



HEART STRINGS

A bi-monthly publication for families and friends enriched with the Down Syndrome connection.



July/August 2010

Upcoming Events

Holiday World

Saturday, September 25th

GRADSA will buy admission tickets for individuals with Down Syndrome and their immediate families. Extra tickets for extended family members can be purchased at discount rates and must be prepaid. Splash' Safari will be closed.

Please contact Carla Renfrow for tickets by Sept. 10th. 270-925-0195 or crenfrow@roadrunner.com

DSAW (formerly Buddy Walk)

Down Syndrome Awareness Walk

Saturday, October 9th, 11 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

Watch for more information coming soon.

Pie Auction

Coming in October

This was a success last year and we are excited to do it again. Please watch for more information.

NEW TV SHOW COMING

Forever Friends is targeted for kids ages 3-7 and stars Chris Burke, the actor with Down Syndrome best known for his role as “Corky” on the ABC-TV series “Life Goes On”. This unique show will feature people with and without disabilities both in front of and behind the cameras. Individuals with disabilities will be featured not as “disabled” but as talented, “abled” actors. **Forever Friends** will include music videos, sign language, a story line and a special featured called “Down Right Spectacular!” where children with and without disabilities can submit inspiring home video’s that highlight their special and unique talents. This segment will offer your children a chance to be featured on the show too! To view the pilot episode, please visit the web site: www.chrisburke.org/links. For more information please call (609)581-2651 or email jmuso105@aol.com.



Thanks Anji Edge

I want everyone to please know that Anji is still with us as a board member and will help whenever possible. Please keep Anji and her wonderful family in your prayers. She has been such a positive role model to this organization and always will be. There is no way to show our tremendous appreciation and love for Anji and her family.

New Executive Director

Hi, my name is Carla Renfrow and I am honored to be the new Executive Director for GRADSA. I come to GRADSA with great enthusiasm and a heart for helping others. My previous involvement in charity work and volunteering at school and church will greatly benefit GRADSA. I also work in accounting and HR at The Messenger Inquirer. I have one son, Cody who is 12 years old. I am extremely excited about helping the GRADSA families and taking the GRADSA Community to the next level in education, outreach and social events. I would love to hear from you with questions, suggestions or just to talk.

Carla Renfrow

270-925-0195

crenfrow@roadrunner.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT ANNOUNCEMENT

Brenda Walker is GRADSA's new President-Elect. Brenda has been a GRADSA board member since 2005. A former special education teacher, she has been employed by the Daviess County Public Schools for the past 28 years, currently serving as the Guidance Counselor at Country Heights Elementary School. Over the years, Brenda has gotten to know many of our GRADSA families through serving on the board and through the integrated preschool program at Country Heights. She looks forward to continuing serving the families of GRADSA in this new position.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Joy Engineer

Joy comes to GRADSA with excitement and a heart full of joy (no pun intended)! Joy has been a special education teacher for 10 years. She is starting her 7th year at Newton Parrish Elementary School in the MMD classroom. Her husband, Durand, teaches at Catholic High School and is the girl's head soccer coach. They have two precious children, Reagan, who is almost 3 years old and Max who is 7 months and has Down Syndrome. The family looks forward to meeting all of you at the GRADSA events.

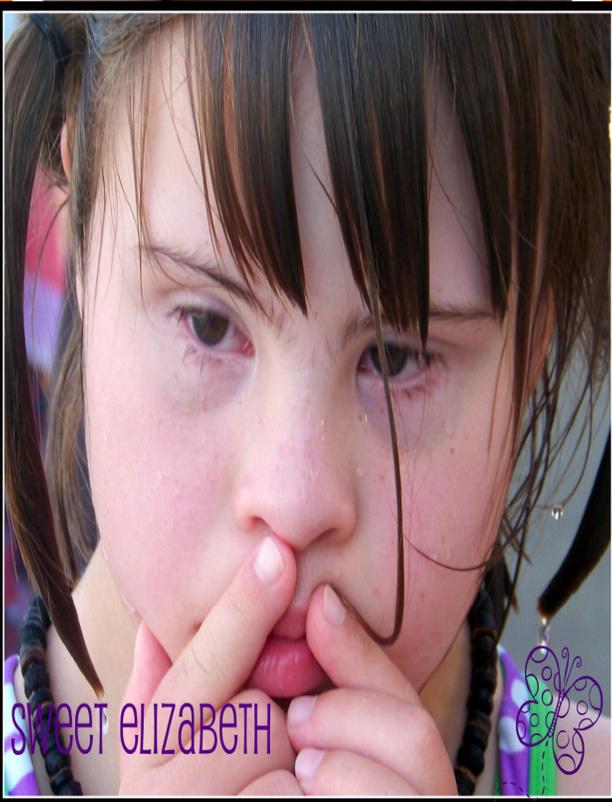
Harry Walker

Harry is employed as Traffic Coordinator at Sazerac north America, Inc. He came to Owensboro in 1967. Once seeing Owensboro he never saw reason to relocate to Ohio or Pennsylvania where his family was located. He graduated from Brescia University with a major in sociology and minor in psychology. He has a mobile DJ service which he enjoys greatly. He is fondly known as Mrs. Walker's husband or Nicholas' dad (his identity has been overshadowed). He has 2 children, Kin and Nicholas Walker and one fur child, Dixie! Harry is a former member of the Owensboro Jaycees and the Noon Optimist Club.

WELCOME Carla, Brenda, Joy and Harry!



Thanks to all that were able to attend the Pool Party, we had such a good time and I was so glad to meet everyone. Below are a few of the pictures. Sure hope I have the names correct!!! Love ya all, Carla.



Future Educational Events from Down Syndrome International

For more information go to www.downsed.org and click on events

Date	Time	Event
9-11 Sep 2010	All day	Down Syndrome Education Conference Atlanta, GA, USA
14-Sep-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about the specific learning needs of children with Down syndrome (5 to 11 years)
14-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about the specific language and learning needs of teenagers with Down syndrome (11 to 16 years)
15-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about the specific learning needs of children with Down syndrome (birth to 5 years)
21-Sep-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: Speech, language and communication skills for children with Down syndrome (5 to 11 years)
21-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Language and communication skills for young children with Down syndrome (birth to 5 years)
21-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Developing speech and language skills for teenagers with Down syndrome (11 to 16 years)
22-Sep-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about the specific language and learning needs of children and young people with Down syndrome (0 to 16 years)
28-Sep-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: Number, maths and memory skills for children with Down syndrome (5 to 11 years)
28-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Speech and verbal memory skills for young children with Down syndrome (birth to 5 years)
28-Sep-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Developing number, maths and memory skills for teenagers with Down syndrome (11 to 16 years)
29-Sep-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: Developing speech-motor skills and intelligible speech for children and young people with Down syndrome (0 to 16 years)
12-Oct-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about teaching children with Down syndrome to read (5 to 11 years)
12-Oct-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about teaching young children with Down syndrome to read (birth to 5 years)
12-Oct-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about teaching teenagers with Down syndrome to read (11 to 16 years)
13-Oct-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: Developing vocabulary and grammar for children and young people with Down syndrome (0 to 16 years)
19-Oct-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: Reading skills for children with Down syndrome (5 to 11 years)
19-Oct-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Early reading skills for young children with Down syndrome (birth to 5 years) -
19-Oct-10	14:30 GMT	Web Seminar: Developing literacy skills for teenagers with Down syndrome (11 to 16 years)
20-Oct-10	12:00 GMT	Web Seminar: What does research tell us about teaching children and young people with Down syndrome to read (0 to 16 years)

Back to School: What to say at your child's IEP meeting!

Most common comments made at IEP meetings and what you can say to counter them..

“She will get more attention in a small group setting,”

The average self-contained class has eight students all with significant special needs while the general education classroom has an average of 20 students but statistically only one will have significant special needs.

“Your child requires more attention than I can give in my class. I have 20 other students that need my attention.”

I understand and it sounds like you do not have enough support in the class to help with all of your students. Then maybe a paraprofessional is necessary.

Or

All students need to be challenged and you should not feel like you are the only one who can teach my child. I am sure there are several other children who would love to help out my child. We all know that helping someone else learn reinforces what is being taught. Peer tutoring is a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the class to learn.

“He needs to be with other kids that are like him. He will feel always left out and unable to really compete with his peers.”

My child needs to be around age-appropriate peers in real life situations to learn how to get along with others in the real world. Research shows that all children benefit from inclusive classrooms.

“He is not at the level of the other children.”

I know he isn't at the level of the other children. That is why he has an IEP. I don't expect him to be at the same level as his peers, but I do expect us to use a modified curriculum where we can identify the supports that are necessary and helpful for him to learn.

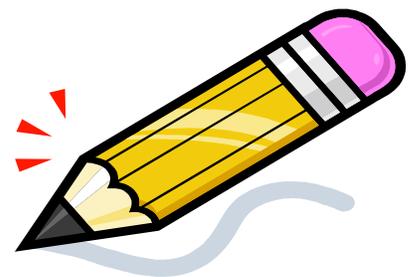
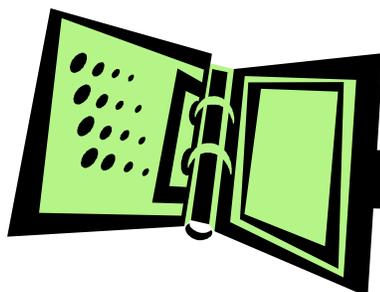
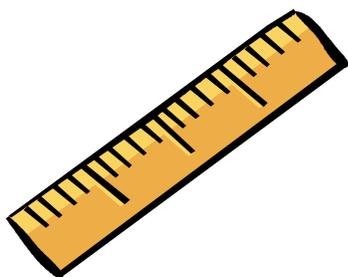
“We are concerned about her life and/or job skills. That is why she needs to be in this class.”

I really appreciate your concern. There are many things I can replicate at home and I can teach my child. But I cannot recreate a high/middle/elementary school environment. My child needs to experience that just like any other child. I will teach my child life skills. I can take my child to the grocery store. I need her to learn how to be around other people.

“They need to be in adaptive PE (or art or music).”

I understand my child has limitation; but she will benefit from access to the general curriculum, just like all of the other students do. And, in a class like PE (or art or music) just learning to follow directions or changing clothes is a skill my daughter needs for life

Taken from Down Syndrome News; Newsletter of the National Down Syndrome Congress, Vol. 33 2010; #2



THIS AND THAT...

Need good books? Go to www.woodbinehouse.com and get 20% off select books through August 31, 2010.

Problems with a public agency? Call Congressman Guthrie at 270-842-9896. Ask for a "Privacy Release Form". Fill out this form on a particular agency and send back to see if Congressman Guthrie can help you.

Stay up-to-date with NDSC governmental affairs!

Stay alert and informed by getting up-to-date information on critical issues such as proposed changes in Medicaid, IDEA, supported employment and more. Receive the free NDSC Governmental Affairs Newline by sending a request to join and an email address to info@ndscenter.org.

Parent Survey: Adaptation and Resiliency in Families of Children with Down Syndrome

Dr. Marcia Van Riper is conducting a research project with parents of children with DS. This study is part of a larger cross-cultural study that will be conducted in at least six different countries. You are invited to participate. A packer of questionnaires will take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete. This will be followed by one 60-90 minute interview, either by phone or in person. If you do not want to be interviewed, it is fine. To participate, please call or email Dr. Marcia Van Riper at 91-966-4284 or vanriper@email.unc.edu. All information will be kept confidential.

DON'T FORGET...

Two Rivers Buddy Ball is a non-profit sports league for kids ages 5-20 with any disability mental or physical that would keep them from playing on a regular league. Two Rivers now offers Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Cheerleading, Bowling, Fishing and soon to have swimming. Please go to www.tworiversbuddyball.com for more information and schedules.



Happy Birthday!

Neal Sweeney	June 1st
Caleb Francis	June 5th
Jason Snell	June 15th
Tina Miller	June 17th
Chris Hagan Stavrakis	June 18th
Zeriam Newcom	June 18th
Amie Morris	June 23rd
Blake Spainhoward	June 26th
Joseph Clements	June 27th

Abbey Garvin	July 3rd
Taylor Palmer	July 5th
Shelby Faye Crook	July 9th
Caron Posey	July 14th
Shawn Riney	July 15th
Sam Fenwick	July 18th
Tyler Lamar	July 19th
Dana Hamilton	July 20th
Will Beyke	July 26th
Alan Fisher	July 30th
Charity Wilkerson	July 31st

Linda Murphy	August 3rd
Justin Hagan	August 10th
Ethan Smith	August 11th
Aaron Shoemaker	August 20th
Beth Wilson	August 20th
Samuel Rutland	August 21st
Kyrstyn Randolph	August 22nd
Luke Stone	August 22nd
Brent O'Nan	August 23rd
Luca O'Hara	August 23rd
Keith Grant	August 28th



**“This is the day which the
Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be
glad in it.”
Psalm 118:24**

GOOD DEED!

GRADSA happily delivered cups with the *GRADSA* logo to both meetings, for the Daviess County Public Schools Special Education Teachers, to show our appreciation for all they do for our kids. The cups were filled with goodies and “Thank You” flyers. The teachers were very grateful.

Fazoli's Birthday Club:

Fazoli's, 5060 Frederica St., is treating individuals with Down Syndrome to a free meal to celebrate their special day. Children ages 12 and under can choose a kids meal while teens and adults have their choice of a small spaghetti with marinara or meat sauce. To receive you free meal, show this column to the cashier during the month of your Birthday.



GRADSA

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MISSION STATEMENT

GRADSA'S mission is to enable families enriched with the Down syndrome connection to share resources, build friendships and advocate together for the future of individuals with Down syndrome.

SERVICES

GRADSA is an affiliate of the National Down Syndrome Society and the National Down Syndrome Congress. GRADSA is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that provides its members with a bi-monthly newsletter, educational workshops, social activities, a website, a parent outreach program and a hospital outreach program. There are no membership fees to join.

POLICY STATEMENT

GRADSA does not endorse any specific therapy, treatment or educational setting. We provide a variety of information and viewpoints, however, each family must make an individual choice.

PRINTING OF ARTICLES

GRADSA welcomes articles from parents, professionals and other interested parties. Material for consideration should be sent to Carla Renfrow at info@gradsa.org. Articles written for *HeartStrings* may be reproduced if credit is given to the original author and GRADSA. Permission to reprint articles not original to *HeartStrings* should be acquired from the original source.

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