



the NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the June 2018 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the Florida Youth Council!!! For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to write about Traveling With a Disability.

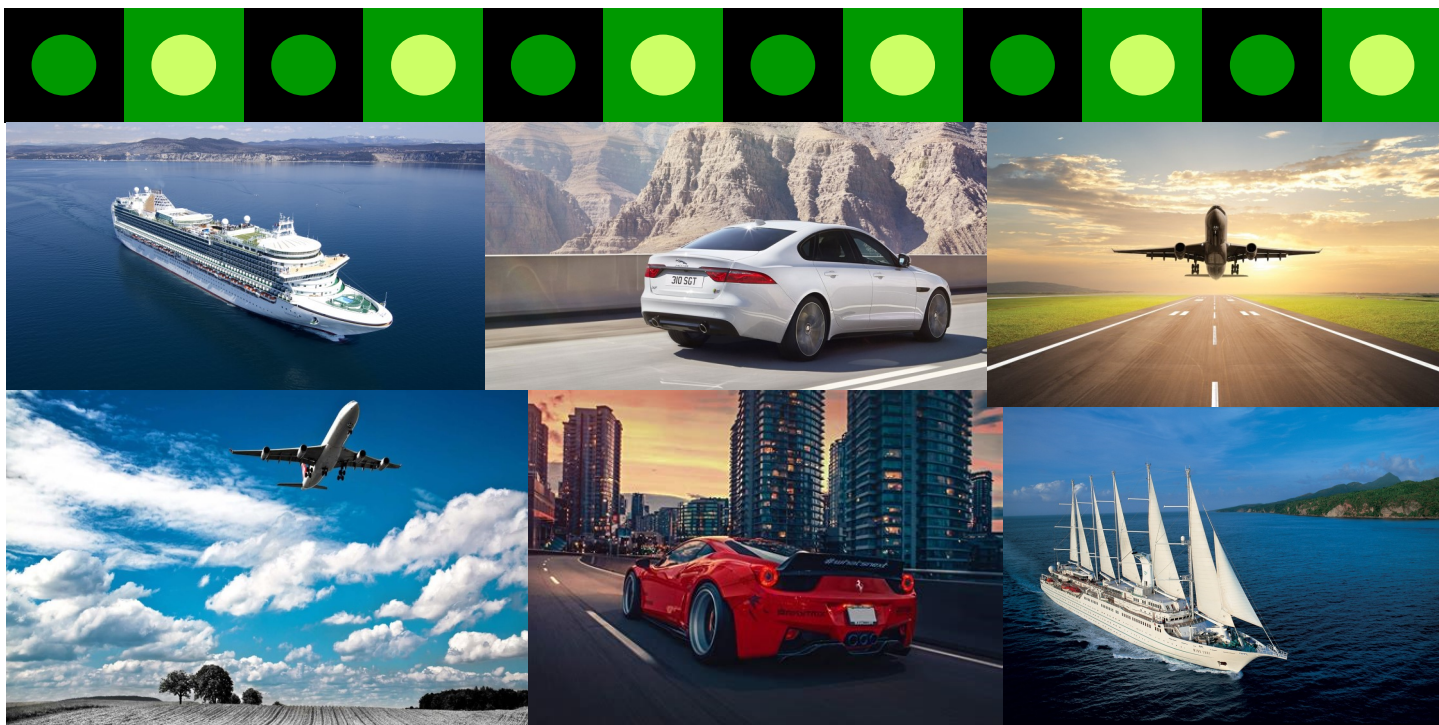
members to share their thoughts about what Traveling with a Disability is like and how to make it better.. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this June 2018 edition of

This topic allowed *The Noodle!*

Current Members:

Shevie Barnes
Derek Carraway
Rocky Castro
Megan Germain
Ian Horowitz
Josh Tapia
Dakota Smoot
Christina Waldron
Serena Wetmore





Bon Voyage

I absolutely love to travel, whether it's on a plane, on a ship, or in a car! The wanderlust bug has bitten me hard. Travel with a disability can be a piece of cake if you do it right. My first piece of advice is plan everything. Know everything about where you are going, like places to eat, hotels, and entertainment venues. Make sure everything will fit your needs and your wallet. This can make or break your trip. Plan your trip before you go, and you'll thank me later. My second piece of advice is to be as adaptable as your disability will allow

you to be, and don't be scared. Do something you have never done before and go with the flow. Think of it this way: Only get what is necessary for your health and well-being and forget the rest! Have fun! In my case, I went on a cruise to the Bahamas with my wife and didn't get an accessible cabin because they were sold out! But, instead of not going, we went and still had fun. Yes, it was a little difficult, but it was worth it. Plan, have fun, be safe and travel to your heart's content!

By Megan Germain

Tips for Your Trips

After my graduation, I am planning to go to England over this summer. I am going to tell you the steps that my family is taking for the trip, in the hopes that this will be helpful to you.

Step 1: Pick a destination. This may seem intuitive at first, but you have to pick a destination that you know will be accommodating to your disability. I picked London because it is a more modern city and thus is likely to have more modern accommodations. There are choices for transportation, like special maps for trains that are wheelchair accessible. This will allow me to use my wheelchair instead of being lifted in and out of vehicles all day long.

Step 2: Packing.

You have to prepare for every eventuality, whether that be a medical emergency or just the weather. Anything that you consider to be essential that may not be available at your destination, you should take with you in case of emer-

gency. For me, this means my medications and any medical products specifically necessary for me.

For actual travel, we booked a direct flight from Orlando to London, so we can avoid having to get in and out of the plane multiple times. I have to transfer out of my wheelchair and into the airplane aisle chair to get to my seat. This is somewhat challenging and is very awkward and time-consuming. We have to notify the airline so that they can make all the necessary preparations. I usually get on first (pre-boarding) which gives us extra time and avoids the crowd. Usually they put me in the bulkhead row so it is a little

easier to lift me into the seat. We often pack some pillows to prop me up in the seat, since I tend to fall over.

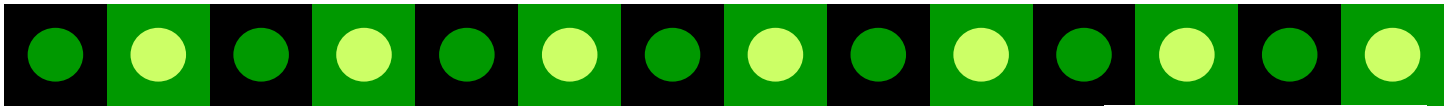
In general, know your disability, research ways online that you can accommodate

yourself, don't be afraid to ask for help from airlines and travel agents, and pick a place where you can have fun.

Bon Voyage!

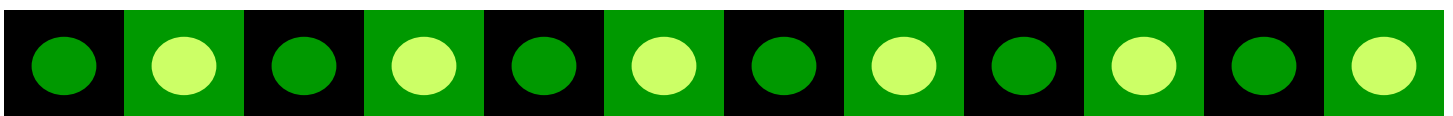
By Serena Wetmore





SUPER

DAD



When I Travel, I Stick to the Path

Just recently I had my 30th birthday, and it was amazing. I got to go to one of the most important places I've ever wanted to visit in my life. That place was Washington, DC. I got to go to all the Smithsonian museums, and I also got to see the many memorials spread around the city. One thing I did notice, however, is that some of the locations were more accessible than others. Here's how I noticed them.

The Smithsonian area is huge and disorienting and intimidating for a visually impaired person like myself. Everything is walking distance. And I mean everything. The only issue is that with everyone walking my cane becomes the tool of legend. People see someone using a see eye cane and dodge out of the way like it's a car with no brakes. It's a funny sight every time, but still it can make a person feel small. The streets were really narrow and moving around was like connect the dots, but at an expert level. Still though, I walked through every museum they had to offer. I just tried to arrive at a decent time, and I didn't have to really bump into no one. I would leave right before it got full so I didn't have to feel guilty for bumping into people.

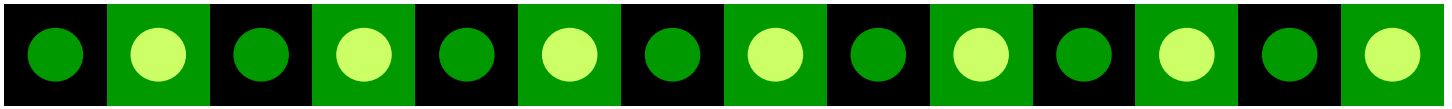
The restaurants in DC are bar none the best. Everything was so updated and the



wait staff were so kind and knowledgeable. I went to a steakhouse for one of the nights I was staying, and the lighting in the restaurant was real dim. I asked the waiter if they had a large menu and he said that unfortunately they didn't. He pulled a chair close to me and read the menu for me and also described in great detail the steak cuts they had and their toppings. That place was awesome. They made me feel like royalty. Plus it was my birthday, so maybe that had a little to do with it. But still! I had a blast!

Traveling with my disability is something that I always have to plan and pack accordingly for. My impairment is very unpredictable, but living with it for so many years has helped me become more independent and more willing to go outside my comfort zone. It's never the easiest thing to do, but if you plan well and know yourself better than anyone else, then why not?

By Josue Tapia



Traveling With a Disability

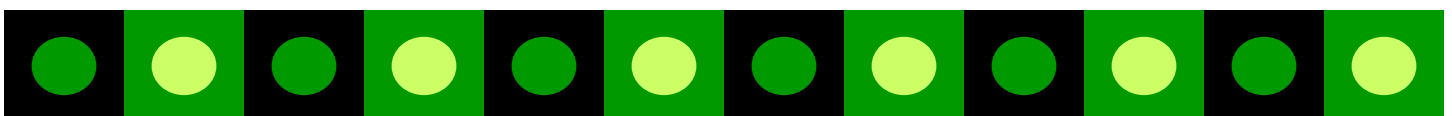
Traveling . . . it's something everyone does. Some people travel for work, pleasure, or both, and there are a lot of different ways to travel to get to the places you need to go. The most obvious is driving, of course, but what if that isn't an option for you because of your disability? There are other options, such as the bus (such as a Greyhound or Red Coach), or even taking a train. Some other tips though come more so after you get to where you are going, and it all comes down to planning. If you have a disability and plan to stay in a hotel, call them directly to book it to ensure they give you an ADA accessible room that will meet your needs. This helps ensure they get it right. Even doing that, they

can still mess it up though. If this ever does happen, my best tip for you is to stand up for yourself and raise holy Cain with them until they fix it. That works. I witnessed such an incident once when we had one of our FYC meetings and they messed up a former councilmember's room. Let's just say by the end of the night, they got it fixed, and he got into an accessible



room. That's just one example of how you have to know your rights and by law what they have to provide you. I could probably list a few more tips but I hope these will be valuable next time you are traveling with, or as, a person with a disability.

By Derek Carraway





FATHER'S DAY

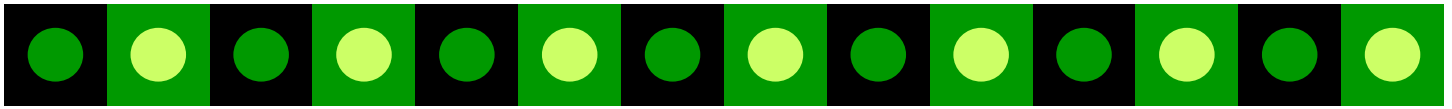
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FATHER
FUNNY
GAMES
GENEROUS
GUIDE
HANDSOME
HARDWORKING
HUGS
HUSBAND
JOKES
KIND
KISSES

LEARN
LIFE
LOVE
MEMORIES
MENTOR
PLAY
PROTECT
SILLY
SPECIAL
STRONG
SUPPORT
SWEET
TEACH
THANKS
TOGETHER





Travel Can Be Stressful . . .

Travel can be stressful at the best of times, but when you have to factor in a disability, getting from point A to point B can become that much more frustrating. Airlines know this, and do their part to make air travel as comfortable and seamless as they can for every passenger. Since each airline is different,



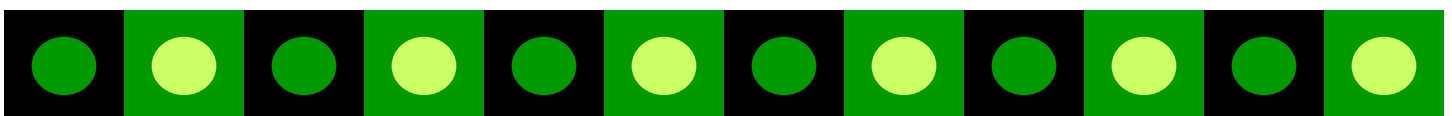
they may have differing policies where travelers with disabilities are concerned.

We're sharing some tips and information on what 23 major airlines do for travelers who need extra support when flying. I know this first hand on the way to Washington, DC my family had fun surprises, but not without setting at least one alarm off.

People who rely on meds have a hard

time in airports, so they mainly choose to drive. My family honestly can't go one day without something going wrong. Like I said earlier, traveling can be difficult for the disabled community. Next time you travel try to remember this won't last forever. The stress will turn to joy when you finally get where you are going. This is an undisputed fact. Traveling can be stressful but, to me it's a matter of how you make the travel plans. If it's last minute, you will feel stressed out.

By Dakota Smoot



Smooth Cruising

A quote by Guy Fieri, a Food Network Star Chef, says “You can find tranquility, you can find party, you can find new friends. I’m a cruise convert.” In all truth, I’m a cruise convert as well, and have been on 25+ vacations on 5 different cruise lines to 10 different ports of call throughout my lifetime. As an individual in a wheelchair, going on vacation is not always a simple and relaxing event. From finding wheelchair accessible transportation, to booking an accessible hotel room with all of the necessary amenities, it can be taxing. On top of that, there’s finding some sort of entertainment that you can actually participate in despite your limitations. After a vacation like that, even most able-bodied individuals would need a vacation from their vacation. That’s why, in my opinion, going on a cruise is the best all-in-one experience. On a cruise, you pay one price for your room, all the food you can eat, and countless hours of entertainment and activities. Additionally, being an individual in a wheelchair I have noticed the cast and crew of most cruise lines take that extra step to help individuals like myself.



On several occasions, the staff in the buffet would help me get my lunch. Also, the crew always ensures my safety when entering and departing the different ports of call. Moreover, there is always something

to entertain me on the ship, despite my limitations. From singing in the karaoke bar, enjoying a good drink at the piano bar, cracking up to the nightly comedian, or catching the latest Broadway Musicals in the main theater, there’s never a dull moment. However, even the greatest cruise

lines have their own faults. For example, most disability accessible rooms are overpriced, since there are a limited number of them on each cruise ship, and they are often located on the upper decks, which are valued more. Additionally, there have been a number of occasions when I have booked a “Handicap Accessible Room,” but upon boarding the ship, I have found that the room is so small that I can’t even get my power chair into my room. Despite these faults, I will continue to be a cruise convert, and I am looking forward to my next cruise vacation.

By Rocky Castro

Traveling with A Disability

“We can’t take your chair ma’am, so please stand up so we can load the aircraft!” The first time I ever traveled with my parents was at fifteen years old going to Tallahassee for a leadership camp. The first thing I noticed was that the other camper was told to get out of her chair so she could get on the plane. One big problem is that she could not transfer or walk. Their way to solve the problem was to refund her ticket.



It was at this point in my life that I realized two things: I was lucky to be able walk to my seat. And the ADA needed to up its game when it came to travel. My life thus far has lead me all over the world, and the trials and conflict that arise due to travel are unbearable at times.



To be frank, sadly in my time on the earth I have not actually had a good experience with traveling alone. When traveling with disabilities my words of wisdom are: Find good family or friends. The world isn’t ready for those of us with disabilities to be able to roll on.

Now, as not to leave a sour taste in the mouth of our readers, I will say that if we can possibly start to communicate our struggles maybe the world will be willing to help us. If you forget everything else, please remember, when all else fails: **BECOME A GREAT ADVOCATE!**

By Shevie Barnes

Staying in a Hotel

When you travel you could go camping or in stay in a hotel. You can stay with friends or relatives, too. I like staying in really nice hotels with bell staff, like when we go to The Family Cafe.

First thing to think about is money. You need to know your budget. The amount of money you have really matters when you travel. Some hotels are much less expensive than others. Look for discounts. Think about the cost of food,



activities, and transportation. Souvenirs, tolls, and tips cost money too.

Then, set time aside to make reservations for the hotel. Different online services will show you hotels. You have to know your arrival and leaving date. Have your credit card number too. You can call or do it on the website.

Remember, when you check into your hotel, you must show your ID. Memo-



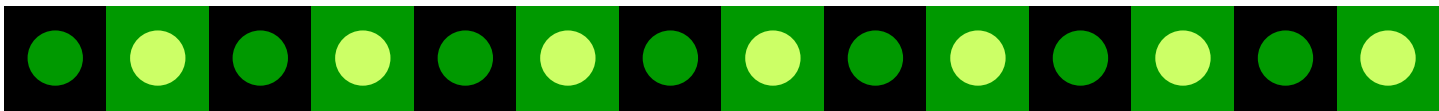
size the room number or keep it with you. If you lose your room key, get a new one from the front desk. But try to keep it with you because you avoid standing in line to get a new one.

Some expensive hotels have bell staff who will take your luggage up to your room. They will take it out of the car for you too. Have cash ready for their tip. Read some articles about tipping so you know how to do it. Sometimes hotels have people that help take the luggage out of the car and then a different person takes it to the room. Both should get tipped. Housekeepers get tips too. Some hotels let you take your own luggage up on a cart.

You will need to learn your way around the hotel. Sometimes I get lost. I have to read signs carefully.

Enjoy your stay!

By Ian Horowitz



How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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