

WVDSA Monthly

Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association

Come to the 2005 Spring Social!!

Rachel Sargent and Katie Ross have put together a great opportunity for the members of the Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association to get together! Our 2005 Spring Social will be held at the Corvallis Senior Center at 2601 NW Tyler. The center is right next to Chintimini Park, which will provide a place for the kids to play if the weather is nice!

This is going to be a dessert potluck, so be thinking of your favorite dessert to bring. The WVDSA will provide beverages, munchies, and pa-



Two of our "Luau Babies" at a past Spring Social

per plates, cups, and table service.

The Spring Social will be Saturday, April 23rd from 2:00—4:00 PM, so won't interfere with evening plans.

At this time, Rachel is working on lining up the Hawaiian Club members from OSU to do some exhibition dancing for us.

Hopefully, the kids will be able to get involved, too, since most of them love to dance if given the opportunity!

As in the past, these social events are a great chance to get to know

other members and to watch our kids play with their friends from the group. After the smashing success of the Christmas party that Rachel hosted, we're expecting great things from the Spring Social!

Put April 23rd on your calendar and be sure to come!

March Meeting: An Encore Success!

George Estreich kindly agreed to do his presentation on the history of Down syndrome, with personal applications to his (and our) lives again in Corvallis last month. Many from the southern part of the valley missed his presentation in Salem for the February meeting, so this

was a wonderful opportunity for them to hear what he had to say.

The report was that the meeting was well-attended, including several families new to the Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association! We had families from as far north as Carlton and as far

south as Sutherlin! What a range we cover!!

Mark Davey ran the meeting in the absence of our President, Mike Moore, who had already heard George speak at the meeting in Salem in February. According to Mark, George's presentation was great!

WVDSA
4272 NW Pintail Place
Corvallis, OR 97330

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Directions to Spring Social:

Follow Harrison Street into Corvallis from west, as if going to Grace Lutheran Church on Kings St. Go past the church, however, to 26th Street. Turn right and go one block to NW Tyler Ave. The Senior Center is at 2601 NW Tyler Ave.

Ways to Get Involved!

You're invited to **Developmental Disabilities Action and Awareness Day** at the Capitol on **Monday, April 18**.

Please join us for all or part of the day as we celebrate our accomplishments and educate our legislators about the important issues of the day!

8:30 Tentative Hearing on Respectful Language Bill
10:00 Welcome, information and orientation in Hearing Room #50
10:30 Introductions and courtesies in both House and Senate Chambers
11:00 Issues Overview in Hearing Room #50
12:00 DD Awareness Ceremony with honored guests, including Governor Kulongoski on the Capitol steps
1:00 Meet with Legislators - Call ahead to make an appointment with your legislator or their staff

Sponsored by The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities and The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition.

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State Legislative Update **Ways and Means Budget Process:**

Ways and Means Subcommittees are working on prioritizing agency programs and services into a list. The prioritized lists will be submitted as first round recommendations to the Co-chairs by March 28. The Co-Chairs will release their recommended budget on April 4. **Public testimony is expected to occur sometime between March 28-May 13.** Further prioritization

discussions, are currently scheduled to take place around May 16-20.

Many of the proposed budget reductions impact people with disabilities. The GO! Bulletin will be highlighting these reductions.

Of particular concern in the budget right now:

The Fairview Trust has been placed near the bottom of the DHS prioritization list. See the Oregon Network Action Alert (<http://ocdd.e-actionmax.com/showalert.asp?aaaid=1149>) for details, and information on how you can help.

Children's Development and Rehabilitation Center (CDRC) Clinics, a part of the Oregon Health Sciences University, will be severely impacted by the current budget proposals, which would:

- Reduce by over one-half the number of children and youth served annually by CDRC
- Close Spina Bifida clinical services for 372 patients per year
- End Feeding Disorder services for 340 patients per year
- End Clinical Genetics program that serves 916 patients per year
- Close ADHD/LD clinic that serves 408 patients per year
- End Developmental Follow-up of 148 High Risk Infants per year
- Eliminate Social Work services that coordinate follow up care
- Eliminate Special Education services for 144 patients per year
- Close Neurobehavioral Clinic that serves 190 patients per year. For more details, see all of cuts outlined on the OHSU website.

• Watch the Ways & Means Committee agenda, available online, for chances to testify about the budget .

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Advocacy Day Training Workshop on May 10 - LAST CHANCE!

Please note that the April 20 training date has been cancelled.

Whether you are a concerned citizen who wants to learn more about our legislative process or a veteran advocate who wants a "refresher," join us for one of our popular Salem Advocacy Day trainings. We will talk about how to participate in the policy process, meet with legislators, testify at hearings, write letters, and speak up for ourselves and the people we care about. We will review current issues including funding and policies concerning Family Support, Brokerage services, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education, K-12 Education, health care, and the state budget.

The program runs from 9am-2:30pm in the State Capitol in Salem, with registration starting at 8:30am.

Lunch is provided.

Limited financial assistance for childcare and mileage, as well as parking permits, are available for pre-registered self-advocates and family members.

On May 10 only, we will also offer Spanish-language interpretation services.

The event is free, but pre-registration is required.

**April Meeting:
Spring Social!
Saturday
March 15th
2:00-4:00 PM
Corvallis Senior
Center
2601 NW Tyler
Corvallis, OR**

2005 Easter Egg Hunt: A Bit Wet!

As usual, the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, and others, came through with an outstanding Easter Egg Hunt, despite extremely wet conditions. Most of the kids came prepared with rain-coats and boots, so the rain didn't seem to bother them at all. The parents probably had more trouble, because some wading was required to get from the Easter Egg Hunt area to the covered picnic area, at which the prizes were distributed. No one did much complaining, though, because the kids still had fun.

For those who aren't familiar with this Easter Egg Hunt, several service groups from the Corvallis and Adair areas get together each year to sponsor an Easter Egg Hunt at the Adair County Park (a Benton County Park). As you would expect, there are a lot of kids that come to this hunt, but what makes this Easter Egg Hunt unusual is the fact that they open it up in a special way to children with disabilities! Helpers are provided for each special needs child (frequently the helpers are OSU students, although groups such as the Boy Scouts have also helped in the past) to ensure that the child has a successful experience and



finds their quota of eggs. These helpers stay right with their child, so they aren't overwhelmed by other children, who tend to be a bit more aggressive than our kids are when it comes to something like finding Easter Eggs!

Each child receives a raffle ticket, so there are equal chances for each child to receive one of the special prizes that have been donated. Sometimes those prizes are "big ticket" items (as far as kids are concerned) like bicycles or game systems. This year, the big prize was a DVD player!

There is even a wheelchair course for kids confined to wheelchairs. The course is on the paved portion of the parking lot and the eggs are up on barrels so the children can find the eggs at the level they're at as they maneuver in their wheelchairs.

It always impresses me that these people make sure that every child leaves with

plenty of candy and small toys, even if they don't end up with one of the larger prizes. It probably explains why the hunt is so well-attended—rain or shine!

This year's wet conditions kept some of our Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association children away, but there were a few die hard people attending, such as Becca Davey and Katelyn & Dallin Prince. Aside from



getting a little wet and cold, the kids seemed to have fun. I know that Becca enjoyed her candy very much (and I have to admit that I enjoyed it, too!).

Thanks, Ray Shimabuku, for inviting us again this year!



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Comin' Around the Corner

Dear Members,

There are lots of websites featuring Down syndrome these days. You don't have to look far to find one that has information for parents and interesting articles. You realize just how big of a network we're part of and how many children and adults with Down syndrome there are!

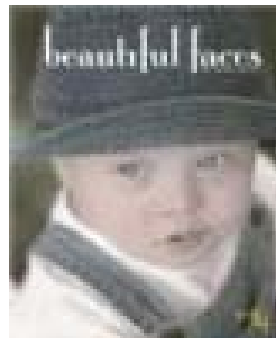
Cory Harrington turned me on to a website she discovered called "Band of Angels". It's quite an interesting site, with a lot of great places to explore. They've done well in the fund-raising department—mainly for parent education, etc.

"We do our work through the generous contributions of many private and corporate donors. This past March, we hosted our first black tie gala-Starry Night raised over \$100,000 to help new families. In 2004, we also awarded five scholarships to graduating seniors with Down syndrome for the purpose of pursuing higher education. Over the next three months, we will be involved with

the world classic Ryder Cup, Thierry Mugler Angel Fragrances and are developing a fitness program. We hope you will check back here often to see our progress and find fits for you and your family. Thank you for caring enough to visit the Band of Angels Foundation web site."

I think we could be inspired to do more with our group when it comes to raising money to promote Down syndrome! It takes a lot of teamwork to do this, though.

I like the products they carry, such as calendars ("Beautiful Faces"), note cards, and books, among other things. I'd love to get the coffee table book called "Common Threads: Celebrating Life with Down syndrome". It looks amazing!



this neat website go to: <http://www.bandofangels.com/default.asp>. You'll be as fascinated as those of us who have already checked it out!

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the **Spring Social in Corvallis** on **April 23—2:00 to 4:00 PM**. I know what a wonderful job Rachel Sargent and Katie Ross have done in the past. I encourage all of you to come this time and get to know your fellow members of the Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association! It's fun to watch our kids play with each other and make new friends! Hopefully, we'll have nice weather so the kids can play outdoors in **Chintimini Park**.

Also, remember that if any of you have something you'd like to share, this is a good place in which to do it. The "Comin' Around the Corner" section is for anyone in the group who would like to share. Of course, President Mike Moore gets priority treatment when he gets inspired, but I can usually find a spot for anyone who has something to share with the group!

If you're interested in checking out

Gretchen Davey, Editor
