

UPCOMING
EVENTS

- **BEES—Building Exciting, Effective Skills for Parenting—**Next meetings are January 27th, February 24th, March 24th (always the 4th Thursday of each month from 6-7:30).
- **CENTERPOINT DD ADVISORY MEETING—**First Thursday of the month. Next meeting: January 6, 5:30—7 p.m., Center Point, 4045 University Parkway.
- **NO LIMITS II DANCE:** January 14th!
- PDSSN has served our families & community for a quarter of a century!

BUDDY WALK 2010!



What a great day Saturday, October 9th turned out to be! I don't think we could have asked for better weather or a better reason for celebrating! The day's events were smooth and everyone did a great job.

I want to thank you all for volunteering, for putting in many hours of hard work to bring this event together. I've had many participants tell me

how much fun they had and how they can't wait until next year. This Walk could not happen without the people that willingly volunteer! Thank you!

The gate count when we left was: 312. That's about the number of cars we've had in the past. This would not count any vehicles that already have a Tanglewood sticker.

Helen's latest \$\$\$ update indicated we have raised \$13,500 so far! Considering our pre-registration was down, I think we did really well!

We need to be sure to thank all our sponsors, contributors and volunteers. Thank you postcards were mailed to our sponsors and many others. If you know someone who was missed, let me know.

Thank you again for all that you do for the PDSSN! Sherry and Barbie will be updating us on next year's walk on page 2 of this newsletter. If you feel led to volunteer again, please let them know.

- Lisa Kennedy, 2010 Buddy Walk Chair

Buddy Walk 2011

Thanks to everyone for their support in the 2010 Buddy Walk and to Lisa Kennedy for her hard work for the last 4 years in chairing this walk. Lisa, you have done a fabulous job and we truly appreciate your dedication and support. To all the volunteers it would not be possible without you. We thank you tremendously - your work doesn't go unnoticed.

Barbie Wright and I have signed up to chair the walk for 2011. We would like to know if some of the volunteers would be willing to chair some of the committees they were on this year. We'll also take any ideas this year to make the event better, different or unchanged. Barbie and I are looking at 10-8 for next year's walk and as soon as its confirmed I will let everyone know.

We are looking at moving the talent show around a little so that most people don't leave after the walk. The talent show is one of the BW highlights. Any input would be appreciated.

Thanks for your support and as soon as we confirm the date, Barbie or myself will be notifying and gathering our committees together to plan.

Thanks!
Sherry Jeffries

Not a Member Yet? Please join PDSSN!

Membership in Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network offers some tangible benefits such as eligibility for workshop scholarships and the right to vote in elections, but the best intangible benefit you get is the pleasure of supporting activities that all children with Down syndrome and their families enjoy! We keep saying it's the best bargain available at \$10 per family per year! If your family is not among the names below, we hope you'll send a \$10 check to Helen Johnson, our treasurer, today! See the last page of this newsletter for Helen's address. Or join at our annual meeting on January 21st. Here are our current members:

Anders, Bill & Kathy
Burnette, Karen & Wayne
Donohue, Bill & Deb
Faulkner, Scott & Kristen
Gentry, Melinda & Jeff
Jeffries, Sherry
Kelsey, Chris & Arnn, Loretta
Liiperfert, Bailey
Reaves, James & Winnie
Severt, Nancy
Warren, Greg & Maggie

Bennett, Tootsie, Bobby & Brent
Cook, Harold Clay
Douglas, Robert & Kristin
Falsis, Hilda
Harvell, Michael & Karen
Jewett, Tamison
Kennedy, Wayne & Lisa
McGuirt, Will
Rice, Ron & Phyllis
Smitherman, Rebecca
Wright, Brad & Barbie

Bowen, Simon & Jessica
Dahlin, Jacob & Lori
Egan, Stuart & Laura Laxton
Fuller, John & Anike
Haynes, Ali & Greg
Johnson, Helen & Jim
Lane, Rosetta
Newton, Brian & Traci
Sauer, Stephen & Sandy
Varner, Craig & Patti
Butler, Richard & Anita

Tidbits from the Top!

We asked for some good news and we got some great news! Continue, dear readers:



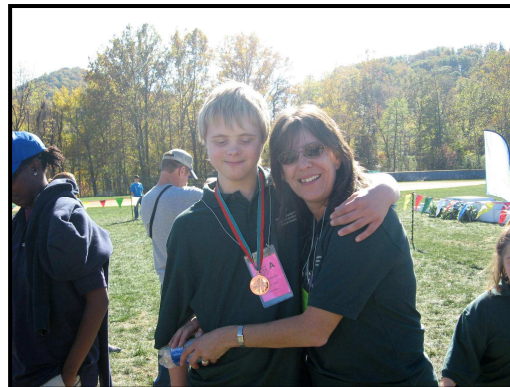
Lisa and Ronnie Bassett, Chase's parents, have combined their family's love of racing with their support of PDSSN by raising \$185 for the organization from contributions of their fellow drivers! In addition, they had copies of our logo made into decals that can be put on a car. (They race with our logo on their cars!) The decals will be available at our annual meeting! Thanks so much, Lisa, Ronnie, and all you Bassett racing enthusiasts! We appreciate your dedication!



Pictured at the right is Austin Barnhill with Suzanne Marin, his Bocce coach for Special Olympics.

On Saturday 10/23/10, Austin won a bronze medal in the singles division of the 2010 SONC (Special Olympics of NC) Western Bocce Tournament held in Asheville.

Way to go, Austin! We're so proud of you!



An Update on Miss Rachael Owen

Rachael now has a job coach and is doing an internship at the Lexington YMCA, working at the back door check in desk. The job description is for her to boot up the computer, to look up members names if they forget their cards, to scan their cards, to give out towels or any other supplies they might need from behind the desk and to greet everyone as they enter and exit the Y. She really loves this job.

She also goes to GTCC two days a week, has piano lessons on Wednesday, a bible study group at church, and an assistant teacher job for the 5 year old class.

She 's training for Special Olympics State Games in Cheerleading again. And she continues to bowl on a USBC-sanctioned bowling league on Saturday Mornings. I am also bowling in a different league on Tuesdays, and we recently entered a doubles "Turkey Trot" tournament, with prize monies of \$100 for first place. We didn't win, but we did have fun!

Coming up, we have our Women's Christmas party at church, and Rachael will be helping me decorate a table. This is something she LOVES to do each year. She may also play some Christmas music on the piano for the ladies event. She is working on Carol of the Bells, Jingle Bells, Silent Night and Away in a Manger. She's doing quite well. A couple of the songs are duets (with me) so we may get to play something together. (Thanks to proud mom, Patti Varner, for this update. See page 4 for Rachel's photo!)



↑ Several Families from the area went to Victory Junction Gang Camp for the Down Syndrome Family weekend. Here is a picture of all of us. The families are: Drum, Barnhill, Jeffries, and Moutons (Used to be in W-S, but now in Cary....we still claim them. (Thanks to Kris Drum for sharing this tidbit.)

More Tidbits from the Top!

You may recognize these handsome men and lovely ladies! The photos were taken by Melinda Gentry at the formal dance.



Brent Bennett



Jeremy Donohue



Michelle Barker



Rachael Owens



Neal Joyner



Sarah Ashby

Even More Tidbits from the Top!



Hannah Newton, age 9, and her Shetland pony, Peanut, are shown here having a great time!

One of Hannah's accomplishment this past summer was learning to ride! She was so excited when she didn't have to have anyone walk beside her to help with balancing. Hannah's words were, "I can ride ALL by myself!"

With her mom holding the lunge line, Hannah is able to walk and trot Peanut. Her next goal is to steer the pony. Good luck, Hannah! We know you'll master this skill and have a great time at it!

Self Awareness Conference Earns High Marks

In response to member request, a conference was held in October to focus on how to help people with disabilities deal with issues of personal development and safety. It was co-sponsored by Center-Point and PDSSN, and attended by parents and professionals. The day's event was a great success.

Terri Couwenhoven, who provided leadership for the conference, is the parent of a daughter who has Down syndrome. In addition to her academic and work credentials, this gave Terri instant credibility and rapport with her audience.

Parents were impressed with the material, and the perspective that Terri shared. Below two of our members express their opinions of the conference:

"I found the conference to be helpful in a lot of ways. The most important thing I learned was to evaluate how I was talking to my son and how he was learning what was important. I also was able to step back and focus on the skills I needed to review and/or teach him. The book is a timeless resource of information and I would highly recommend purchasing it." -Kathylyn Barnhill.

"Not only did I learn things that are going to be great resources (when my daughter's older), but I took away information that I can use even now. Teaching ... privacy, etc. It's so much easier sometimes to do things for our kids because it goes much faster, but when I heard that at age 6 kids should be starting to bathe themselves, it got my attention. We go through step by step how to bathe (sometimes in song :-). It's also a great setting to continue teaching privacy. Glad I bought her book. It will be a good resource for me and visual teaching guide for my kids." -Barbie Wright



Terri Couwenhoven, nationally recognized speaker, leading the conference on Self-Awareness

The Road Not Taken

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference*

...Robert Frost

Roads

As I near my fortieth birthday, I can't help but reflect on the roads I've traveled. The last significant road was the birth of my daughter. The pregnancy was as normal as can be expected in a tired old thirty six year old. What was not normal was the turmoil that surrounded me. I found myself sitting on the sidelines helplessly watching my husband battle his addiction demons and my mother battling Alzheimer's. Both of them were hopelessly losing. As my heart was breaking for them, my heart was also mysteriously mending.

June 17, 2007. Miss Ella Grace was born via C-section. I lay on the gurney helpless yet again, numb from my chest down, arms splayed out to my sides, unable to move anything but my head. When I heard that first cry I knew immediately who was mysteriously mending my heart. My eyes filled with joyous tears. Then... oh, God please no, then... I hear whispers from the nurses and the doctor. The nurse came over to me with concerned eyes and told me Ella was not breathing well and would need to be taken to NICU immediately. Her lips were blue and she did not look healthy. I barely heard, she also has features that may be indicative of Down syndrome. More tears, this time they were tears of fear, all I could repeat was "She's going to be okay" over and over. I was trying to convince myself, the doctors, the nurses, God, anybody, everybody... MY DAUGHTER WAS GOING TO BE OKAY.

They came in with the DNA results the next day and confirmed she had Down syndrome. I never asked, "Why me?". Only, "What can I do to teach her and help her in life?" I laugh now at how naïve I was!! Little did I know, she would be teaching me and everyone else she graces with her presence.

A week after she was born, my dad's spleen busted. He was in critical condition for several days. I turned to Ella for comfort. Three months later, my mother lost her battle with Alzheimer's. I turned to Ella. During the divorce and eventually the death of her father, I turned to Ella. Her touch, her smile, her unconditional love brought me through the most difficult times I ever had to face. I felt guilty for looking to her for comfort. I'm the adult; I should be the comfort giver. Another lesson she taught me, love is reciprocal and it's okay to be weak sometimes.

Oh this is definitely not the easiest road traveled. There have been emergency room visits, physical therapy, speech therapy, temper tantrums, sleepless nights and many lessons in humility. Each lesson she teaches me ends with a smile on her face and sometimes even an impish gleam in her eye.

The incidence of Down syndrome is estimated as 1 in 733 births. I wonder why God has sent so many angels here. Could it be because they teach us how to live as God wants us to live. I see Ella with adults and their walls immediately come down. They are genuine, caring and loving. I see Ella with children of all ages who jostle past each other so they can spend a few seconds with her. They don't see differences, they see similarities.

So, on December 22, when I look back, what will I see? I will see God, family and friends that walked beside me and sometimes carried me down my chosen paths. I will see a woman I am proud of, a child that has more wisdom than most people ten times her age, and I will see a road less traveled and more beautiful than I could have ever imagined. And most important, I will see that my DAUGHTER IS MORE THAN OKAY!

- Brigitte Parsons

PLEASE Annual Meeting!

**Please come to
our 2011
Annual Meeting!**

**Where: Allegacy Federal CU
1691 Westbrook Plaza Drive**

**When: Friday, January 21st,
5:30 p.m.**

**Dr. Tamison Jewett's
annual update on facts
about Down syndrome!**

**Election of
Board Members for
2011!**

**Dessert!
Yum!**

Meet other families!

Have fun!



Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network

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Website: www.pdssn.com

Support PDSSN! Join Today!

PDSSN friends—if you are not yet a member of PDSSN, consider joining, please. You can print the membership form you'll find on our website and mail it with your \$10 family membership annual dues to:

PDSSN
Helen Johnson, Treasurer
PO Box 91
Pfafftown, NC 27040

PDSSN is a non-profit organization



Dance! Dance! Dance!

COME AND DANCE! WELCOME FALL!

Spend some more time with your family
Get More Exercise
Catch Up with Friends

No Limits II

When: January 14: 7—9 p.m.
Where: Pinedale Christian Church
(Directions on PDSSN Web Site)

Good to Know!



Triad First in Families has money set aside just for families of people with Down syndrome. This fund is provided to TFIF by PDSSN. Your Buddy Walk dollars at work in our community! For more information, contact Susan Pepper at Triad First in Families.



Is Your Child Interested in Playing Ice Hockey?

Winston-Salem Youth Hockey Association is opening their season for the Special Hockey Program for children with disabilities. This is a joint program sponsored by Carolina Hurricanes and Winston Salem Youth Hockey Association. Practices are held each Sunday 4:30 p.m. at the Annex of the Lawrence Joel Coliseum in Winston Salem starting Sunday, December 5th. Please contact Jacob Dahlin at 336-596-7477 or jdahlin@mountcastleinsuranc.com.



Save these dates: Jan 21, 5:30 p.m., annual meeting.
April 18th, High Point, Rights Law Conference.



From Laura Laxton: Here is the direct link to the DS & non-verbal designs: http://store.safetytat.com/store/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=1_5&zenid=b3fdcdf743ca11452f595e0bbf52e625. We used the write-on version for both of our kids while at the NDSC convention in Orlando this summer. They worked GREAT. One came off after too much sunscreen, but the others lasted for the whole week.

YOUR PDSSN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President: Wayne Kennedy
Vice President: Melinda Gentry
Secretary: Deborah Woolard
Treasurer: Helen Johnson
Self-Advocate: Brent Bennett

Other Family Members

Lori Dahlin Barbie Wright
John Fuller Bill Donohue
Margaret Warren
Phyllis Marshall-Rice

Professionals

Dr. Will McGuirt
Dr. Tamison Jewett
Rebecca Smitherman
Chris Kelsey

