 3 years old.

DRAGON BALL 40TH ANNIVERSARY

BY ORLANDO JUAREZ

Dragon Ball, the Japanese franchise, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Dragon ball began as a manga series in 1984 by Akari Toriyama and was an enormous success on its manga series and on anime series since 1986. Since then, it became the highest grossing media franchise, and they even sell merchandise throughout the countries including movies and video games. It is a shame that Akari passed away due to a subdural hematoma on March 1, 2024, the fans mourn for him. Still the fans continue to enjoy the Dragon Ball franchise, and this year on the 40th anniversary dragon ball is going to have lots of surprises coming up, 3 to be exact 1, a new dragon ball series is coming this fall, 2. A new dragon ball video game is coming out, and 3. a dragon ball theme park is now in development at the Saudi Ariba, hope those three news might make the fans enjoy the franchise even more and hopefully Akari would be proud on what's going, and maybe I can make an event on the dragon ball franchise.



Orlando shows some of the Dragon Ball characters

MY FRIEND

JENNIFER

NAFTELOWITZ

BY RENE RUIZ

Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most beautiful, best friend in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most lovable woman, best friend in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most happy woman in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most gorgeous woman in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most delightful woman in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most kind woman, best friend in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most respectful woman, best friend in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most perfect woman, best friend. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most greatest woman, best friend in the world. Jennifer Naftelowitz you are the most happiness woman, best friend in the world.

FIRST DAY IN NEW JOB

BY ROBERT CARDONA

My 1st day of work was today, April 2nd at 220 East 42nd Street at the YAI facility in East Manhattan - where I am now officially a YAI employee!

My job title is self advocate in the Easy Read job. I review documents to make sure they are easy to understand for people with disabilities.

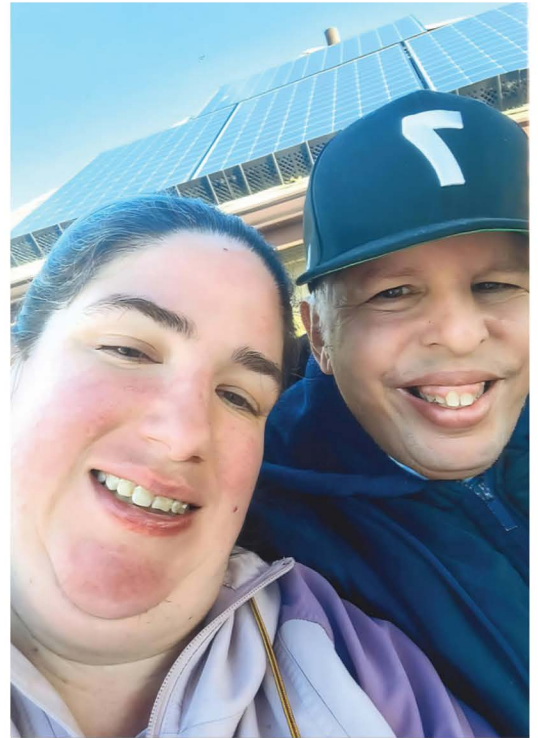
The supervisor who is supporting me now on the job is Johanna Berglein. Today- basically- she gave me a tour of the entire office- where all of the employees sit at their cubicles- and- Johanna and myself also worked on a pamphlet for new staff and individuals living with their families and at the residences to look at. The document is about circles of support and how individuals shouldn't be isolated in their own communities!

All in all- after 4 years of going on interview after interview, doing individual different job links, now-I AM NO LONGER LIKE TOMMY FROM MARTIN-I AMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM EMPLOYED AGAINNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN - HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

FRANCO'S BIRTHDAY

BY JENNIFER NAFTLOWITZ

My article is about celebrating my boyfriend Franco's 46th birthday. His birthday is on April 7th so last week I went over to his house to celebrate his birthday with his mom and uncle and I had such a great time seeing him. I haven't seen him in such a long time. We had so much fun hanging out together. My mom took me over to his house for his birthday. I was so happy to see him. Then we went to Dunkin Donuts and I treated him for a soda and a donut. After that I took him to his favorite store and he wanted to go shopping. When we got done with shopping then we both walked back to his house and had dinner together. So his mom asked him what he wanted for dinner and he said Chinese food. The three of us sat down at the table and waited for the delivery to come. When the food finally came we all sat around the table and had our dinner. I shared my food with his mom and it was really nice. Then the best part came. My boyfriend Franco had his favorite ice cream cake from Carvel and it was so delicious that I wanted to take a piece of cake home but it will melt by the time I get home. After dinner and dessert I stayed over at Franco's for a little bit until it was time for me to go home. I just wanted to say thank you to his mom and family for inviting me over for his birthday.



Jennifer (left) and Franco (right)

LISTENING TO THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

BY JANICE MCPHILLIPS

Some people who are blind or partially blind who weren't able to see the eclipse on April 8, 2024 were able to hear it.

In 2017 Ms. Bieryla, the manager of Harvard's undergraduate astronomy lab, and Wanda Diaz Merced, who is an astronomer and is blind, developed an instrument to translate changing light into musical tones. It's called Light Sound. They have made changes over the years to make it better.

The inventors sent out about 900 Light Sound machines around the country for the eclipse. The machine has a flute sound when there is intense light, a clarinet that lowers in pitch as the light fades, and a drumming sound during the dark period. It can be used with headphones or speakers so many people could hear the eclipse.

VALENTINES PARTY

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD

I went to the Valentines Party at YAI Headquarters from 5pm to 8pm on Friday February 16th, 2024. Mallory Perry sent me an email about the Valentines Party. They had pizza, snacks, and drink at the Valentines Party. I have a disability, but I will find a lovely lady at the party. Terry, Robert, and Allen are DJ Rappers. I learned to make my cookie decoration at Valentines Party. I met my friends at the party. I had a good time at the Valentines Party. I did my breakdance and bust-a-move at the party.



DJ Allan (left image) Janelle, Steve, and Richard (right photo) at the Valentines Party

AN ARTIST FINDS INSPIRATION FROM HER GUIDE DOG

BY JANICE MCPHILLIPS

As a child, Emile Gossiaux always liked to draw. She even charged other children 25 cents each for drawing lessons. She also had hearing loss.

Emile went on to Cooper Union to study art. While still in school she was riding her bike and was hit by an 18 wheeler truck. She went to the hospital with a traumatic brain injury, broken bones and had a stroke. After a while she got better but lost her sight.

She had to rethink what being an artist was. She learned to work with wood and plaster.

Emile is in residence at the Queens Museum on a Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists. She has a one woman show called "Other-Worlding." The star of the show is her guide dog London and how they help each other. The big piece has 3-woman body-dog head sculptures around a Maypole that is made by a white cane and leashes hanging from it.

Emile will have 2 touch tours of her pieces at the museum.

Since she joined the museum, they now have audio descriptions of all of the art work.

Emile Gossiaux's show runs through April 7, 2024.