



HEART STRINGS

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



September/October 2010

Upcoming Events



FALL FUN FOR THE FAMILY

Friday, November 12th, 2010

6 pm to 9 pm

The Homeplace, 8289 Haynes Station Road, Whitesville

Come out for a fun night of food, games, hayrides, and more.

GRADSA will provide the meat and drinks, YOU bring a side dish or dessert.

Dress for the weather.

In the event of rain, the event will be held inside.

RSVP to Carla at crenfrow@roadrunner.com or
270-925-0195 before Thursday November 11, 2010.



Annual GRADSA Christmas Party

Saturday December 4, 2010

5 pm to 8 pm

Yellow Creek Baptist Church
5741 Highway 144
Owensboro, KY 42303

Come out and celebrate the holidays with the GRADSA family. Food, games, gifts and more.

This year, GRADSA will provide meat, drinks, and dessert.
You bring a side dish.

Look for more information coming soon.

RSVP with the number of children ages 14 and under, and total number of people.

Comments from Carla...

Well, it has been a few months now and I want to thank all of you for your help and patience. I feel very blessed and fortunate to be involved with GRADSA.

In this issue you will find upcoming events that you will not want to miss out on, important information, good books and an opportunity for FREE training.

I have enjoyed meeting several of GRADSA's wonderful families but still excited to meet the rest of you. Hopefully I will get the chance to do this over the Holidays.

www.momswithapps.com

Moms with apps is a collaborative group of family-friendly developers seeking to promote quality apps for kids and families.

There are apps for special needs to assist children and family members. The apps will be updated periodically. If you have feedback on the apps please contact the Developers.

After going to www.momswithapps.com just click on "apps for special needs" to get a current listing.

Hope you find this site helpful.

Welcome New Board Member

PIE AUCTION 2010

Deanna Best Honeycutt

Married to Brian Honeycutt Since May of 2009.

Step Mom to 2 great boys. Stephen is 19 and a 2009 graduate of OHS. He is diagnosed as MMR and has CAPD. He is currently attending the Carl Perkins Vocational Rehab School in Thelma KY. Thomas is 15 and a Sophomore at OHS. Thomas is diagnosed with severe ADHD and Asperger's Syndrome. After 15years in the business sector, I lost my job in May of 2009. GRADD gave me the opportunity return to college full time. I am now a junior at Brescia University working on my Bachelor's in Special Education (k-12 certification). I wanted to become involved in GRADSA because I believe in raising awareness for Down Syndrome and all special needs diagnosis's. In my free time, which is limited, I love to read, ride my bike and spend time with my friends and family.

GRADSA and The Lions Club made \$2,437.00 this year at the Annual Pie Auction. We want to thank all who participated, volunteered and baked. A very special thanks goes to *Cheri Morris* for her 14 homemade, professionally decorated cakes. This fund

This and That...

IEP Toolkit Available

The educational coordinator at The Jane and Richard Thomas Center for Down Syndrome At Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center developed *The IEP Toolkit* to help "families of children with DS become knowledgeable, prepared and empowered partners in the IEP process." The free 12-page toolkit walks through sections that are commonly included in IEPs. Download it at: <http://communicationskillsforlife.wordpress.com> Under "Posts by Topic" click on Education.

Down Syndrome News Volume 33, #6

CONTACTS WANTED

Mother of a 35-year-old son with DS and a spondylolisthesis L5 S1 has consulted doctors in spine surgery and neurosurgery to treat the back, leg and foot pain and numbness. Before deciding to pursue surgery, the family would like to hear from other parents who may have dealt with a similar concern.

Please contact Diane McLaughlin at: dmmcl@comcast.net.

Fundraiser for "Courageous Kids Camp"

GRADSA will be selling "World's Finest Chocolate Bars" to help Courageous Kids Camp. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go to the camp. If you are interested in buying or selling candy bars please contact info@gradsa.org or Deanna Isbill at 270-302-6893.

Down Syndrome License Plates

We are trying to get a Down Syndrome License Plate for KY. Per Louisville this project had been started and then put on hold. It will be started back up the first of the year. To do our part we need to get a list of people together that are interested in purchasing the license plate. Joy Engineer will be heading this project. You can contact info@gradsa.org for more information. We need your help to get this going.

Obama passes "Rosa's Law"

Rosa's Law, a law that would remove the terms "mental retardation" and "mentally retarded" from federal health, education and labor policy and replace it with the term, "intellectual disability" and/or "individual with an intellectual disability" has been signed by President Obama and now becomes law. The changes would occur as laws and documents come up for revision over the next several years. Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., the bill's sponsor stated: "For far too long we have used hurtful words like 'mental retardation' or 'MR' in our federal statutes to refer to those living with intellectual disabilities. Rosa's Law will make a greatly-needed change that should have been made well before today — and it will encourage us to treat people the way they would like to be treated."

Rosa's Law is named for Rosa Marcellino, a Maryland girl with Down syndrome.

Purchase this exceptional book and help *GRADSA*



ORDER YOUR COPY FOR \$29.95
Order at www.theotherpersonisyous.org
Enter code: GRADSA

All profits from sales of this book on this website will be donated to the organizations which support all aspects of the Down Syndrome community. \$5.00 of each book sold will go to GRADSA

A preview:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KszX1NvU_38

The Journey

An Excerpt from *I'm Down with You*

By Jagatjoti S. Khal

This book was born from a place of deep admiration. Many people search their whole lives for peace of mind and unconditional love—pouring over self-help books, attending seminars, listening to audiotapes and praying by their bedsides for help. The simple irony is that there already exists, within the Down Syndrome community, a simpler model of emotional contentment and spiritual perfection. I've always felt that this extra 21st chromosome was a blessing, whereas most people misjudged it as a curse, problem or disappointment.

To capture the spirit of these individuals, I embarked on a photographic journey—meeting, learning from, and photographing members of the Down Syndrome community. What you will find on these pages is not a staged or grouping of subjects, but rather, a series of moments with people I met and befriended along the way. In the yogic Scripture it says, "Even a glance from the eyes of a holy man can cure mental and physical imbalances."

Looking into the eyes of these extraordinary individuals is a healing experience that can cure even the most world-weary traveler. I set out to capture the essence and purity of these radiant souls by focusing on their eyes as a reminder of the perfection of God's image. With each page, I hope you find yourself gazing into the eyes of God and letting a warm flood of grace, radiance, and love permeate your heart. Look into their gentle, joyous eyes. The eyes of grace. The eyes of acceptance. The eyes that bring our souls to the very seed of life.

I hope that you enjoy these sacred images of true and unconditional love. If you are looking for quiet heroes who emit love each time they speak or take a simple breath, you are in for a treat. You will find the absolute kindness that exemplifies the same boundary-less map we are all taught that God offers, yet it does not require you to journey to the top of a mountain or to the pulpit of a temple. It only requires you to open your eyes.

~ Jagatjoti S. Khalsa

Another Great Book...Many of you may know this author. Parent Joe Rinaldo is from Owensboro and moved to Nashville a few years ago.

As a parent of a child with Down syndrome, Joseph M. Rinaldo has written a novel realistically portraying a character with Down syndrome. Garrison, Noah's father, may be telling about his life as a CIA operative supporting rebellion against anti-American governments, but Noah steals the story. Noah is not the stereotypical "overly loving" child with Down; he's more realistic, and the other characters treat him with the respect we all want shown to our children.

A SPY AT HOME presents parenting a child with Down syndrome in a touching light. The book is available at www.josephmrinaldo.com.

HOLIDAY WORLD 2010



*Holiday World
September 25th, 2010*

GOOD TIMES!!!

DSAW 2010

Ambassadors

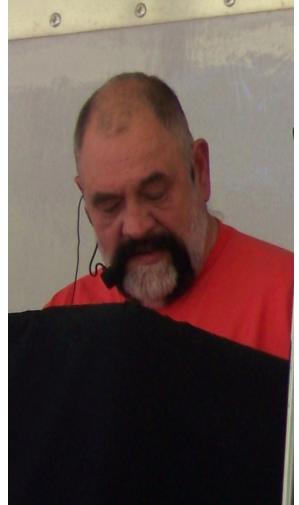
Peyton VanMeter

And

Jonathan Whittaker



Dana Hamilton
singing the
“National Anthem”
Great Job Dana!



Thanks Harry Walker:
“Rockin’ Gator”

**Best DJ in
Owensboro**

A Special Thanks to Sandra Clayton.
Sandra designed and sold T-Shirts to
Raise money for GRADSA.

Sandra presenting check for \$3,300.00 to
Stephanie Smith, President of GRADSA.



**A Huge Thanks to all of our Volunteers...without you
DSAW would not be possible!!!**

FUTURE IS NOW TRAINING

People With Developmental Disabilities and Their Families Creating Visions and Plans for A Desired Future

This project will assist participants to develop a vision for their family member's future and determine what supports would need to be in place to secure that vision. The plan will involve the identification of people to take on specific roles, the financial resources needed to put the plan in place, and the legal mechanisms required to implement the plan. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to actively include the person with a disability in this planning process as well as siblings and other family members or friends.

Who Should Come?

- Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Parents and Siblings. Other Interested Family Members Friends.
- What Will "The Future Is Now" Project Trainings Offer Toward Creating a Safe And Secure Future for a Loved One With a Developmental Disability ? Information and guidance on how to create a support plan for the future.
- Description of a Special Needs Trust Information about publicly funded resources and their limitations Critical questions which need to be addressed before meeting with an Attorney.
- Resources for referrals of Attorneys who can assist with planning. Team approach - encouraged to invite family members and/or friends to attend.

A RESOURCE NOTEBOOK and WORKSHEETS will be provided to each family who attends trainings. This is a FREE Training that will be held in Owensboro and several other locations.

Request your sign up sheet at info@gradsa.org, arcofky@aol.com or contact Carla Renfrow at 270-925-0195. Don't miss out.

DO YOU HAVE HBO? Don't miss out...

HBO will be showing "Monica and David" during November. It will also be out on DVD in spring 2011. Below is more information about "Monica and David".

MONICA & DAVID explores the marriage of two adults with Down syndrome and the family who strives to support their needs. Monica and David are blissfully in love and want what other adults have—an independent life. Full of humor, romance and everyday family drama, the film uses intimate fly-on-the wall footage to reveal the complexity of their story. While Monica and David are capable beyond expectations, their parents, aware of mainstream rejection of adults with intellectual disabilities, have trouble letting go. Directed by Monica's cousin, the film has a storybook beginning with a young couple full of hope and laughter. Just before the wedding, a self-assured Monica declares: "It's all about him, and all about me. This is my day. It's my life, to be with my husband forever". By their side are two fearless mothers who realize a lifelong dream—a "normal" life for their adult children. Marriage for adults with Down syndrome is very unusual, in part because until recently people with Down lived short isolated lives. In 1983 life expectancy was 25, but today it is 60, with some people living into their 70s. Although Monica and David's love is never in question, the honeymoon slowly subsides as the realities of everyday life sink in. They prepare to move to a new apartment with her mother (Maria Elena) and adoptive father (Bob), disrupting the routine which Monica and David so rely on. In the midst of the chaos, David is diagnosed with diabetes and it seems that the couple will never be independent. Throughout the story, Monica and David's capacity is countered by their need for assistance, establishing a vague grey line between adult and child. But their parents will not always be around, and Monica and David are can handle adult responsibility when it's allowed of them. Maria Elena has an epiphany moment, stating: "as parents, we want people to look upon our children with special needs like anyone else...And yet because we want to protect them so much, we are typically the first ones who treat them poorly by subconsciously denying them their rights to have a normal life." In the end, Monica and David are allowed to take the first steps towards a more independent life, and with Bob and Maria Elena's help, begin to explore work opportunities. At a meeting at Best Buddies, an employment coordinator explains that: "ultimately, it's about independence, independence with the support."

Happy Birthday!

Tatum Parker

Jeff Rhinerson

Mitchell Hensley

Isaac Ramsey

David Fogle

Raven Paulson

Kaleb Warman

Eli Rose

Alyssa Toerne

Ruby Hidalgo

Paige Roberts

Alec Skipworth

Denise Howard

September 1st

September 2nd

September 4th

September 9th

September 10th

September 13th

September 16th

September 18th

September 18th

September 20th

September 21st

September 21st

September 23rd

October 14th

October 19th

October 28th



**"This is the day which the
Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be
glad in it."**

Psalm 118:24

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.

A Special Thank You Note from DCPS:

Dear GRADSA,

Thank you so much for the cups of treats that you supplied for our Special Education Update training.

The teachers were so appreciative and certainly enjoyed the snacks.

Thank you for ALL your organization is doing for our kids.

Robin Bush

DCPS

GRADSA gives a special thanks to Brenda Walker for planning and delivering the cups to DCPS.



GRADSA

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www.gradsa.org

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 it's 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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