



WVDSA Monthly

Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association

May Panel:

Have you ever wondered what will happen when your child reaches the age where they start noticing the opposite sex? It's becoming less and less rare for children with Down syndrome to date one another and, in some cases, even get married!

At last month's meeting, we met Jenny and Erik, young adults with Down syndrome. Both live on their own and are using independent-living skills they learned in school and at home. Both have jobs (Jenny at Roth's and Erik for a mailing service) and cherish their independence..

They consider each other to be their girlfriend/ boyfriend and like to do things together. They even went to the high school prom together!

The kids' mothers did most of the talking, although



Jenny's brother said a few words. Jenny seemed very shy and spent her time leaning on her brother's shoulder and telling him she loved him and her mom.

Erik likes to cook and, with some help, he has learned to plan and cook his own meals.

Neither Jenny or Erik likes to be told what to do by their parents or siblings—typical for any young adults, really—and like the friendship they have with each other.

One thing that was mentioned was that Jenny and Erik have known each other for a very long time. With a group like the Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association, we have the opportunity for our kids to get to know other children of the same age. It's entirely possible that they may take a special interest in one of these WVDSA friends someday and we'll have another "Jenny & Erik" relationship budding. It sure is something to be aware of, isn't it?

Looking Ahead

July 28 : We will be meeting at the Enchanted Forest south of Salem at 10:00 AM. We hope all of you can make it. Call Cory Harrington—503-463-9788 for details.

~*~*~*~*

August 17: Family Picnic at the Lion's Shelter in Avery

Park, Corvallis. More details will be in the August newsletter, but it will probably be from 6:00 to 9:00 PM and will be a potluck-type picnic with games and activities for the whole family!

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September 21: Report on

the 2004 NDSS National Conference in Washington DC by our representative, Cory Harrington! We'll also discuss the upcoming Buddy Walk!

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October 9: 2004 Buddy Walk in Salem!!

WVDSA
4272 NW Pintail Place
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October 2004 Buddy Walk Needs Your Help!

October 9, 2004.....set the date aside! It's our 6th annual Buddy Walk. This year we will return to Riverfront Park in Salem. We have started making plans and have a committee formed to share the planning and all that goes into making the day a huge success.

There are several areas we are seeking ideas and suggestions for:

Speakers:

If you know of someone that would make a great speaker on the day of the event please let us know. We are not in need of additional self-advocate speakers but other public figures preferably recognizable to the communities participating in the walk.

Donations:

- Balloons/Helium tank rentals
- Table rentals
- Prize donations

This year we would like to add a tradition of acknowledging our members and those that have raised the most in pledges.

Directions to the August Picnic

Avery Park can be accessed from either Highway 99 (turn at Avery Avenue) south of downtown Corvallis or from Highway 20/34 (turn at 15th Avenue) on the west side of town. Once in the park, follow signs to "Lion's Shelter". We will have balloons up to mark our picnic location.

While in the park, there are a lot of family-type activities to enjoy. Be-

Sponsor:

If you, your employer, or a local business might be interested in supporting our group on any level please let us know. We would welcome a presenting sponsor, supporting sponsor, event sponsor etc.

Mascot/Clown:

It's fun for the children to have characters mingling before and during the walk.

Please look for updates in the August and September newsletters. We will be sending a pledge sheet and flier then. This year we would like to have the pledges collected ahead of time and turned in the day of the event if possible. This will hopefully be easier for those collecting pledges. You will not have to go back out to collect the pledges after the walk. If you would like to volunteer or get involved in any way, large or small,



Karen Gaffney speaks at Buddy Walk 2003 in Salem

please contact me. We are looking forward to this being our best Buddy Walk yet!

Keri Prince
Buddy Walk
Chairman
503 434-8618
email: ark-

Submit "Child of the Month" information to:
Gretchen Davey

370 Center St
Lebanon, OR
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have an opportunity to play together and get to know one another.

Plan to bring blankets and/or lawn chairs if you don't want to spend all your sitting time on the picnic table benches.

If the weather isn't "perfect", the Lion's Shelter is a covered picnic area, so we can still have our picnic with a roof over our heads!

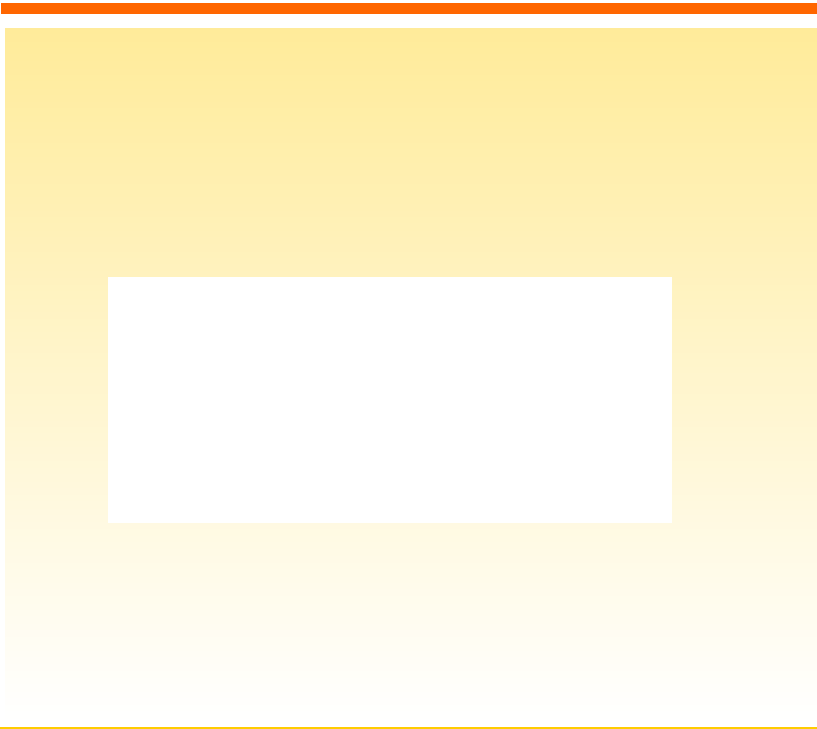
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Comin' Around the Corner

It seems like during the summer organized group plans kind of go down the drain. Despite good intentions, there just doesn't seem to be a lot of impulse to do much of anything! Unfortunately, the WVDSA is falling under the spell of some of the siren calls of summer.

Keep in mind, though, that even if you don't hear about many activities, the group is busy planning for the future! In August, Cory Harrington, our New Parent Packet Chairperson, will be representing the WVDSA at the National Down Syndrome Society's annual conference. This year, the conference will be held in Washington D.C., which ought to be a special thrill for Cory!

She will be giving us her report on the trip at the September meeting. Everyone who has been to one of these conferences has come back feeling enthusiastic and full of new ideas, so plan to attend the September meeting to hear Cory's

report (details in the September newsletter).

We will also be discussing the Buddy Walk coming up on October



9th. We'll need lots of help to make the walk this year as successful as last year's! Be thinking of ways you'd like to contribute!

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For the first time in WVDSA history, we'll be meeting somewhere to have an activity together. Because of its central location, we've

chosen the Enchanted Forest south of Salem for this year's family activity. We discussed the pros and cons of meeting on a weekend or a weekday and decided that it would be less stressful for our kids to come on a weekday, when it's not quite so crowded.

Cory Harrington is taking care of the arrangements. You can call her at 503-463-9788 if you have any questions about our outing. Hopefully, we'll send out a reminder card in July so you can make sure you remember when the activity will be taking place.

We decided that wearing our yellow WVDSA t-shirts would be a good way to advertise Down syndrome awareness, so please plan to wear yours if possible. If you don't have one, call Gretchen or Mark Davey at 541-451-5215 to have them bring a t-shirt in your size from our stock from the Buddy Walk. Shirts are \$10 each.

