



STEPPING UP

July 2010

Issue 10

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CELEBRATING EVERY PERSON WITH DOWN SYNDROME

All Born In Conference

Inclusion conference inspires new teacher

By Kim Jarvis

I attended the All Born In conference for the third year this April, as I was finishing up my Master of Arts in Teaching degree. As a new educator I was excited for the opportunity to expand my knowledge about the nuts and bolts of inclusive education. As part of my education, I took classes on the importance of differentiated instruction and how to include all students in my classroom, but as the aunt of an amazing boy with Down syndrome I knew that what I was taught during my degree program was just the tip of the iceberg. Luckily the All Born In Conference is around to help fill in the blanks and give me the tools and confidence to support all of my future students.

This year's event was outstanding. I, along with 220 other parents and professionals, gathered at the Ambridge Event Center for a day full of informative sessions and inspiring keynote speeches. Session topics ranged from support with IEPs to typical sexual development, from kindergarten preparation to Latino parent leadership. There were so many good choices it was difficult to decide which workshop to attend for each session.

Joy Zabala started off the day with a great talk on Universal Design for Learning and how important it is to look at a classroom and identify any barriers that might be in place for any learner. She explained that the three main pillars of

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Wednesday's Child is Full of... Love

Family rallies around Riley

By Jennifer Johnson

"Wednesday's child is full of woe." Or so the saying goes. Yet our Wednesday child is full of joy and rhythm, empathy and smiles; he is full of love. Our son Riley Finn was born on Wednesday, August 31, 2005. Our miracle had finally arrived. Sure, his birth was difficult and he had jaundice and low tone in the hospital. Riley's pediatrician assured us that he would keep an eye on Riley and his low tone. He encouraged us to go home and enjoy our newborn son. We did. At three weeks, Riley rolled over. Again and again and again. Ha! What low tone? That first year, we lived on Riley-time. He was meeting milestones at his own pace, just a few weeks behind schedule. After all, he wasn't a textbook baby. He was our miracle, our Riley.

At 14 months, Riley was at a well-baby exam for an upcoming eye surgery to

Please see *Wednesday's Child* on page 3

*"There shall be eternal
summer in the grateful
heart."*

~Celia Thaxter

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Readers are welcome to submit letters and articles to the address above or e-mail editor@nwdsa.org. Please include your name, address, phone number and e-mail.

All submissions will be reviewed and edited for content and style.

The NWDSA Mission:

Create and nurture a loving and inclusive community celebrating every person with Down syndrome.

NWDSA will accomplish this mission by empowering and supporting families and individuals who have been touched by Down syndrome.

We will work to increase education, promote public understanding and acceptance, and toward full inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome in our community.

Opinions published in *Stepping Up* are not necessarily those of the NWDSA

Photo on front and back cover by Jodi Collins of Urban Photography www.urban-photography.com

Letter from the Board

The NWDSA welcomes summer and new board members

By Steven Holland, NWDSA President

With all the challenges facing us, from oil spills to the crisis with federal and state budgets, and ongoing unemployment for so many, it reminds us that what really counts are our families, friends, and community. In difficult times we rely on each for help and encouragement. NWDSA is pleased to announce that we will be getting some help and encouragement in the form of two new board members and a new Advisory Board Member. We are also working hard to settle into our amazing new Resourcefulness Center. We will welcome you all to join us for an open house in September. Many thanks to the people at the Multnomah Educational Service District for this great opportunity.

Joining the Board of Directors are Becky Adelman and Tina Albers. Many of you know Becky from her work at OHSU, and she has been a long-time supporter of the NWDSA's work. She is a parent of two young adults and has extensive experience with health care systems and advocacy. Becky is the Family Involvement Manager at Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. She has a passion for empowering and supporting families in leadership positions and making sure that families participate in meaningful ways as advocates for their children. She also works with faculty and students at the Child Development Rehabilitation Center to promote family-centered care. Having Becky work with us more formally means a lot to us, and we look forward to her sharing her depth of skills, knowledge, and wonderful smile.

Tina Albers has volunteered with NWDSA for a number of years, and her can-do spirit, work ethic, professionalism, and positive energy are absolutely contagious. Tina is a graduate of Portland State University with a degree in Business and Human Resource Management, and has worked as an insurance agent and in the health care industry in business management. She is a great addition to our NWDSA team and family and will be taking on the role of treasurer and human resources advisor. Her hobbies include biking, hiking, camping, tubing, rafting, snowboarding, going to the beach, meeting new people, reading and having bar-b-ques. Tina is going to keep us young and active!

Joining our Advisory Board is Melanie Fallis. She is grandmother to four boys, including Riley Finn, born August 2005, who has Down syndrome. Be-



See Letter on page 5

Summertime fun with the Jarvis-Holland family

Wednesday's Child

Continued from page 1

address his crossed eyes. The doctor turned to us and said that Riley's head had stopped growing at the rate it had once been growing. This, the doctor shared, was an indication of developmental delay. Riley needed a full round of tests at OHSU and we would have to wait four long months for them to fit us in. What? What happened to Riley-time?

Riley charmed everyone at Doernbecher Children's Hospital. While my husband Cory and I anxiously read the faces of the 11 specialists observing Riley, he scooted around on his bum, smiling. We were heartened to hear that he was on the cusp of grasping new skills and with their help, he would learn them successfully. Minutes later, though, we were horrified to learn that the preliminary diagnosis meant a very early death for Riley. My husband and I gathered up our little boy and left; exhausted and scared but hopeful that the blood tests would bring better news.

Two weeks later, our pediatrician called. With bewilderment and tears in his eyes, he delivered the diagnosis of Down syndrome. We were relieved. Then shocked. Everyone was shocked. The doctor, our parents, friends, family, the specialists at OHSU - no one caught it. No one saw it. No one suspected it.

Initially, we thought our whole world had collapsed. But in time we realized we had been given an amazing gift. We had 17 months of not worrying. We had 17 months of calm before the craziness of weekly therapy visits, IFSP and later IEP appointments. We had 17 months of hopes and dreams for our son that we became determined to not let this diagnosis change. Riley was still our Wednesday child, full of joy and possibility - not of woe.

Now that he's a big brother to Colin, and has completed two years of preschool, Riley is a confident and capable little guy. He loves to dance, give hugs, sing, recite the alphabet, giggle, count, go on walks, climb, swing, slide and he loves to be helpful. As with all firstborns, Riley teaches Cory and me every day how to be parents, and we're extra proud of each new accomplishment, even as Colin catches up.

On this journey, we have also had the love and support of both sets of Riley's grandparents. My parents had retired to a golf course community in Gresham before his birth and became his daycare two days a week, providing a much needed overnight for us and giving the three of them time to form an incredible bond. My Dad in particular was smitten with Riley - he would insist on putting Riley to bed after some Riley/G'pa time and would insist on greeting Riley when he woke up. He didn't want to miss a thing. He cherished Riley. Riley was his special man.

The bond they created was so strong it could only be broken by death. Sadly, my Dad died unexpectedly in October, 2009 of silent heart disease. That was the last day G'pa talked with Riley - and the last day that he played golf with his buddies at Persimmon Golf Course.

In honor of my Dad's memory and his love for Riley, on October 11, 2010, the Persimmon Golf Course is holding the Bill Fallis Memorial Golf Tournament, "Tee UP for DOWN Syndrome." 100% of proceeds will go to support the NWDSA's outreach, inclusion and education programs. My mother Melanie would love to give you more information on sponsorship and golfer signups at melaniefallis@gmail.com.



Riley with his parents Cory and Jennifer and brother Colin



Riley and Colin



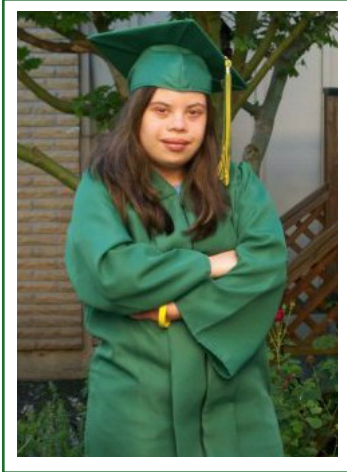
Bill and Melanie Fallis with Riley at the 2009 Buddy Walk

Family Corner

Saying Goodbye to School

By Sheyla Hirshon

My daughter Chrystal has just graduated from high school. I wrote this reflection of our school journey shortly after our last back-to-school night last September as I ran from class to class, retracing her footsteps through a typical day at school.



Chrystal graduated from high school this year

The halls were awash with parents, a few of them familiar, and we wailed together: “What happened? It was just yesterday they were in kindergarten.”

Even the hard auditorium seats and the principal’s somewhat overdone joviality were tinged in nostalgia. The halls were awash with parents, a few of them familiar, and we wailed together: “What happened? It was just yesterday they were in kindergarten.”

It’s been a long haul for us. Chrystal was born in Nicaragua with Down syndrome. In 1997 I brought her to the United States “for a few years,” convinced that she would receive a better education here than in our small impoverished city. Uppermost in that conviction was the notion that inclusion, still unknown in Nicaragua, was the way of the so-called “first world.”

Almost everyone involved with the world of disabilities utters either a peal of laughter or a snort at this point in the story. But, amazingly it happened, thanks to John Withers, a visionary principal we had the incredible luck of connecting with. I e-mailed him from Nicaragua stating that I would like my 6-year-old with DS, who understood English but spoke only Spanish, to become part of the Spanish Immersion program, which was then starting up at Atkinson Elementary. And he answered: “Sure, come on,” with a few caveats I didn’t understand at the time, but now comprehend all too well: to register her as a normal student and not to expect any transportation. “They’ll do some testing on down the line,” were his words.

Twelve years later, John, I’m still thanking you in my heart as the bell for fourth period rings and I leap out of my chair in the very functional learning center room, with the very well-meaning and competent, and, yes, necessary teacher. But this teacher’s profession is very focused on repetition and measuring. My daughter’s quarterly reports say things like: “Chrystal read orally a third grade passage with 91.2 correct words per minute.”



With the sounding of the bell, I am released into a general education American History classroom where the teacher exudes enthusiasm and talks of wanting kids to like history and to understand how it has affected people, instead of memorizing dates.

A brief pause for fifth period, which Chrystal spends as an aide in the school’s bookroom, and it’s on to sixth period. Chrystal - who is an incredible schmooze - had talked her counselor into signing her up for this “regular English class.” I had spent most of the summer warning her that she might find senior English extremely difficult.

The room looks more like a neighborhood coffee shop than a classroom - couches, art objects, posters and memorabilia everywhere. The teacher

See Family Corner on page 5

Letter from the Board

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fore retiring to Oregon in 2003, Melanie worked at the IBM Corporation in San Jose, CA, mostly managing teams of software development engineers and doing project management. One pet project, a weeklong technology camp for sixth-grade girls, was eagerly adopted by other high-tech companies, including HP and Intel. Melanie's personal interest in NWDSA is fundraising, and this goal is directly connected to her husband Bill's unexpected death in late 2009. A great start to her involvement on our advisory board is the Bill Fallis Memorial Golf Tournament, "Tee UP for DOWN Syndrome" coming up on Oct. 11. See the NWDSA web site for more details and to register for the tournament.

As we move into summer, take time to pull your shoes off and take a walk in the grass. Enjoy the sunshine on your face, and let your mind take a break from cares and worries. Enjoy the laughter of your children as they splash in the pool, or throw water balloons. Take a bike ride, or go for a walk in the neighborhood. Dig in the garden, read a book, or hike in the woods. Count each day as a blessing and live in the moment. The best time to enjoy life is right now.

Family Corner

Continued from page 4

talks of wanting to do something different in senior year, of inspiring creativity and passion along with stimulating reading and writing. I am open-mouthed in wonder and in leaving I tell him that it's a privilege and a total surprise for my daughter to be in a class where creativity is fostered. He laughs. He has no idea, I think, what I mean when I say "privilege."

The final period is Art 3-4, and we are surrounded by a wealth of visual stimuli; color and form and an elaborate grading scheme designed to reward good intentions in this class of 40 students.

I walk home through the brisk autumn dark, asking myself why I feel so much happier in the general education setting, with its emphasis on inspiration, than in the learning center with its relentless emphasis on measurement and "adult living skills." Is it me?

It's been a long day, it's been a long journey, and I'm a little tired. There have been pages of e-mails, hours and hours of homework, countless IEP meetings that always felt like trial by a jury not of our peers. But 12 years on, I have a daughter who moves through school with confidence, eagerly greeting and being greeted; who moves easily between English and Spanish; who understands that sometimes she needs help with things that others find easy; and who is full of illusions, dreams, projects and ideas... and creativity, just like every other 18-year-old. And, yes, I believe that her "typically developing" classmates (whatever that means) have also learned something over the years, as I can note by their total ease interacting with her.

We had a miracle happen on entering kindergarten. It fills me with rage that inclusion is ever less the norm in our district, that it is not "the way of the first world" as I innocently thought 12 years ago, that parents and students still have to fight so hard to be included in the halls of our public schools. But I am convinced that it's a battle worth fighting.



Daniel dressed up as Uncle Sam on the 4th of July

As we move into summer, take time to pull your shoes off and take a walk in the grass. Enjoy the sunshine on your face, and let your mind take a break from cares and worries.



Chrystal at the 2010 All Born In Conference

The NWDSA Finds a New Home

Resourcefulness Center moves to MESD headquarters

By Angela Jarvis-Holland

Today I sat on the floor going through one of the last few boxes that need unpacking in the NWDSA's new home. As I sorted, sifted and tried to organize a box from the back of the shelf, I found myself amazed at all we have enjoyed and worked on with our many partners, as well as at the beauty, growth and changes in the children that motivate our work.

Among the papers was a disc from a week-long summer inclusion institute I attended seven years ago. Also at that event were Angela Frome from the NWDSA and Nancy Anderson from the Multnomah Education Service District (MESD). We worked in groups during the week and drew a map of how we would like the future to be. We wished for many things and one of them was to be in respectful powerful partnerships across the divide of parent and professional. It was an intense and challenging week.

Now seven years later we are being welcomed by MESD Superintendent Ron Hitchcock, Nancy Anderson, and the supportive staff at MESD into a new and comfortable space to grow our work. We are excited about the opportunity to continue to create an NWDSA family-friendly Resourcefulness Center within the MESD main building near Portland Airport. And we will keep the door open wide to our families and friends from all over the Portland Metro and Southwest Washington areas.

We have a larger space to work in, bigger kids area and a comfortable spot to connect and share resources. We are also able to use some of the other larger meeting spaces in this building and that is a good thing since a lot is being planned for the fall.

An exciting and needed project we are launching is a kindergarten inclusion cohort program that will focus on that critical transition to kindergarten. We have built expertise in trainings that empower parents and will draw on the talents of the staff and many presenters we have worked with both in our RLC trainings and at the All Born In conferences. Our intent is to take a group of parents who have children with significant disabilities and provide them with trainings and tools they need to advocate for a great transition to inclusive kindergarten.

When we ask for rights such as inclusion in kindergarten we can also prepare ourselves for some of the responsibilities that go with that request. MESD and others will be helping us reach out and find families who want to commit to several trainings that will give them portfolios, tools, insights and relationships to help them



The new Resourcefulness Center has lots of room to work...



Welcome to the NWDSA's new home

... I found myself amazed at all we have enjoyed and worked on with our many partners, as well as at the beauty, growth and changes in the children that motivate our work.

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steer their course. Portland State University will continue to be a key partner in this work along with others.

Our other work such as the Buddy Walk, new parent outreach, phone support, drop ins, social events, awareness work, RLCs, youth work, presentations, All Born In Conference, and community-building will all continue. We will be presenting with OHSU at a medical ethics conference in Seattle on the need to have the parent’s perspective understood and appreciated in the context of genetic testing. We also have action meetings in process to strategize and protest cuts at the local school district level, and at the state and federal levels. As everyone knows, needs continue to grow making our work more important than ever.

Amongst the many photos in the box I discovered while unpacking, were my two sons at rallies and protests. Daniel first as a toddler and later as a young man telling his own story. It’s important to also note the many happy moments we have all shared with NWDSA at our many events. Life moves fast and progress is not always linear.

Coming together, sharing all we can, raising funds for the work and showing our pride at events like the Portland SW Washington Buddy walk, are ways to feel less of a victim. They are also ways to find meaning and joy in our lives and that is something every family is looking for more of.

We would love to have some housewarming help for our move and have a wish list that includes a “nice trendy sofa“ for the youth group; Starbucks cards to treat our volunteers and drop-in families; Fred Meyer coupons for some of the new things we need. A toy castle and Playmobile figures have been requested by the youngsters, and a TV/VCR for the youth area. Please let us know if you can help.

Please come and celebrate the new space on September 15th. You are all invited to come check out the new location from 4 to 6 p.m. at 11611 NE Ainsworth Circle, Suite 321. Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP to 503-238-0522.



The new space features four separate offices

Coming together, sharing all we can, raising funds for the work and showing our pride... are ways to find meaning and joy in our lives and that is something every family is looking for more of.



... and room to sleep for younger guests



The children’s play area is well stocked with toys, but we need more guys and playmobile figures

Events

2010 Summer Social: Saturday, August 28 from 11 AM to 3 PM at Blue Lake Regional Park. Come enjoy an afternoon of socializing and fun with the Northwest Down Syndrome Association. There will be games to play and live music to dance to, along with all of the amenities provided by Blue Lake Regional Park. Hot dogs, fruit and drinks will be provided, parking costs \$5 per car load. RSVP to 503.238.0522 or mhagood1970@yahoo.com.

Tee UP for DOWN Syndrome Golf Tournament: In memory of Bill Fallis to benefit the NWDSA. Monday, Oct. 11 at the Persimmon Golf Club, 500 SE Butler Road, Gresham, OR. Golfer Registration: \$140 per person; \$500 per foursome. For more information contact melaniefallis@gmail.com.

Resourcefulness Center Open House: Come check out our new space at the Multnomah Education Service District Headquarters from 4 to 6 PM on September 15 at 11611 NE Ainsworth Circle, Suite 321. Refreshments will be served. RSVP to 503-238-0522.

Open Arms Playgroups: The playgroups are taking a break for summer, but will return in September. See the NWDSA web site for details.

Down syndrome community drop-in session: Join NWDSA Board Members for a casual afternoon exploring our resources and getting to know other parents. In September we will resume our meetings every Thursday, from 12:30 - 2:30 PM at the NWDSA Resourcefulness Center, 11611 NE Ainsworth Circle, Suite 321, Portland. Enjoy light refreshments and a chance to share stories and ideas. Please RSVP at 503-238-0522 or to Angela Jarvis-Holland at ajarvis-holland@nwdsa.org.

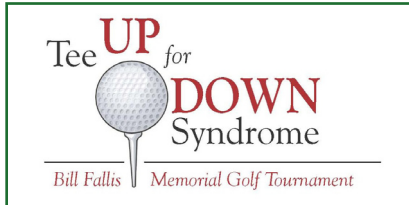
All Born “In” cross-disability inclusion drop-in session: Starting again in September, join us on the 4th Wednesday of every month from 5:30 - 7:30 PM to discuss IEP goals and inclusion, and explore our resources. For location and contact info, see DS community drop-in session listed above. In the fall we will be doing focus sessions with guest speakers. More details to come.

Et Cetera

... Neera Malhotra, a doctoral student at Portland State University, has joined with NWDSA to host sessions in the fall for parents interested in how to talk with their child about sexuality and development. Neera has more than ten years of experience as a special educator and volunteer in India. “I have a passion to work with families and develop research based interactive training sessions for parents, based on their personal experience. My core area of interest is the role of sexuality and its related issues. I am very happy to be associated with NWDSA and enthusiastic to start this new endeavor,” she said. The sessions will focus on the pre-pubescent age group as a starting point. The goal will be to give tools to help parents learn better communication and also best practices about teaching healthy sexuality. It will be combined with each family’s personal values. Email neeram@pdx.edu if you are interested in participating.

... The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition website has been re-designed and features important advocacy tools, such as Fact Sheets, that

Continued on next page



*The golf tournament is coming up on
Oct. 11 in support of NWDSA*



*Be sure to check out the new Oregon
Developmental Disabilities Coalition
website at
www.oregonddcoalition.org.*

Buddy Walk News

The 2010 Walk Is Just Around The Corner

By Kim Jarvis

Be sure to save the date for the 2010 Portland and Southwest Washington Buddy Walk, which will be held on Saturday, September 25, 2010 at the Rose Quarter. Bring your friends and family, your classmates and neighbors, and help make the 12th annual walk the biggest one yet. Last year we had more than 900 participants and this year we want to break 1,000.

Don't miss the opportunity to mingle with old friends and new as your kids get their faces painted and play carnival-style games. Bev and The Boys will be back to provide all your rock and blues favorites on stage and as always we have some great speakers lined up. Gustav's Pub & Grill is donating hot dogs for everyone, and Starbucks is sending hot coffee and cocoa. But if it's too warm for hot cocoa, we'll also have Dreyer's ice cream on hand, water from Nestle and Kidz With Ice will be providing cotton candy and specialty coffee drinks. We have also been busy collecting a variety of excellent raffle prizes so don't forget to buy some tickets on the day.

Buddy Walk is a great community-building event, but it is also a fundraiser. If you know of any local business that might be interested in sponsoring the walk this year, please get in touch with Angela Frome at afrome@nwdsa.org so that we can get them a sponsor pack. We have sponsorship levels to fit all sizes of business, so be creative and think of anyone who might be in a position to help out this year. And a big thank you goes out to those businesses who have already stepped up to support the walk.

Now is the time to round up the support of all the people in your life. Invite your friends and family. Form a team at work or school. Make it a neighborhood event. Buddy Walk is a great day to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome, and it's the perfect time to introduce new people to the NWDSA community!

There are two ways to sign up for the walk: online or in person on the day of the event. Register online at www.buddywalk.kintera.org/nwdsa. Pledge forms will also be arriving in the mail soon. You can use the pledge sheet to keep track of your donations and team members. Either mail it in or bring it with you on the day of the walk. We can't wait to see you there.

For more information or questions please call Angela Frome at 503-238-0522 or e-mail afrome@nwdsa.org. Para comunicarse en español, llame a Sheyla Hirshon 503-239-1509.

Et Cetera

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specifically address the state budget crisis and its impact on individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and communities. The web address is www.oregonddcoalition.org. The NWDSA encourages you to visit the site and become a member of the Oregon Disability Network, which includes an electronic newsletter, the Go Bulletin, which is a great source for updates on issues, events and activities related to people with developmental disabilities. The NWDSA is very active in local and state advocacy issues so if this area is of interest to you, please contact our Resourcefulness Center at 503-238-0522 to get involved.



*This year's walk is on
September 25, 2010*

*Register for the 2010
Buddy Walk online at
www.buddywalk.kintera.org/nwdsa.*



The Buddy Walk is fun for all ages

All Born In Youth Group

Youth Group gets rolling

By Quinn Jarvis-Holland

The All Born In youth group is a catalyst for social change and justice, comprised of youth (under 25) with and without disabilities. Promoting progressive ideas in a fun and cool setting is the purpose of our work, all of which is done with a focus on our main asset (youth) while veering away from stagnant techniques, and ideas, and most of all, pity. We are looking for near equal membership (those with and without disabilities). Our true diversity of abilities will be a real strength, lobbying to people who would not typically be exposed to these ideas.

My brother Daniel was born with Down syndrome when I was 5, and it has led me to some great interactions with people with and without disabilities that I wouldn't have had otherwise. I've joined the All Born In movement, and things aren't going to change until we get a lot more people involved. Interested in helping or joining the movement for an inclusive civil society?

Check out this video on youtube to see what we are all about:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CeKbT9BU7E>

We will start meeting up in the fall so email Quinn at quayquay17@gmail.com if you are interested in getting involved.

Thanks from the board,

-Quinn Jarvis-Holland

-Eleanor Bailey (public speaker and part-time NWDSA staff member)

-Emma Frome

Community Voice

Youth Group sponsors book sale

By Emma Frome

One of the first events the Youth Group decided to organize was a book and bake sale to raise money for the children at Sriarunodayam. That is a home in India for children with disabilities who have been abandoned by their families.

Advocates from the Youth Group board interviewed a representative for the home who mentioned a great need for training materials for his staff. The money raised through the sale will go toward the purchase of best-practices resources such as the DownsEd Trust series.

The sale was on a sunny Saturday and dozens of people stopped by to check out the wide selection of books, snow cones from the Harvey family and baked goods. Members of the Youth Group were joined by several kids from Beaumont Middle School who helped out taking money and painting faces.

The sale raised over \$600! And thanks to a local family who offered to match the funds raised at the book sale, a total of almost \$1300 will be sent to India. The book sale was a lot of fun and it was great to have my friends involved in something important to me.

Representatives from the youth group will also be shopping for toys for each of the 90 children in the home. The package sent to India will also include some artwork from our kids to brighten up their rooms. For more info on the home in India, please visit <http://www.sriarunodayam.org>.



Eleanor and Issac enjoy the book sale



Members of the Youth Group and students from Beaumont Middle School helped out at the sale



One happy customer at the book sale

Conference Wrap Up

Continued from page 1



Joy Zabala gave a great presentation on Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design are to provide multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression and multiple means of engagement. Great advice that can help teachers reach kids at any level!

My favorite session of the day was Multiply by the Power of Two: Co-teaching and Inclusive Education. This presentation featured two Portland State University instructors from the Graduate School of Education, who shared an overview of co-teaching and how it can enhance inclusion. But the most inspiring part of the session was the presentation by two classroom teachers who co-teach middle school together. One is a general education teacher

and the other specializes in special education. They demonstrated how they work the room while helping individual students, and gave concrete examples of how they support each other. What I was most impressed with was the way they communicated with each other and the support they were given by their school administration and district. I wish all classrooms and special education programs were given such support.

The day wrapped up with a final keynote speech by Karen Gaffney and some inspiring speeches by self-advocates who enjoy expressing themselves through art. Their artwork was amazing and the final song about belonging performed by several kids was a wonderful way to wrap up the day.

The conference organizers were pleased that the mix of parents and professionals was more equal this year. It seems obvious to me that all educators need to be exposed to this kind of positive parent power and that everyone who has the best interest of their students in mind can benefit from such an uplifting day full of valuable information.

Internet resources from the conference:

Universal Design for learning:

<http://www.cast.org>

Accessible Instructional Materials:

<http://aim.cast.org/>

Principals of UDL

<http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines>



Eleanor, Chrystal and Daniel show their solidarity at the end of the conference

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Angela Frome

Tina Albers

Becky Adelman

For more contact info
please visit
www.nwdsa.org

NWDSA is organized for charitable, scientific & educational purposes to provide families and individuals with Down syndrome social opportunities, support, education and information.

NWDSA is a registered non-profit corporation in Oregon and has 501(c)3 tax-exempt status with the federal government.

Down syndrome is a genetic condition that occurs in approximately one of every 800 live births. The chance of having a baby with DS is not affected by where you live, social class or race. Also, having a baby with DS does not mean you did anything wrong: nothing done before or during pregnancy causes DS. Recent advances in our understanding have resulted in dramatic improvements in the potential and life span of individuals with Down syndrome.



northwest down syndrome association

PO Box 9127
Portland, Oregon
97207

A Message from the NWDSA

Each board member of the NWDSA has firsthand experience with the joys and the hardships of caring for a child with individual needs. We understand the importance of connecting with other families and how much we rely on these relationships when we encounter the inevitable challenges. We also celebrate each others victories, making the journey so much richer. The Board of Directors of the NWDSA consists of volunteers and is supported by enlightened professionals. For more information on our organization and ways in which you can become involved or make a donation, please visit our website at www.nwdsa.org or call 503-238-0522.

Para comunicarse en español, llame a Maria O’Harra al 971-570-0942 o Sheyla Hirshon 503-239-1509



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[NWDSA Newsletter Committee](#)

Editors: Abby Braithwaite,
Nancy Korf, Kim Jarvis
Production & Design: Jen Brandse

Save The Date!!!

Summer Social

August 28, 2010

Blue Lake Regional Park

11 AM – 3 PM

There will be games to play and live music to dance to, along with all of the amenities provided by Blue Lake Regional Park. Hot dogs, fruit and drinks will be provided, parking costs \$5 per car load.

RSVP to 503-238-0522 or
mhagood1970@yahoo.com