



# WVDSA Monthly

## Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association

### Family Picnic Report—Fun at Prince's!

The annual Family Picnic we hold each summer is always a fun time for everyone able to attend, but this year's picnic was especially great! Reed & Keri Prince recently purchased a home in the Eola Hills southeast of Amity and have been wanting to host a WVDSA function there. The picnic seemed like the perfect event, since they have a huge yard, with lots of fun things to do, but in a location safe for the children—especially our "runners"!

On Saturday, August 4, nearly 70 people, including



Kim & Gemma try their hands at T-Ball in Prince's front yard.

with an oversized ball, croquet, and T-ball were also available for the kids.

The final activity was a "Stomp Rocket", which sent foam "rockets" shooting high in the air—propelled by the stomping of an air bulb. Almost all of the kids—from the oldest to the youngest—took a turn stomping the bulb to see who could send the rocket the highest!

15 kids with Down syndrome—ages 2 to nearly 26—flocked to the Prince "Ranch" for an afternoon of fun and fellowship! Dallin Prince was given a wonderful playground structure by the "Make a Wish Foundation" during his battle with leukemia, so that was the centerpiece of activity for the children.

In addition, there was an inflatable water slide that provided a great deal of entertainment during the warm afternoon! Volleyball,



The Prince "ranch" made a perfect place for our summer picnic!

The Princes cooked lots of hamburgers and hotdogs to add to the salads and desserts brought by everyone who came. By the end of the day, everyone was able to leave—tired, full, and ready to come back to the Prince's next year!!



Katelyn & Becca perch at top of water slide, while Dallin watches below them.

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# 2007 Buddy Walk: New Venue; New Ideas!

After several years of meeting near the Carousel at Salem's **Riverfront Park**, we've decided to try something different this year and schedule our **Buddy Walk** at the nearby **Amphitheater**, past the carousel building and on the far side of the playground.

We're starting a little later, too, to fit our activities a little more into the lunch hour. In addition, we'll have the **Albany German Band** providing background and dancing music (they do a great "Chicken Dance"!) for anyone game to give it a try.

Fitting in with the German Band theme, we're providing an "O'Fest" style lunch, with sausages, hot dogs, and other items typical of Oktoberfest celebrations. Local businesses will be donating the food again this year!

At this point, registration will be starting at **10:30am**, with the Buddy Walk beginning at **11:00**. Instead of having speakers and introductions before the walk,



we'll be doing that afterwards, while we eat lunch in the Amphitheater! This will mean that families can sit and enjoy themselves, instead of having to stand around waiting for the walk to start.

As in the past, we'll have **face painting, activities for the kids, carousel tickets, and informational booths**, making this a perfect time for the family to get together and celebrate acceptance and inclusion for people with Down syndrome!

Another new feature this year is **online registration and donations**. You can instruct your friends and family members to go to online at [www.wvdsa.org](http://www.wvdsa.org) to register for the walk and/or make donations to the Willamette Valley Down Syndrome Association. This will make things much easier the morning of the Buddy Walk. We're also providing t-shirts to each person who pre-

registers this year—at **no cost to you**—so encourage anyone you think is planning to come to the walk to go to our website and take advantage of this new feature!

Be sure to remember to register t-shirt sizes for each member of your group. We'll be offering sizes from Child's Small to Adult XXX, but will have to get your pre-registration by **August 31**, to give us time to get the shirts ordered.

We still need lots of help pulling all the details of the Buddy Walk together. If you've wanted to help, but haven't known who to call, here's your chance!

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## 2007 Buddy Walk

Saturday, September 29, 2007  
Register Online: Now [www.wvdsa.org](http://www.wvdsa.org)

Get ahold of either of these ladies if you'd like to get involved in this year's

**SUPER Buddy Walk!!**



Jonathan tries a new way of sliding down the slide in Dallin's play structure.

More pictures from the Family Picnic. If you missed it this year, plan to attend next year. This was probably one of the most enjoyable WVDSA functions to date! We'll probably schedule it for the first weekend of August next year, too. Plan ahead!



Rachel and her brother have fun on the water slide.

08/04/2007

# IonKids: Peace of Mind for Parents of "Runners"!



Keep an ion what is important.



*"The IonKids system allows you to monitor up to four tagged objects at once. Children, seniors, pets or anything you might lose and want to keep safe. The system consists of a base unit, a handheld device that al-*

*lows parents to monitor up to four tags simultaneously and a Wristag. Tag holders can be purchased separately and can be clipped onto belt loops or lanyards; Wristags can be locked on children's wrists. ionKids lets you set a variable zone around the base unit so you will know when your child wanders too far. If you can't find them, use the locating device and let it show you where to go to find them. ENJOY YOUR TIME WITH YOUR KIDS. LET IONKIDS HELP TAKE AWAY THE STRESS."*

## Coming Events:

**September 29: Buddy Walk** (see information on opposite page).

**October 27: Hallowe'en Dance!** This will be a costume dance for everyone—from little kids to teens and up. The dance will be in Keizer, but more details will be coming up next month. Start thinking about your costumes!

**November 10: Mini-Workshop** The topic will be on different speech issues, featuring Heather Mackey, a speech therapist at the Mighty Oak Children's Therapy Center. Other speakers will also be included and will address speech issues for children at different levels of development, such as pre-school/emerging speech and school-age. This workshop will be held at the Mighty Oak facility in Albany and will be an all-day event. Stay tuned for more information.

**December 1: WVDSA Christmas Social** We will be holding this at the Keizer Fire Station's community room. More details coming soon!

This information was taken from the "IonKids" website, where you can order the system for under \$250. If you order through IonKids, they'll actually set you up with a payment plan. You can get the system with some extras for \$299 at Amazon.com, but you would have to pay it all up front.

I think the system has been getting a lot of word-of-mouth advertising, though! I ordered mine July 1 and it's now back-ordered through Amazon until the middle of September! I notice that the IonKids website is back-ordered, too. It will be worth the wait, but you may need to get on the list!

Cory Harrington has the system for both Lora and Calleigh (this after Lora ended up down on River Road—the busy main road through downtown Keizer!) and can answer any questions you might have about how it works!

Go to the IonKids website at <http://www.ion-kids.com/> to find out more about the product and watch a demo video showing how the whole system works. I've seen Cory's system and it looks like an answer to prayer for anyone who has ever had a child disappear! I've tried other gadgets to keep track of Becca, but this is the first one that seems to actually do what it's supposed to!

Cory will have her equipment at the Buddy Walk and will demonstrate it for anyone who needs to see how it works before they decide to invest in the IonKids system! I think you'll be impressed!

Now I'm trying to figure out if I need to get something I can send to school with Becca. It's hard to believe how far one kid can get in a short amount of time, but some of you can identify, I'm sure!



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## Coming Around the Corner: Sex Education?

As your child with Down syndrome approaches the years of puberty, one of the most persistent questions to come up is "how are we going to explain all this to him/her in a way he/she will understand?" It seems daunting, yet it is a necessary part of maturing, no matter who you are. It must be addressed!

Woodbine House, the company that has brought us so many helpful books on how to teach our child with Down syndrome just about anything, has done it! This September, they will be releasing a new book titled, "Teaching Children with Down Syndrome About Their Bodies, Boundaries, and Sexuality, A Guide for Parents and Professionals!"

The author, Terri Couwenhaven, is a sexual educator and the mother of a child with Down syndrome. She is able to draw on a combination of factual information and practical ideas about such things as gender differences, personal boundaries, puberty, sexuality,

appropriate behavior, and relationships. The book is written in an easy-to-read, non-clinical style and is said to give par-



Becca Davey & Cory Harrington join the crowds on the dance floor during the "Family Dinner," ending the International Down syndrome Congress in Vancouver, BC

ents the tools they will need to speak comfortably with their children—whether young or old—about these difficult subjects. The book includes "extensive appendices containing teach-

ing materials and illustrations of body parts and functions."

At last summer's international conference in Vancouver, BC, one of the workshops stressed the importance of being very specific with our children in this area so they aren't easily taken advantage of or convinced that something is "okay", when it's not.

It seems like this book is just what we need as a tool to help our kids with Ds make the transition to adulthood without trauma or confusion.

To pre-order the book and get a 20% discount (expires 9/30/07), go to [www.woodbinehouse.com](http://www.woodbinehouse.com) or call 800-843-7323. With shipping and the discount, the total is less than \$25.

The group will probably purchase one of these books for our library, so if you can't afford to buy one, check our library at a future meeting.

Gretchen Davey, Editor