

PULSEBEAT

News from the heart of Center Club

FALL 2023

Center Club is a Clubhouse for adults with psychiatric disabilities. Since 1959 we have been dedicated to the principles of self-help, peer support, and empowerment. We offer a safe and supportive environment in which members of the program can work towards building meaningful lives, connecting to the larger community, assuming valued roles in the communities of their choice, and ultimately live as independently as possible.

Center Club
 p. 617-788-1000 f. 617-788-1080
 centerclub@baycove.org
 31 Bowker St. Boston, Ma 02114
 Centerclubboston.org



Employment Events at Massachusetts State House

By Kate Fazio, with contributions from Ward Merithew, Nichola Prince-Alves, and Lynne Campbell

In October, the Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities held several events for National Disability Employment Awareness month at the Massachusetts State House. These events were both to celebrate employees with disabilities in the workplace, and to raise awareness about issues faced by these employees. Center Club staff members and members attended four of the five events with topics ranging from Dispelling Myths about Social Security benefits, the Workforce Crisis in Human Services, Opening Doors to Persons with Disabilities, and an Employment Celebration. Nichola Prince-Alves said that the events were "very informative and enlightening" and that she learned about "how to go about getting a job...while disabled." Ward Merithew said his favorite event was the employment celebration "because you find out who is helping disabled people." He described how the company Microtech stood out to him because they had a worker with a disability talk about their job at the employment celebration. He said that

(Continued on the next page)

- In this issue**
- Employment and Education**
- Social Life**
- Life**
- Art & Leisure Halloween**
- Édition**
- In Memorium**

Cover Art: Krikor Nichoson Below: Cheryl awaits for the amusement ride to start at Topsfield Fair



EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION

"they do a good job at helping people with disabilities and made me want to help people with disabilities."

Lynne Campbell felt that the "keynote speakers were positive for change in recognizing people are fully capable to work in spite of disabilities." The events were attended by a variety of community members and legislators, both in-person and via Zoom. They were all catered by Community Work Services. More information, and full videos of the events are located: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/permanent-commission-on-the-status-of-persons-with-disabilit>



Marieta wearing her Primark uniformt

Working at Primark By Marieta Soares and Kate Fazio

I started a new job at Primark at the end of September. Primark is still hiring. They need people for cashier, the fitting room, and positions where you put away the clothes, which they call "running." I love my new job and it is very busy. It took three to four weeks to get hired. The manager told me that I was hired but then I had to wait for the background check, which took a long time. The supervisor calls me "Miss Marieta" and they tell me that I'm doing a good job. I have been learning new things. I have learned Primark's fitting room procedures, and now I am running the clothes. Most of the people I work with are nice. They help out and they let you keep trying until you learn whatever it is that you need to learn. They don't give up on people. I would recommend the job to other members who don't mind a fast paced job.

Applying to Lesley University Written by Robert Sollenberger

I'm attending Lesley University this Fall to study Human Services and attain a Bachelor's Degree by June 2025. The number of steps to apply is many. I need the original transcripts for my major, Human Services, and proof that I'm able to attend class and internship. I've attended several colleges, so the paperwork is a lot. Here is how I'm doing it.

I've attended the Open House at Lesley University and I'm impressed by the pleasant, welcoming, and peppy atmosphere all over the compasses. I saw the Threshold program for students who are disabled and decided not to join Lesley with that program because I feel more able and I need to use the FAFSA, and Federal Student Aid form to attend Lesley. I was impressed by the Open House and the dormitories. Next, I'm waiting for my original transcripts to be sent to the college from the Student Clearinghouse, which keeps most college original transcripts for college admittance.

I start and finish an internship this semester, after I've been helped with the Financial Aid Department, at Lesley. I'll meet with my academic advisor and pick courses and an internship. That will be grand. I hope that I'm accepted soon. Thank you.

Poetry Group Written By Omar Singetah

I love coming to the poetry group on Mondays. It is a way to express myself by reciting and coming up with poems that I would not have imagined outside of the group. The motivation within the room through the prompts Robin provides are always useful to keep the mind going and coming up with words to sew together. I am always eager to listen to my fellow members recite as I take a lot from their poems -I get to hear and see their experiences in that room as if I am watching them from a television, which is always a valuable moment. Everyone is always cordial and attentive to the fellow. The excitement in the room when a beautiful poem is recited is astonishing.

I would recommend the group to anyone interested - a safe space where knowledge is shared through the embellish words of poetry. You will not regret your time attending; it's always here for your development.

SOCIAL

On October 6th, Center Club went on our annual outing to Topsfield Fair. Rides were ridden, cute animals were petted, and treats were eaten.



“It was so awesome to hold a baby chick. It was nice to walk around to see the sights and go on the rides.” - Christine G.



“It was lots of fun. I treated myself to two hotdogs. They were the size of my arm.” -BJ L.



“I love going to Topsfield every year, especially because of the the animals. I love the horses. I like walking around and going to the shops. Every year, I look forward to eating a pastrami sandwich, and like always, it was great.” -Michael B.



“It was fun even though, I came back broke. I won two games. I also had humongous chicken fingers for lunch ” -Rose D; Photo by Michael B.



Bill W. and Gabriel take a ride on the Viking ship

SOCIAL



Left:
Patricia K;
Right:
Clydesdale
horses,
photo by
Michael B.



Cuisine Tasters: tasting the food of the world

October: American pub food
Porters Grill and Bar
173 Portland St, Boston, MA 02114



Does not even deserve one star!

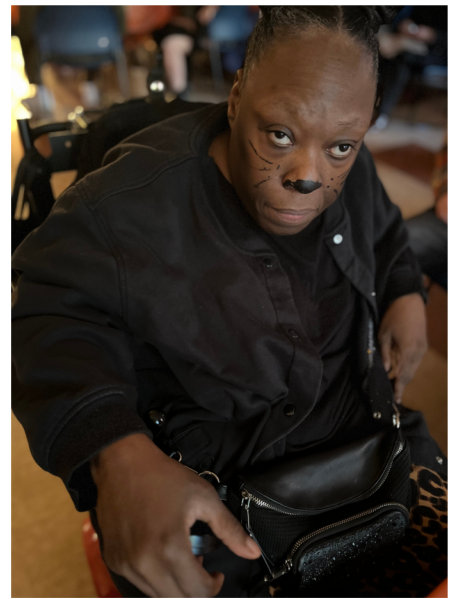
Going to Porters for Cuisine Tasters was a disaster of epic proportions, I have been attending Cuisine Tasters for several years and I had never had a bad experience like this. I got a hint that this might be a problem, since it took so long for any food to be served. My stomach was growling. There were only 3 of us including staff and the first person to receive her meal, got cold food. After a while, I got my food which would have been bad even if it had been cooked the best way possible. I ordered fish and chips, they were around 3 or 4 nugget looking fish pieces encrusted with a lot of breading. They failed to substitute onion rings for french fries, which I had requested due to dietary needs. At this point, the waiter came by and apologized for the poor service and bad food, and told us that he was not charging our meals because the kitchen was having a bad night.



I ate my food and the staff waited calmly for her food. When she finally got the attention of the waiter, he threw off the sentiment that he thought she did not want anything that she had ordered after he had said that he was comping the meals. He then offered her a bowl of soup which was available. She had been dying for a tuna melt and refused the soup. We left there feeling empty and totally disappointed. Although there was a lot of camaraderie, we were utterly gutted. To be the kicker on it, the waiter told two guys who came after us to go to a different restaurant including a better one down the street.

What a debacle!

SOCIAL



Left to right: Top row: Paul L, Fred H, Doria G,
Second Row: Sabrina D, Lea M, Fred H
Third row: Fred H, Casandra X, Steve O



Top Row: Group shot, Sabina.

Second Row: Michele U, Pierre L, Rose D.

Third Row: Omar S and Pablo C, Cherly W, and Christine M.

**WISHING EVERYBODY A SPOOKY HALLOWEEN
FILLED WITH DELICIOUS TREATS!**

LIFE

Working in Halloweentown

By Arlene Hohneker

Ever since I first visited Salem as a tourist on a mother daughter trip with my birthmother Sarah, I had this desire to either live in Salem or work in Salem. What folks don't know about me – Jasmin Moonglow, my alter altar ego I grew up with a fascination for the strange and the unusual. I had an interest in parapsychology, a form of psychology that explores extrasensory perception like precognition, telepathy, psychokinesis, and the "clairs" (clairvoyance, clairaudience, clairsentience). My adoptive mother read tarot cards for me when I was about 11 which predicted my parents' divorce. I rarely talk about this side of myself because not a lot of people are open-minded about things that are considered fringe concepts.

Extrasensory Perception, the paranormal which is a catch all term that can cover extraterrestrial encounters and UFO (Unidentified Flying Objects), UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena), cryptids, crop circles, poltergeists, hauntings (both residual and intelligent) and other topics not often mentioned in what I consider "polite" society. Being interested in divination and the predictive arts kept me in the witches' broom closet for most of my childhood into adulthood. I developed an interest in magic - stage/performance magic/illusionist sleight of hand magic through my brother John who had stage magic as a hobby and sometimes my adoptive mother and my adoptive brother would have these trips to Asbury Park where John would get his coloured balls in a tube, Chinese rings, and other stage magic props short of a top hat that you could pull a rabbit out of. To this day I have no fuckin idea how my brother did the Chinese ring trick or how he could pour milk into a newspaper and the milk disappeared.

Salem is a good place to go for stage magic tricks. The Magic Parlor store has some, but they mostly have novelty and practical joke supplies. But, I digress. Fast forward to August of 2023, I was browsing the video section of Facebook and I see an ad for Coon's Cards and Gifts. At the time I have been out of work for a year having been laid off from T.H. Weiss. I thought to myself, "Would they hire me?" Twice, I wanted to work at Crow Haven, a store owned by the "Official Witch of Salem" Laurie Cabot only for a troll to put me down for not being well to do enough to live in Salem and why hire someone from Boston.

Then I tried again. I was so frustrated. I have worked in Salem before in a "muggle" or "mundane" capacity as an office temp for Jacqueline's Gourmet Cookies, and the commute was grueling. I had to take a bus and my bike because the production place was off of Highland, which was one of Salem's main roads. So, mentally I shrugged off my past disappointments and decided to give it a go. My

retail experience is scattered throughout my work history. There are some folks that make a career out of retail and that is fine because they usually have a good reason for working retail. My former priestess Kaitlin worked a retail job in New York City as a means to have funds and flexibility for her acting projects and personal familial obligations. For me, retail is my go to when agencies and employers don't hire me. I also figured with seasonal help situations they need the help so badly that I might have more of a chance of getting work for the next two months and what money I make can keep me from tapping into what little money I had left in the bank.

So I apply, I use a cover letter to explain how much I wanted to work in Salem and how sentimentality I had for Coons because I visited Coons with Sarah my birthmother and how fairly recently I bought an oracle that I was thrilled to find because I saw someone use this particular deck on You Tube and I fell in love with the art work and the rich jewel tones used in the art work. I tried to sell my enthusiasm and my knowledge of Salem and its sad and tragic history and tourist attractions, things of an occult nature, superstitions and folklore I felt could be a plus. So I interviewed on a Saturday and I mentioned that if they are in a pinch and need help now I can start the following day. I got a call that evening asking me to come in the next day! I guess enthusiasm really does pay off.

Regarding my workdays, time goes by so fast. There is always work to do. All I do is fold and refold shirts and put out merchandise but I don't care because I have great co-workers there is always good music playing through I could do with a lot less REO Speedwagon and Huey Lewis and the News. We have Saturday at the 70s (music not fashion thank Goddess because I couldn't fit into bellbottoms then and I still can't fit into jeans). I don't mind when customers need help finding what they are looking for. I like the expression on their face when they can find what they are looking for. I also like to people watch as I fold shirts. Mostly to see what they are wearing. Some wear some really cool clothes and then there are the fashion train wrecks.



LIFE

If I were a journalist writing for a Halloween themed newspaper like "Bell, Book and Candle Publications" (not a real paper) or be an on-site news reporter and I did a segment on this year's fashion trends, Hocus Pocus is the main FOCUS. OMG so many people coming in wearing Hocus Pocus shirts or anything with the Sanderson sisters on it. Now if Pantone this company that sets colour trends for design were to have a Halloween witchy trend the colours would be Yam which is a cross between a coral and muted peach, and burnt orange but none-the-less in the orange family without being overly pumpkin or safety cone orange which sadly seems to be the case with some vendors are moving to the latter. I grew up in the not so great neon/day glow 80s yuk.

Four-legged customers tend to be my favourite customers. People will bring their pets to the store and if the owners allow I love spoiling them with doggie treats. Though honestly as the time nears closer to Halloween I would prefer owners keep their beloved companions at home all that stimuli of being in crowds is very stressful for pets. The craziness already starts at the end of August and will continue into the first week of November. I feel uncomfortable when it is so crowded that I cannot get to the stockroom or get to the side of the counter. Security guards sort of help with crowd control. Thursday the 5th will be a test of my resolve because the big parade kicks off Haunted Happenings which is basically Halloween month. The parade has some interesting floats and always Ghostbusters vehicles are in it. After all, Salem is Halloween City, USA. I think one year they also had Scooby Doo's "Mystery Machine".

For someone like me who loves going to New York City to see the Greenwich Village parades in the past, seeing the parade pass the store is my jam though I might not be able to catch all of it if folks are coming in and out all night. What is Haunted Happenings? Haunted Happenings is a month long calendar of events going on in the city. There are ghost tours galore telling stories of gore and local folklore. There are cinema festivals, and holiday rituals. Christian Day and the folks who work in his two shops Hex and Omen offer two interesting events I would love to attend if money wasn't an issue. The Victorians had developed ritualistic way of looking at death. Mourning for widows was expected to last two years. Mourning was incorporated into every aspect of life... even tea.

So the folks of Hex and Omen take over part of the historic Hawthorne Hotel's restaurant and hold what is called a "Mourning Tea". It's kind of a blend of part Day of the Dead mixed with the British influence of a Dumb Supper/Silent Supper/Feast of the Dead but with the English

tradition of formal tea. I believe that there is a Dumb Supper also offered at the Hawthorne. Some segments of the population believe that All Souls Night or even the time leading up to All Souls Night the veil between the living and the dead is at its thinnest allowing our deceased loved ones to be with us. If this is the case, I am curious to see if weird sh*t happens at work. I have been told that old Mr. Coon's spirit may still be hanging around the place. I have seen stuff fall onto the floor when no one is around. I ask the guys when they are down in the basement if they had any weird experiences. I am sensitive to the other side. I don't mention it much at Center Club. I have to feel people out before I disclose my gifts/curses. Being sensitive to the other side can make one question their sanity... just sayin. I muttered under my breath "Okay Mr. Coon no practical jokes here the girls are stressed enough as it is." I have to say despite being exhausted, I feel like I am in my element here at Coons

I get to do things I could NEVER do in corporate or other retail establishments like using sage or another incense to cleanse the air when folks who are ridiculously high come in reeking of weed. I use sage at home to cleanse the energy of my space and I use it to cleanse the energy of my crystals. So I do the same at the store. Coons has a small selection of crystals. So whenever I sage, I pass the sage smoke over the crystals. I do this as a preventative maintenance measure since so many folks handle them it helps to cleanse the energy as often as possible. Same goes for tools of divination. Witch, I mean which reminds me, I have an article on Halloween traditions, to read, jump to page 9.



ARTS: BOOK REVIEW

“I Hear Something You Can’t Hear” Exploring the Subjective Experience of Mental Illness in “The Quiet Room”: A Book Review

[Excerpt from my latest book *You Are Enough: The Journey to Accepting Your Authentic Self*]

By Jacques Fleury

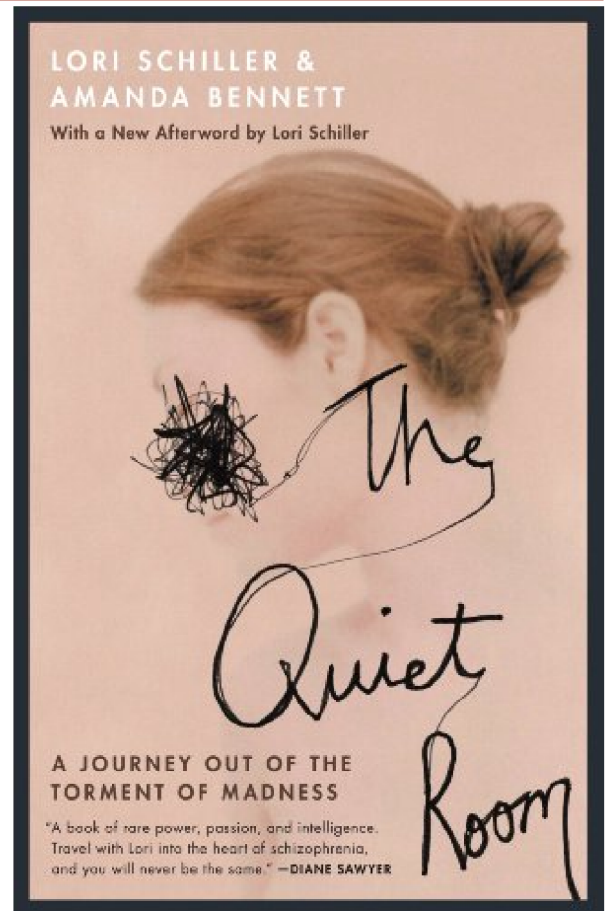
Imagine a world where darkness swallows darkness and swallows more darkness. Picture a world of shadows and obscurity where dogs look like wolves and a world seemingly crumbling around you waiting to be rebuilt. The world of which I speak is that of Lori Schiller’s in her ghastly and chilling book “THE QUIET ROOM: A JOURNEY OUT OF THE TORMENTS OF MADNESS.” The book details Lori’s gruesome tale of the illness and experience of the disease of schizophrenia. The illness experience differs from the disease in that it focuses more on the day-to-day effects of the disease, how it permeates over all aspects of one’s life. By this I mean how it can affect family relationships, friendships, career and general interaction with the inner and outer world. In the following article, I will focus on Lori’s resiliency and using aspects of the analogous theories of Carl Rogers, Alfred Adler and Carl Jung and existential ideologies to illustrate the point that in the midst of immense strife, how an individual manage to strive for purpose and meaning in their lives.

At the beginning of the book, Lori wrote “*I hear something you can’t hear...*”

She went on to write about how in the brevity before the darkness, how bright and beautiful the world seemed. She explained that during her seventieth year at summer camp, how “The Lake seemed more blue...the trees of the Catskill Mountains that tinged our camp took on a deeper green than I remembered...” She goes on to say that she was “...overwhelmed by what life had to offer.” And that she “could not run fast enough, could not swim far enough, could not stay up late enough...”

She described herself as “...energetic...happy... bubbly [and] a friend to everyone.” However, things soon changed for Lori. She mentioned a sense of doom “...settled around [her].” The camp that she once defined as beautiful became a thing of disgust, “...a thing of evil...” So began her tragic journey on the hard and often satanic and precarious road to mental health recovery.

Lori stated that during one of her episodes, she did not sleep, stayed in her room and declined to go to class. She was engulfed in “...the blackness of [her] depression.” Like Lori’s father, Marvin Schiller, refused to accept the fact that she was gravely ill.



Something very common in the afflicted persons themselves and their families as well. The issue of stigma is of course one of the major motivators in this scenario. Lori’s dad wrote, “I didn’t want my daughter to be stigmatized by some temporary rash act.” Mr. Schiller thought that it was his fault that Lori was sick.

He wrote that when he was studying psychology back in the 1950’s, the cause of mental illness was determined to be “...a faulty upbringing.” Of course, as he stated, there were other theories. For example, the Freudian model which focused on the intrapersonal (within oneself) ideologies that the id, ego and superego were the root causes of everything. Carl Jung’s concepts of unconscious myths were also considered, but most of the population believed that “...early life experiences... were behind mental disorders” Marvin Schiller wrote. Today most of us know the root causes of mental illness operates under a more holistic framework in that it has both a biological (nature) and environmental (nurture) origins. As Lori strived to survive her illness, some of her actions made it painfully obvious that she had a defiant need to transcend her “voices” or demons that threatened her very being. She struggles to grab some remnants of sanity in the midst of the insanity of her ailment. She felt that she was only a shadow of who she once was and thought that she would never return to a normal life again. However, she was determined to keep trying. Resiliency is one of the core coping strategies people often use during

ARTS: BOOK REVIEW

intense periods of trauma and strife. Lori has hoped for something more than just being given a raw deal in the diagnosis of a disease. She foresaw a future decorated with options and opportunities. The following theories directly coincide with these innate needs and desires in the social context.

Unlike Freud, who focuses on the “intrapersonal” or “within oneself” concepts, Alfred Adler, Carl Jung and Carl Rogers all offer the more practical, I think, approach in looking at the individual in relation to a more “holistic” context of their lives, particularly Jung and Adler’s ideology involving *spirituality* which I will refer to later. Adler proposes a “holistic wholeness” ideology. One of the major life tasks he purports is finding where one fits in society, which includes vocation, contribution and *spirituality*.

Jung proposes a similar concept of “individuation”. He describes it as “...developing wholeness through integrating all the various parts of the psyche. However, Jung “...ignored the negative, maladaptive side of human nature.” Nonetheless, in modern times, an increased interest in “human potential” has catapulted a resurrection of curiosity in Jung’s ideas.

Carl Rogers also makes a similar point in that he sees the individual as heading in the path of “... wholeness, integration, [essentially] and a unified life.” He believes that consciousness is engaging in the broader “...creative, formative tendency.” By this he means a “directional” or “actualizing tendency”, a tendency on the way to achievement, on the way to actualization that entails not only the preservation but also the improvement of the individual.

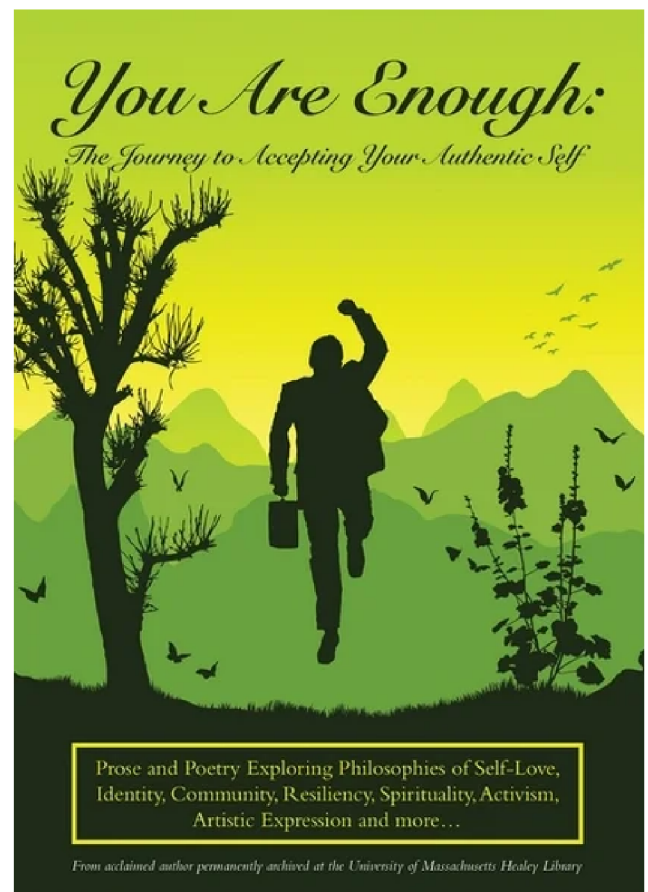
Lori made many repeated unsuccessful attempts to find and keep employment in her community. She persevered until she was able to stabilize and made small steps to getting back to the work force and feeling like a contributing member of her community and essentially her world. She found some solace in the use of prayer.

Both Jung and Adler promote the idea of “spirituality” as a way to mental health recovery, and I completely agree. I know that the power of prayer, patience and perseverance have helped many on the path of recovery from mental illness.

Existentialist ideations dictate “life is meaningless or meaningful as one experiences it.” Furthermore, it defines “...regret in existentialist terms, is grief and loss over a life not lived. The best way to deal with ...regret is to discover what is worth dying for that is worth living for.” So by Lori risking her life to try the then new drug Clozapine, she decided to risk dying so that she could live a fruitful life. She found meaning in suffering in that it has broadened her perspectives and enhanced her as a human being.

For some, 90% of recovery can be attributed to the integration of spirituality (i.e. activities in their communities) and 10% medicinal (drug therapy). In the “Quiet Room”, Lori Shiller wrote that her successful recovery process was due to the love and support that she received from family, friends and her general community; which have essentially put her on the track back from mental hell to mental health.

Jacques Fleury is a Haitian-American Poet, Author, Educator and literary arts student at Harvard University online. His book "You Are Enough: The Journey to Accepting Your Authentic Self" & other titles are available at public libraries, The Harvard Book Store, The Grolier Poetry Bookshop, amazon etc... Visit him at: <http://www.authorsden.com/jacquesfleury>.



JACQUES FLEURY

Arts: Book Review Halloween Edition

Matt's Comic Shop: Stalking The Night- my review of The Nightstalker's comics By Matthew Burrus

Last year I started collecting old reading material on one of my favorite Super-heroes, Blade. Of course, like most fans I knew of The Daywalker from the movies but I didn't know much about his history in the comics so I started collecting graphic Novels of the old Tomb of Dracula Stories. Then I started collecting The rare Nightstalker's comics from the 90's which reunited Blade with Hannibal King and Frank Drake. After reading each issue I was amazed and so for this article in the spirit of Halloween, I'm going to talk about why I like The Nightstalker's comics.

The Plot: The story picks up not where it left off not only in The old Tomb of Dracula Comics but the graphic novel, Day of Blood, Night of Redemption. Hannibal is still haunted by the fact that he is a human turned vampire, Frank tries to move on from the occult and Blade is stuck in a mental ward. The old gang is brought back together thanks to Doctor Strange to open their old detective agency and battle the occult.

The Daywalker: in this comic series Blade don't his now famous Black trench coat with spikes and a high-top fade. He has completely ditched the brown coat, green goggles and afro from the 70's. His attitude is much meaner than before and while he reluctantly helps his partners, he is for the most part bickering with them and is willing to cross the line to get rid of the Occult. This version of Blade we would see later in his own solo comics and his movies.

The Villains: The Nightstalker's don't fight vampires much in this comic (at least until the final arch) but there are still plenty of worthy villain's. There's Lilith, who of course first appeared in Ghost Rider. Then there's Hydra's Department of Occult Armaments (DOA), which the group spends most of the time fighting. Spoiler, Dracula does not appear in the comics but someone from his past does. Who is it? Collect the comics to find out.

The Cover Art: The overall Artwork in Nightstalker's is amazing but for me the best is the cover Art. The Cover Art for The comics does what it's supposed to do, make you want to buy the comic as soon as you lay eyes on it. For

example, issue #1, Rise of The Midnight Sons. We see Blade with his sword, Hannibal flying, Drake with his gun (that he calls the exorcist) and the title of the book written in blue and yellow. If I was a kid in 1992 and I saw that in a comic shop I would beg my mother to buy it for me. My favorite one is issue #3, Staking Claim. You got Rothwrop laying on the ground with bugs coming out of her and Blade standing over her with his clothes ripped and looking like he's been taking some special supplements. If that doesn't want to make you buy a Nightstalker's Comic then nothing will.

Guest Appearances: Most of The guest appearances in these comics come from The Darker Heroes of The Marvel Universe. We get appearances from Ghost Rider, Johnny Blaze, Doctor Strange, Morbius and Darkhold. You see at this time; Marvel launched a comic series called The Midnight Sons which dealt with the supernatural so there was a lot of crossovers with these heroes. The only regular Hero from The Marvel universe was The Punisher who appears in issue #4 and 5, so don't expect any appearances from The Hulk, The X-men or you friendly neighborhood Spider-man.

In conclusion: These comics are worth tracking down on the internet. This series lasted from 1992-1994 but it made Such an impact on the Marvel universe that it was used in Blade Trinity. Fans of The Blade Films and of The old Tomb of Dracula Comics will love this series as it has great storytelling, Artwork and enough horror to satisfy your appetite for horror comics. It picks up where Tomb of Dracula ends and marks where The Blade movie Mythology begins.



Top: Cover of issue 3; Left: the heroes of Nightstalkers

Arts: Television Halloween Edition

My 9 All-time favorite American Horror Story Seasons

By Matthew Burrus

Every Year for Halloween I get 3 bags of M&M's, turn off the lights and for 3- or 4-days binge watch my favorite show, American Horror Story. AHS is violent, scary, and sexy all at the same time. My first season was Hotel and ever since then I was hooked. So, in honor of the of Halloween here are my top 9 all-time favorite AHS seasons.



9. NYC- Last seasons NYC takes place in 1981 where gay men are dying from a mysterious serial killer and a new virus. Russell Tovey as Patrick Read, the secretly gay detective is remarkable and so is his Joe Mantello as his boyfriend, Gino Barelli. There's also great acting performances by Billie Lourd, Sandra Bernhard, Charlie Carver Zachery Quinto and Patti LuPone. Most of the sex scenes involve gay BDSM so if whips, chains, and leather are your thing, then this season is for you.

8. Cult- Cult centers on a small cult lead by Kai Anderson (played by Evan Peters). The Story takes place after Trump is elected president and talks about the power and impact of cults. Evan Peters also plays famous cult leaders such as Marshall Herff Applewhite, David Koresh, Jim Jones, and Charlie Manson. My personal favorite is Leslie Grossman as Willow because I had a crush on her when she was on Popular (another Ryan Murphy Series). I also like Emma Roberts guest appearance as Serena Belinda because she's good at playing a B*tch. A good season to watch.

7. Coven- Coven is about the descendants of witches from Salem who go to a witch school in New Orleans. My favorite witch is Madison Montgomery (Played by Emma Roberts) because she's a b*tch you love to hate. My other favorite is Misty Day (played by Libby Rae) because of her love for Stevie Nicks. In fact, Stevie Nicks herself makes a couple of appearances in the season. Jessica Lange's character Fiona is a seductive goddess who's willing to murder anyone who gets in her way. This season will put a spell on you.

6. Double Feature- What's cool about Double Feature is we get two stories in one season. The first story is Red Tide, which deals in a pill that turns people into vampires. The second Story is Death Valley, which talks about the existence of Aliens. We get great performances by Finn Wittrock, Lily Rabe, Leslie Grossman, Macaulay Culkin, Frances Conroy and Kaia Gerber. Two for the price of one, a killer deal.



5. Roanoke- Roanoke is about a house that's haunted by the first settlers in North Carolina. We first hear about the legend in Murder House so it's a nice little throwback. This was the second season I saw after Hotel and I Loved it. Personally, my sole purpose for watching it was Lady Gaga. Her role is not that big but she still had a great performance as Sc`athach. My favorite scene is when Gaga hypnotizes Cuba Gooding JR's character and is doing her from behind. So, if you love old ghost stories, plot twists and kinky sex then watch Roanoke.

4. Apocalypse- in Apocalypse The world comes to an end and its up to the witches from Coven to not only go back in time and save it but kill the antichrist known as Michael. They even go back to Murder house in the episode Return to murder house where we see all the main characters. My favorite scene is when Mr. Gallent is being tortured and as he's being whipped, he screams the name of gay icons of the 70's and 80's. I guess its true what they say, Sticks and Stones may break my bones but chains and whips excite me. If you love Coven and Murder House then this season is for you. Speaking of which....

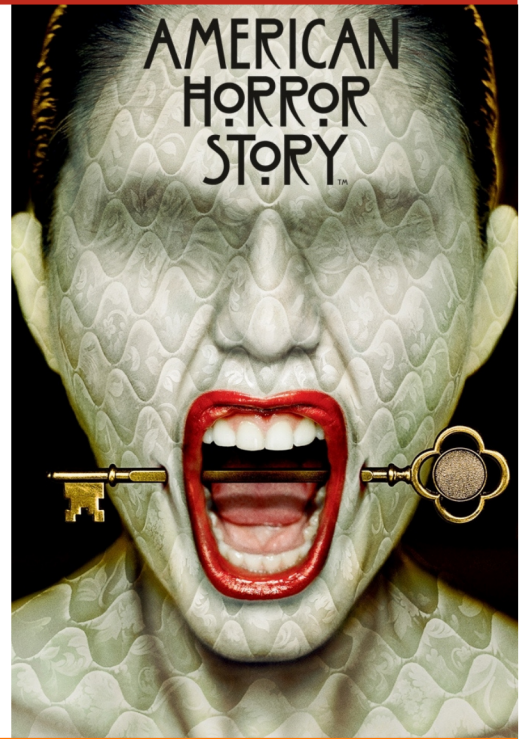
3. Murder House- Ah yes, the very first season, the one that started it all. Murder House centers on the Harmon family, who, after dealing with a miscarriage and infidelity, move to a restored mansion in Los Angeles, unaware that the ghosts of its former residents and their victims haunt the house. Ghosts, murder, kinky sex, what's not to love about Murder House.

Arts: Television Halloween Edition

2. 1984- This season is my second all-time favorite season. It has everything you would want in an 80's slasher movie, Serial killers, ghosts, murder at a summer camp, blood, sex, drugs, and kick ass 80's music. This season will not only make you brush up on your moonwalk but make you dust off your old VCR and have a marathon of 80's horror and porn. 1984, it's both a thriller and a killer.

1. Hotel- This was the first season that started it for me. I was aware of the show but never watched it. when I found out my future wife Lady Gaga was going to be in it, I had to watch it. Since the first episode I have been hooked. Gaga's performance as the countess is phenomenal. She's sexy, seductive, blood thirsty and above all, a bad b*tch. You got humans, ghosts and vampires all in one season. Its packed with blood sucking, murder, and tons of natural and super natural sex. Its my favorite season of all-time and I highly recommend it to everyone.

Happy Halloween



Left: The Burial of the Sardine
Painting by Francisco Goya

Halloween Beliefs, Superstitions, and Customs

Written by Arlene Hohneker

At this time of year, the air starts to get crisp and colder and the smell of pumpkin spice is everywhere you get your coffee or baked goods. Decorations and candy abound in stores. Yes, it's that time of the year again..Halloween.

Halloween, also known as Samain (pronounced Sow in (as in Cow) – in) but pronunciations vary among Ireland and Scotland). Halloween is also known as All Hallows Eve the time before All Souls Day on religious calendars. Halloween is a predominantly a European holiday that made its way to American shores through people emigrating from England, Ireland, and Scotland.

New Year's Eve Meets Day of the Dead

Halloween started out as a pagan festival holiday. In some pagan traditions that are nature based, Halloween is considered a "New Year's Eve" of sorts because it demarks the end of the harvest year in Celtic cultures. In some cultures, Halloween represents a time where the veil between the living and the dead is the thinnest.

Halloween was originally a pagan festival for the dead and like the Day of the Dead, similar traditions of leaving food out for ancestors in the form of Dumb Suppers where a place setting is set for the ancestors and the meal is eaten in silence or Mourning Teas, a more Victorian tradition that started in the years after Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband passed away in England.



19th/early 20th century Halloween costumes

ART AND LEISURE: HALLOWEEN EDITION

Costumes Had a Specific Purpose*

When you have traditions that have been in place for decades, even centuries, often it is difficult to pinpoint the when, where, and why certain traditions were created. Halloween was once considered a portal astronomically and at this time of year when evil spirits and demons would roam the earth. The superstitious custom of wearing masks and costumes came about as a way to confound and confuse evil spirits and demons.



Origins of Jack O'Lanterns and Pumpkin Carving

Modern day pumpkin carving and the creation of Jack O' Lanterns has its origins in the British Isles. The Jack O' Lanterns that we all know and love when carved and lit up with candles on the front stoop on a cold autumn night had a more humble beginning. Back in the British Isles, people would carve faces into pieces of produce more specifically turnips. Celebrants would place lit candles inside the cavities just like the modern Jack O'Lanterns carved from harvest pumpkins we see today. (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com>)

Apple's Place in Halloween Customs and Traditions

In addition to pumpkins, apples also hold a special place in Halloween and harvest time traditions. Again, this tradition goes back to Britain during the time of Roman occupation. During the Roman occupation of Celtic Britain, the Romans brought their pagan beliefs and worship of the goddess Pomona who is associated abundance and the two cultures blended their beliefs and traditions. Somewhere in the mists of time, bobbing for apples became a courting ritual due to Halloween being the last harvest of the season and it was a time for people coming together to seek potential mates. Eventually this courting ritual would evolve into blindfolded couples trying to eat an apple hanging from a string in the 20th Century.



Origins of Trick or Treat

"Trick or Treating" is a traditional Halloween custom for children and adults in some countries. During the evening of Halloween, October 31, people in costumes travel from house to house, asking for treats with the phrase "trick or treat". The "treat" is some form of confectionery, usually candy/sweets, although in some cultures money is given instead. The "trick" refers to a threat, usually idle, to perform mischief on the resident(s) or their property if no treat is given. Some people signal that they are willing to hand out treats by putting up Halloween decorations outside their doors; houses may also leave their porch lights on as a universal indicator that they have candy; some simply leave treats available on their porches for the children to take freely, on the honor system. (Source: Wikipedia)

The history of trick-or-treating traces back to Scotland and Ireland, where the tradition of guising (disguising) or souling, going house to house at Halloween and putting on a small performance to be rewarded with food or treats, goes back at least as far as the 16th century, as does the tradition of people wearing costumes at Halloween. There are many accounts from 19th-century Scotland and Ireland of people going house to house in costume at Halloween, reciting verses in exchange for food, and sometimes warning of misfortune if they were not welcomed.

(continued on page 15)



ART AND LEISURE: HALLOWEEN EDITION

Immigrants from England, Ireland, and Scotland brought many of the Halloween traditions with them during the 19th Century. American historian and author Ruth Edna Kelley of Lynn, Massachusetts wrote the first book length history on Halloween in the US; *The Book of Hallowe'en* (1919) where many of the local residents consisted of immigrants from England, Ireland, and Scotland.

Modern day trick or treating became more popular post World War II both in the US and abroad through popular culture such as television shows like *Ozzie and Harriet* and *Peanuts* cartoon strips and *ET* at the latter half of the 20th Century." (Source: Wikipedia)

Origins of the Associations of Witches at Halloween*

Witches have been around since time immemorial just known by different words in different cultures. Witches are often known by other terms: wise woman, crone, bruja, strega. In some cultures, witches were essential for the survival of the tribe, village, etc. Witches had folk knowledge of herbs and healing methods as well as being in tune with the land and earth's energies and often were called upon in times to ensure a good crop, heal a sick animal, and provide a tincture or ointment for an ailing member of the community. How witches became synonymous with Halloween in the United States is hard to say other than 19th Century immigrants brought their All Hallows' Eve and All Souls Day traditions with them. Most European cultures have witches just that most witches like the Italian Befana and the Eastern European Baba Yaga. The Italian Befana actually was associated with Christmas. Like St. Nicholas, the Befana, or Christmas Witch also delivers gifts to children throughout Italy on Epiphany Eve (the night of January 5).

From the kitchen to a Halloween icon: Italy's Befana and many other European cultures have kitchen witches to ward off evil spirits from cooking. It is kitchen witch motif like the Befana that may have inspired the broom flying witch associated with Halloween as immigrants came over to the United States during the 19th Century and the melting pot of cultures gave rise to the use of witch iconography for marketing purposes and post cards of the early 20th Century.

Trick – or - Treating as a Dia de los Muertos/Day of the Dead tradition in Mexico*

Trick or Treating can also be found in Mexico. In northwestern and central Mexico, the practice is called *calaverita* (Spanish diminutive for *calavera*, "skull" in English), and instead of "trick or treat", the children ask, "¿Me da mi calaverita?" ("[Can you] give me my little skull?"), where a *calaverita* is a small skull made of sugar or chocolate. (Source: Wikipedia)



Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is neither scary nor somber; it is joyous. It's a celebration of life and death. While the holiday originated in Mexico, it is celebrated all over Latin America with colorful *calaveras* (skulls) and *calacas* (skeletons). The Aztecs believed death is not the end, but rather the beginning, and that before death everything is a dream. The holiday is a day of remembrance for those who have died. Its origins can be traced to pre-colonial Mexico, when it was believed that the souls of dead loved ones returned to their families once a year so that their lives could be celebrated.

During Día de Muertos, the tradition is to build private altars ("ofrendas") containing the favorite foods and beverages, as well as photos and memorabilia, of the departed. The intent is to encourage visits by the souls, so the souls will hear the prayers and the words of the living directed to them. These altars are often placed at home or in public spaces such as schools and libraries, but it is also common for people to go to cemeteries to place these altars next to the tombs of the departed.

This year, Center Club put up their first ever altar to celebrate the lives of the members and family members who have passed. Club members brought in photos of their loved ones and favorite possessions.



ART AND LEISURE: HALLOWEEN EDITION



Arts: Literature & poetry

El Viejo Chano Adan Palacios

Muy temprano los rayos de luz del sol baña a las montañas y aun pueblito de la ciudad capital, en una casita de adobe y tejas rojas hacen que se vea bonita, dentro de ella se encuentra Chano o el Viejo Chano como lo conocen en el pueblo. Chano levanta su petate lo enrolla y lo pega a la pared sale a la pila toma con sus manos agua y se la pone en el rostro y en el pelo, se seca con un trapo viejo. De ahí toma un cantarito que contiene agua, se pone su sombrero y se va a tracia donde se encuentra su viejo Penco, lo monta y sale rumbo al pueblo. El Penco trota muy lentamente, Chano voltea y ve al Lechero y el repartidor de pan. La saludan y él con la mano levanta un poco el ala del sombrero, saliendo del pueblo se adentra a un camino terroso del cual lo llevará a una parcela, llega y se desmonta y deja a su Penco bajo de un frondoso árbol, el se encamina hacia su milpa de la cual empieza a quitar ramitas qual hacen daño a su siembra, ya para el medio día para sutrabajo y va junto a su caballo. El cantarillo toma de él su fresca agua ya su fiel Penco le da agua y unas canas de su cosecha. Termina y sigue trabajando hasta que el sol se oculta, monta su Penco y sale rumbo al pueblo de una casa salen a ladrar unos perros viejos, sale Dona Maty y las mate, la gente dice que ella es mas vieja que los perros llega al final del pueblo y cerca de su casa está una cantina desmonta y se mete en ella. El Cantinero que lo conoce ya sabe que toma, después de muchos tragos, está borracho, sale y se monta en su Penco y sin tomar la rienda el caballo se enfila al sur casa, desmonta y entra, se dirija a la ornilla que esta apagada y solo cenizas tiene. Se queda parado y con su mirada recorre las paredes, se dirige a un cuadro fotográfico, la ve y toma con sus manos y le llama Rosita, Rosita, en el cuadro es su esposa. La toma y empieza a llorar, la gente pasa y se extraña al ver el casallo vario días. Un día el caballo está echado y un pueblerino se acerca y el caballo está muerto. Empuja la puerta y el Viejo Chano está acostado en el suelo, se acerca, lo toca y está muerto. Le quita el cuadro de su esposa, el cristal tiene agua, las últimas lágrimas de el Viejo Chano fueron de su esposa ya muerta...Descanse en paz el Viejo Chano.

ARTS: LITERATURE & POETRY

Who am I?

By: Jacques Fleury

if you peel layer upon layer upon layer maybe
 then and
 only then you will find me...
 for i am a multilayered entity...
 a building block of heterogeneity
 i can be fierce and unflinching apathetic and
 also doting
 docile and also volatile lovable and also
 irritable
 compulsive and also discernible
 i am a man i am a "black" man i am an
 American i am a "black" American
 i am a DNA test from Ancestry dot com's
 family tree and twenty-three and me
 i am African ancestry i am Afro Haitian
 ancestry i am European ancestry
 i am the legacy of a middle class family in Haiti
 i am the legacy of America's social and
 economic disparity
 I am the story of Horatio Alger's characters
 thriving over adversity
 i am a malady i am a remedy i am a rainbow i
 am a shadow i am a son i am a brother
 i am an uncle i am an author i am an educator
 and pervasive human valor coconspirator
 i am in attrition i am in progression i am an
 amalgamation i am perfectly imperfect and
 imperfect perfectly
 i am a thesis of social injustice i am a vision of
 personal apotheosis

i am all this and more... I Am ME!

Untitled

By Charles Jones

a love, god, star odds wishing for mission, war,
 being gentle reason members focus on motion,
 doors, head games, chess, vain vision mind,
 inner vice, poker, soldier body, shocking my
 level rise, hell more dipping in wicked gin
 stalking real office content marching darting
 storebridge

Untitled

By Mary Ann O'Keefe

the waves came and pounded about the cliff and will soon we will rise when the dance is over.
 the light was touching the earth and I could see it that was soon coming to come to the clouds.

Joy of speaking

By Omar Singhateh

Meant to speak in my voice, so I speak
 Rejoice In that aptitude, so I speak
 To escape from the agony of non-expressive mind, so I
 speak
 By the beauty of a sweet voice, I speak
 Searching entirely for a lasting voice here in my own, I
 speak
 I am the one in whose retort there is grace
 Praise In my voice as I make sense of this voice
 I feel thrilled than the night sky, in my voice.

Music

By Bruce Perry

Forgotten melodies
 and taboo tones
 I hunger for something to satiate
 my audio senses
 thoughtless mindless requests
 noises cursed
 verbal sensations
 betrayal by questioning the
 authority of the listeners
 spam threads
 with countless violations of
 chatter lyrics
 with power to corrupt humanity
 line by line
 lost in the moment
 the advent of musical illusion
 gives freedom to be expressed
 eager words in rhythmic
 structure
 robbed of any creative gestures

Untitled

Lynette Perry

The stars in the sky were like fire, my heart
 began to dance, her eyes began to shine like a
 beautiful rose!

ARTS: LITERATURE & POETRY

All is well

By Omar Singhateh

An accolade is what I have prayed for in misery
 Now I got the code to win the minds in joy
 It took me a while, but I wailed over the toughest
 Of times when I could not see hope
 Nor think of any good of myself

Now to be honest, I have a shining mirror
 My reflections are not dark
 My thoughts are not shallow
 I am a deep thinker
 With a beautiful mind

I wish to embellish every soul that I touch
 To show them the way to wisdom
 A simple path with a singular aim
 To be as we are set to be
 Triumphant!

ROAR

By: Jacques Fleury

[Excerpt from his latest book *You Are Enough: The Journey to Accepting Your Authentic Self*]

"I am impelled, not to squeak like a grateful and apologetic mouse, but to roar like a lion out of pride in my profession." --John Steinbeck

against cobalt blue and black sky hill-top silhouettes
 draw an undulant line
 in a serpentine jungle teeming with life amidst the deepest darkest night
 moon light hovers to pet the fright mysterious eyes carved obsidian flutter
 in the dusk bottom feeders with nothing to gain
 groveling in the dust furtive
 footsteps creeping cranky crickets chirping
 subversive sounds caballing
 darkness marauding those distressing all this and more are coalescing but a lion's ROAR!!!
 Whose colors are the colors of the morning sun and the evening sky
 From pale orange to deepest flame
 Induce them all to silence...

The Beginning

Scott McConnell

The start of music, when will it hatch
 bass is usually the background
 melody is usually the start
 what song will go with the art work
 what will hatch from the egg to complete the song

When I look into your face, my God, Thank you by Sabrina Davis

One day I remembered, and looked back into a scene in my life when I suffered the most. I was looking out of the window towards heaven, hoping for some kind of comfort, asking the Lord for help not knowing what to do.

The Lord had already replied this is when I sent down an angel from heaven to carry you over to the other side to safety.

This I had done numerous times when I fell and I had to get up again, when you had suffered the most, and needed my help.

When you are ready to face the fear head on the answer will be there.

Right now in the present time when you look in my face like I promised pouring down my love to you, the message from the angel from heaven is your faith that will save you and the answer is anyways you are the one who will save yourself.

Thank you god.

Reality

By Omar Singhateh

In this odyssey of mine,
 I am Lonely in my might with no way to sight
 Drenched by the storm
 I still trod
 Set on a pace of no race
 But I am made to sail
 To go through the whirling of my journey
 In other to ascent,
 through the speed of my faculty
 There, there is no distrust
 Every inch is reaching me to the truth
 Of my destiny, where I belong

IN MEMORIAM

Scott McConnell

April 4, 1957-September 16, 2023



"I will always remember Scott's ability in seeing good in almost anything. His ability to teach math, give me the impression he could be a genius level at times. His smile and laughter were infections. I hope he's in a better place now."

-Rose C.

"Scott was a great chess player. When I played with him, he would always beat me, but he was always gracious. He was a great math tutor and had a great knowledge of many different topics, for example religion and current affairs. He was a great conversationalist."

-Jay H.



I will miss Scott. He was my friend for about 10 years and we went out and had a special relationship. He was kind, patient and I loved him for being a best friend. We went camping together, both attended Center Club and went to the club events. I think that the best club event was camping. We went to the movies every weekend, and he always greeted me at the door. He took care of me the right way. Everyone at Center Club will miss him. I loved his sense of humor and kind of way of asking me about how I was feeling every day. We spent Christmas together, Thanksgiving, and New Year. I was so upset when he passed away and will carry on, thinking of positive feelings about him. I won't feel depressed for the rest of my life, but put my front foot forward and think about the fun we had together. He had fun playing chess and scrabble with his friends. I have so many pictures of him on my cell phone and will always remember his smile. I will never forget what a nice, kind person he was. We will miss him. -Michele U.

"I am saddened by the loss of our dear friend Scott. He was a man of knowledge and wisdom, and it was not hard to notice. I am sure he lived a curious life filled with great experiences. When I first met Scott, we didn't speak to each other as there was this void of two strangers meeting each other at the club, but from observation, I saw his love for music and movies and his cordial interactions with the club members."

I was finally fortunate to be introduced to Scott by Robin for tutoring, and he accepted the proposal to be my tutor. And that was the beginning of my relationship with Scott. I witnessed his love for passing it on, especially his knowledge and wisdom. He was a genius in algebra and many other subjects. You could have a conversation with Scott about anything and not be disappointed with his level of awareness about so many things in life. It would be fair to say that Scott did not only appear in this universe to be Scott, but he contributed to his love for humanity by being an outstanding member of the Center Club. He helped tutor people like me who were lagging in math and varied other subjects.

Here was a guy who conquered his fears. He was as brave as his smile. I am sure Scott died smiling. I once had a conversation with him about fear. Scott was quick to say fear does not exist. I was perplexed by that response. He then explained in detail that I would not get into it for the sake of time, but he was the one who conquered fear. It would be appropriate to say Scott McConnell lived a free and dedicated life in which he endured with courage and perseverance through his trials and tribulations."

-Omar S.

Dear Scott,

Hello, star that you are! Having banana bread for you is nothing I couldn't provide, unfortunately, I had other things keeping me occupied. Nevertheless, making banana bread was always something I planned to do for you.

Scott, as far as our relationship is concerned, there has never been any drama. In fact, our interactions have led me to believe that having a friendship with you has a positive living experience.

You've sat in on some of the art groups, and while I listened to your constant protestations in one of these groups, you drew me a picture.

While in one of the groups, I also gave you your own set of pencils and pad, courtesy of Center Club, where I told you that whenever you graced the group with your presence, you can take your pad and pencils, and do whatever you desired.

If I can find these things, I will put them on the table, and invite anyone who wants to do their own artist's renditions. We will put them in a binder for anyone to see as a means of connectedness to him.

Finally, Scott was also my math tutor, he made our work together without stress. I was able to work well with him. In fact, I told him I would be setting up a time for a refresher course.

While organizing things in my apartment, I came across many of the math exercises we had to work through.

Hopefully, I will use some of this work in ways that will be the impetus I need to accomplish my education objectives.

Scott! You've gone too soon. However your spirit will never die, like a strong chain link, our bond will never be broken...

-Helen C.

IN MEMORIAM



Maryann O'Keefe

March 3, 1958-October 18, 2023

Maryann was a very gentle, kind, altruistic person, who always had a positive view of life. Even when she was facing challenges, she never waived and always found the positive in the situation. Maryann was very involved in the Dual Recovery meeting on Tuesdays and was proud of her sobriety. She loved going to the symphony, and especially dressing up for it.

Maryann came from a close knit family, she loved buying gifts for her nephews and nieces. If there was one thing I learned from Maryann, you can always find the good in anything if you look hard enough and always, always save room for dessert. It was an honor to be with you on your last day in this world, and finally have our "spa manicure day."



Maryann, I will miss our chats and how you would check in on me when I was sick. May you rest in peace.

-Gabi A

Maryann was very sweet, but a straight shooter. She would let you know if she was unhappy with something. I'll always be amazed how Maryann could make it up the steep hill up to her apartment no matter the weather.

-Florence



One of Maryann's favorite Center Club events, was the Mother's Day Tea.