

On another plane of existence, perhaps, a conversation is in progress and about to conclude. Some would recite this in Yiddish but I will spare the majority of it and translate...to give you a flavor however:

Riboyno shel oylam...kumt a neieh neshamah...
Ruler of the Universe, a new soul is coming...

Vu ist? Who is it?

Jeff Erlanger.

Who is Jeff Erlanger?

You remember, the young man who never understood the word “can’t”

No, I don’t remember...

You remember, Jeff, even though he never stood up he was taller than most people

I don’t think I remember

He ran for the City Council of Madison and almost made it!!

So did so many over the years!

Ruler of the Universe, you remember...he met Mr. Rogers who loved him...
Mr. Rogers who arrived here not so long ago...

I remember Fred Rogers but still can’t quite figure out this Jeffrey soul.

Jeff Erlanger, who went to camp when he was a little boy with all of the regular kids because the other camp was just for people who were disabled.

I think I remember something about that...

You remember, Jeffrey who came to work in the office and answered the phone by saying, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute – this is Jeff – can you help me??

You remember, Jeff who sat in a wheelchair

Many people sat in a wheelchair...what is different about him?

Jeffrey Erlanger, who couldn’t move his legs, whose arms were bent, whose neck was locked, whose hands were bandaged...

What a sad picture!!

Jeffrey Erlanger...who breathed only with the greatest difficulty, who struggled with every motion, but flashed a sweet smile to everyone around him.

Jeffrey Erlanger, who needed help with the simplest of human actions but always helped everyone who needed his vision. You remember, Ruler of the Universe, when he was on the internet and traced down a young woman in deepest sadness across the country. Some say he saved her life!!

Jeffrey Erlanger, who many said was crippled in body and elevated in spirit.

Oh, that Jeffrey Erlanger...A Shayner Mann...A Beautiful Jew and a dear sweet man.

Ruler of the Universe, should we put a ramp down for him?

No, my friend, don’t be silly...he will never need a ramp again.

—Eulogy given by Jerry Kaye, June 2007