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DOWN SYNDROME CLINIC EVERY FRIDAY  
AT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER.  
CALL (214) 456-2357

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*This month on the DSG Calendar Ty, Abby, Stephante, and Adrien are all winners.*



MISSION STATEMENT: THE DOWN SYNDROME GUILD OF DALLAS PROVIDES ACCURATE AND CURRENT INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME, THEIR FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY.

ARE YOU MOVING? DON'T FORGET TO PROVIDE US WITH YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS BY CALLING THE OFFICE OR BY E-MAIL AT [DALLASDSG@SBCGLOBAL.NET](mailto:DALLASDSG@SBCGLOBAL.NET).

THE PUBLICATION OF *THE DSG NEWS* IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROSITY OF THE CHARLES H. PHIPPS FAMILY FOUNDATION.

## Down Syndrome Guild Calendar of Events

**June**  
Mom's Escape -  
*Check website for time and date*

**June 13**  
Art Therapy Begins

**June 17**  
Social Skills Class Begins

# THE DSG News

PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME – VALUED AND INCLUDED

June 2008

Affiliate of the National  
Down Syndrome Congress  
and the National Down  
Syndrome Society

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E D O W N S Y N D R O M E G U I L D O F D A L L A S

## From the Outgoing DSG President, **Elizabeth Longworth**

I would like to take this time to thank all the amazing and dedicated people whom I have had the privilege of working with these past two years. Stepping into the president's role two years ago, I was very nervous but thought I had a reasonable understanding of the role and responsibilities. Was I naïve! The Down Syndrome Guild Board and I blazed many a new trail – some expected – some unexpected! But I must say the consistent theme – and what has kept the Down Syndrome Guild going strong for almost 30 years – is the dedication, perseverance, and passion of our founders and board.

I have gained so much in the past two years as president and owe a debt of gratitude to our organization. It has been a blessing to work with people who care so much and work daily to improve the lives of people with Down syndrome and in turn help make the world a better place.

I'd also like to thank my wonderful husband, Greg, and my adorable daughter, Katie, for their gift of patience and time in allowing me to commit to these past two years.

Thank you all for your support, time, and dedication.

- Elizabeth Longworth  
Katie's Mom and Greg's wife!

## **Charles H. Phipps Family Foundation Honors Us Again!**

The Board and staff of the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas offer a very enthusiastic thank you to the Charles H. Phipps Family Foundation! They are not only funding another year of this publication, *The DSG News*, they are funding a new program, *Parents and Schools in Partnership*. Mary Claire and Charles Phipps have been members, as well as benefactors, of the Down Syndrome Guild for many years. Thank you Phipps family!

### Inside This Issue:

- Club 21 ..... 2
- Down Syndrome Guild Board News ..... 2
- Mark Your Calendar! ..... 2
- Social Skills Classes for 13 to 18 Year Olds... 3
- Annual Appeal Donors ..... 3
- Did You Miss the DSG Membership  
Renewal Deadline? ..... 3
- One Family's Story ..... 4
- New Policy for Kroger ..... 5
- Parenting To-Do List ..... 5
- A Lesson in Inclusion ..... 6
- Down Syndrome Guild Photos ..... 7
- Down Syndrome Guild Calendar of Events . 8

## From the Incoming DSG President, **Kelly Drablos**

I am very proud to once again join you as the President of the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas. My previous term was 1988-1989. An article later in this newsletter sets forth some of my thoughts about my role as a mother of a child with Down syndrome and my 23 year association with this organization.

I must thank Elizabeth Longworth profusely for all her hard work during the two years she has served the DSG as president. Her efforts have taken

us to higher levels of professionalism and sophistication, and connected us to many advocates for people with Down syndrome and other disabilities all over the United States. She is a very hard act to follow and has inspired me with her dedication and passion. We are happy she will be around for another term on the DSG Board and know she will continue her good work for people with Down syndrome and their families.

- Kelly Drablos

## GREAT WAY TO HONOR LOVED ONES

# Club 21

*is a Down Syndrome  
Guild program to honor a loved  
one: matching the numeral of  
the important chromosome that  
affects our children.*

To: Addie White  
*In appreciation of your time  
and dedication given to  
Habima Theatre.*

From: Minnie Blackwell

To: Averi White  
*In appreciation of your time  
and dedication given to  
Habima Theatre.*

From: Minnie Blackwell

A gift to the Down Syndrome Guild to honor loved ones is a tangible way to recognize their lives, celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, new homes, or any number of occasions. A gift in memory of a friend or relative is a thoughtful and caring way to express sympathy while sharing concern for an important cause. Upon receiving a memorial or an honorarium gift, the DSG will notify the family or individual of your thoughtfulness and send you, the donor, a letter of receipt.

Interested in making a *Club 21* donation? Contact Becky Slakman by e-mail at [dsged@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsged@sbcglobal.net) or by phone at (214) 267-1374.

## Down Syndrome Guild Board News

**F**irst of all, the Board of Directors of the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas wants to thank the outgoing

Board members for their service to our organization. Kari Urban has served for six years and we are grateful for her significant contributions to organizing the DSG Annual Golf Tournament for many years. Anna Cardenas has served for three years, chairing the Buddy Walk Committee in 2006 and contributing to many other committees and events. Ayako Chan has served on the Board for one year and has been instrumental in our efforts to expand communications with the Hispanic community. We sincerely appreciate their service and thank them for their efforts!

As of June 1, 2008, three people will be joining our Board of Directors. Anita Ford recently moved here from Louisiana with her husband and her 8 year old son and is very excited to join our Board. She brings a significant amount of experience gained through founding and leading a Down syndrome parent support group in Louisiana. Anita is chairing the Parent-to-Parent Committee this year.

Kelly Kile was a Board member several years ago and returns now to provide a fresh perspective to our group as the mother of a 12 year old with DS. She served on the Calendar Committee for several years and will be co-chairing this year's Fall Conference Committee.

Luke Strawn is the father of a 20 month old and joins the Board after having served on the Buddy Walk Committee. Luke was instrumental in raising thousands of dollars for the event through the Castle Hills team. His work with other not-for-profits, as well as his experience in the

mortgage and real estate industry, will be great assets as we continue to grow as an organization.

Finally, the Board would like to announce the new Executive Committee that will serve for the next two years. These officers were approved by the members of the DSG through majority vote at the Annual Family Picnic and Membership Meeting on April 13, 2008:

President: Kelly Drablos

Vice President: Terri McKinney

Secretary: Tamara White

Treasurer: Scot O'Brien

Member-At-Large: Angela O'Brien

## Mark Your Calendar!

**T**he Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is pleased to announce its Fall 2008 events:

### Tuesday, September 16, 2008

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Herb's Paint & Body/Down Syndrome Guild Golf Classic  
Location TBA

### Saturday, September 27, 2008

Fall Education Conference  
New location -  
Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza  
7800 Alpha Road  
Dallas, TX 75240

### Sunday, November 9, 2008

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Buddy Walk  
Flag Pole Hill  
8700 E. Northwest Hwy.  
Dallas, TX 75238

To find out more about these upcoming events and corporate sponsorship opportunities, please contact Becky Slakman by phone at (214) 267-1374 or by e-mail at [dsged@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsged@sbcglobal.net).

## Down Syndrome Guild Photos



*The University of Dallas put on a grand party in April for the young adults.*



*The hip hop class inspired all sorts of creativity in its attendees.*



*continued from page 3*

Ann & Lee Grosshans  
 Judi Grossman  
 Linda Harman  
 Mary & Ron Hill  
 Karen & Tim Hillard  
 Debra & Michael James  
 Sherrie & James Jenkins  
 Suzanne & Jim Johnston  
 Kelly & Bruce Kile  
 Mary Beth & David King  
 Banah & Mas Kono  
 Mikai & Swastik Lahiri  
 Anita & Andy Lau  
 Olinda & Julio Len  
 Jennifer & John Libby  
 Angela & Tyler Malik  
 Charlotte & James Maltby  
 Jennifer & Dalton McGaha  
 Lori & Chris McKee  
 Linda & Mike Miller  
 Karen & Joe Motes  
 Linda & Oscar Murphy  
 My Dung Nguyen  
 Notre Dame of Dallas Schools  
 Angela & Mike O'Brien  
 Carrie & William Park  
 Betsy & Mark Passarelli  
 Keri & Ron Pearson  
 Heather & Harris Razak  
 Joy Reavis  
 Judy & James Ross  
 Cindy & Vance Schneider  
 Kathy Scott Shaw & Paul Riggs  
 Carolyn & George Shelton  
 Suzanne Silverstein  
 Elaine Small  
 Ragan & Rick Smith  
 Kaye Stanley  
 Sara & Eric Stettler  
 Lori & Eric Stevens  
 Cami & Dail Stewart  
 Johanna & Paul Storm  
 Evelyn Stuckly  
 Chris & Jim Taylor  
 Michelle & Aaron Taylor  
 Anna Maria & Alejandro Trejo  
 Sheila & Ricardo Villa  
 Kristen & Glenn Walsh  
 Patty & Paul Watson  
 Jennifer & Temple Weiss  
 Nancy & Tim Wheeler  
 Milligene Womack  
 Toi & James Wright  
 Teresa & Larry Young  
 \*as of April 30, 2008

## A Lesson in Inclusion

Recently, Maureen Tignor, a DSG member, had an opportunity that she handled in a very positive and constructive way. She received home a copy of part of a reading lesson for her daughter who has Down syndrome and in a regular second grade class. Maureen considered the reading topic poorly handled and rewrote the lesson with a more positive spin. Following are the two versions of a second grade lesson which she discussed with the teacher and sent out with the permission of the school.

### VERSION #1:

#### A DREAM COME TRUE

When Hannah was small, she did not like school recess. She never got to do anything. She had to just sit there. That's because Hannah was born with a problem. The problem kept the bones in her back from growing the right way. So, she can't do many of the things that most kids can do. She uses a wheelchair. But kids in wheelchairs can't play with their friends on school playgrounds. They can't use the swings. They can't use the slides.

Then Hannah heard about special playgrounds for disabled kids. She helped to raise money for one in her town. This new playground has a high-back swing that helps her to sit up. Now she can swing! Hannah really enjoys the new playground.

Hannah says, "Disabled people are just like anybody else. We want to be able to play with our friends."

The comprehension questions at the end of the lesson were:

1. Why didn't Hannah like recess?
  - a. She had no friends
  - b. She didn't like playgrounds
  - c. She had nothing to do
2. What did Hannah do to get a playground?
  - a. She studied hard
  - b. She got the law changed
  - c. She helped raise money
3. Why did Hannah want a special playground?
4. Why can't a kid in a wheelchair use

a regular playground?

5. How is Hannah like every other kid?
6. Can disabled people have fun?
7. What do you think would be the hardest thing about being in a wheelchair? Explain.

### VERSION #2:

#### A REAL DREAM COME TRUE

When Kara was small, she and her friends did not like school recess. They never got to do anything together. Kara had to just sit there while her friends played because their school's old playground was not built for wheelchairs. The swings that her friends liked to play on were not built for children who use wheelchairs.

Then Kara heard about special playground equipment that could be added to older playgrounds to make them accessible to children who use wheelchairs. She and her friends talked to their principal about having a special fundraiser to help raise money for this new equipment.

Now their playground has equipment that Kara and her friends can play on together. There is a new high-back swing that helps Kara sit up. Now Kara and her friends can swing together. They really love their new playground.

This story reminds us that everybody is different and that is what makes us all the same. And everybody wants to be able to play with their friends.

**Directions:** Answer these questions.

You may look at the story.

1. Why didn't Kara and her friends like recess?
  - a. They didn't like playgrounds
  - b. They had nothing to do
  - c. They couldn't play together
2. What did Kara and her friends do to get a playground they could all use together?
  - a. They studied hard
  - b. They got the law changed
  - c. They helped raise money
3. Why did Kara and her friends want new playground equipment?
4. How are Kara and her friends alike?

## Social Skills Classes for 13 to 18 Year Olds

**T**uesdays, June 17 - July 22  
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm  
Down Syndrome Guild office  
701 N. Central Expressway  
Suite 5-I  
Richardson, TX 75080

The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is pleased to announce a social skills class for teens with Down syndrome who are ages 13 to 18. This class will utilize the principles of behavior analysis, which is backed by a strong research base, to work on increasing socially desirable behaviors and decreasing undesirable behaviors.

We are very pleased to have Reagan Roth Fitzgerald, M.Ed., BCBA, President of Behavior & Education Specialists of Texas, LLC., as the instructor.

Reagan will address the basic skills of conversation, such as eye contact, personal space and reciprocation. She

will also work on appropriate behaviors when in the presence of the opposite sex, appropriate grooming skills, and the socially acceptable table manners so that the teenagers involved will have the necessary skills to promote meaningful relationships with peers and others in their community. These goals will be taught through modeling, role-playing, and positive reinforcement techniques. At the end of the course, there will be a social gathering where the class participants can implement the skills they have acquired in the natural environment.

There is NO fee for DSG members and \$25 for non-members - Maximum of 10 participants.

RSVP is required by June 13, 2008, to Becky Slakman at (214) 267-1374 or at [dsged@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsged@sbcglobal.net).

## Did You Miss the DSG Membership Renewal Deadline?

**J**une 1, 2008, is the first day of the new membership year for the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas. If we don't receive your membership form by June 10, 2008 – you will be listed as “inactive” and you will not receive the July DSG News. Membership entitles you to the monthly newsletter, notification about free events and services, registration discount for the Fall Education Conference, and a membership directory. In addition, the number of families who are members of the DSG is an important statistic when making requests to foundations for grant funds.

***If you haven't returned a membership form, please do so ASAP! Forms are available on our website at [www.downsyndromedallas.org](http://www.downsyndromedallas.org) or call the office at (214) 267-1374.***

If payment of the \$25 membership dues is a problem for your family this year, fill out and return a membership form – check the appropriate box to receive a scholarship membership. Additional questions about membership issues should be discussed with the DSG's Executive Director, Becky Slakman.

## Annual Appeal Donors

**M**any thanks to the following families who have chosen to support the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas through its annual appeal. New programs and better services will be available to you, the members, because of their generosity. There is still time to be part of this DSG fundraising effort. Please send your checks to the DSG office or contribute online - noting in the comment box that it is for the Annual Appeal.

Ana Abbott  
Sara & Casey Abell  
Andrea Alvarado  
Linda & Stephen Amos  
Peggy & Mark Andrews  
Heather & Jason Astuto  
Dana & Brian Barber  
Minnie & Keith Blackwell  
Ana Julia & Thomas Boylan  
Rob Bramer  
Lottie Brodsky, Ph.D.  
Mary & Charles Bronson  
Gail Brookshire  
Carla & Jima Brown  
Diane & Wes Char  
Bradley Chamberlain  
Juanita Chihuahua  
Cindy & Bob Cohen  
Abbie & Bob Crockett  
Stephanie & Gary Crow  
Nancy & Dick Davenport  
Stephanie & Geoff Diener  
Kelly & Scott Drablos  
Merit & Doug Dureau  
Denise Duckett  
Suzanne & Robert Eaglestone  
Connie Edwards  
Diane & Tom Edwards  
Patricia & Armando Estrada  
Sarah & Dennis Eubank  
Rosa Flores & Jose Zelaya  
Dagmar & Richard Fraser  
Susan & Ray Fraser  
Kerri & Mark Fuller  
Lisa W. Genecov, MD  
Rhonda & Jay Gray

*continued on page 6*

## One Family's Story

**A**lana Patricia Drablos is my first born 23 year-old daughter. I was 26 and my husband, Scott, was 29 on February 8, 1985, when she arrived six weeks early weighing 4 pounds, 11 ounces. We learned she had a heart defect when she was two days old, and a group of doctors told us she had Down syndrome four days later when the definitive test results were in hand. My delivery was a Caesarian because Alana was breech and premature. She actually did very well and breathed on her own from birth, but needed to stay in the hospital for 16 days to establish a pattern of gaining weight.

Our doctors were well intentioned, but poorly informed in many ways. The lead neonatologist assured us that Alana would walk and run and play, for heaven's sake! Granted this was more than 20 years ago and times have changed, but it is almost silly to think of it given what Alana has accomplished and all that she can and will do in the future. Our shining star at the time was Alana's pediatric cardiologist, Damaris Wright, who is passionately attached to her patients with Down syndrome and a high energy super positive happy individual. Dr. Wright went through all of Alana's heart issues with us including successful surgery at 10 months.

Scott and I were referred to the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas. We met other families with children with Down syndrome. I read everything I could find that seemed relevant trying to understand what it really meant to have Down syndrome. Alana was a perfect baby, easy going and very attached to her

dad. She started home based therapy at six weeks. I became an advocate for full inclusion of people with Down syndrome

to national conferences without her parents, and was very much a part of the school community with good friends and supportive teachers. She was assisted by peer tutors in some of her academic subjects where curriculum was modified. Alana herself was able to be a peer tutor for a student in a wheelchair her senior year. She was very active in the Life Teen program at our church.

After graduation from Allen High school Alana received a Special Services

Certificate in Office Skills from Eastern New Mexico University in Roswell, New Mexico, upon completion of a one year program of study there. She lived in a college dormitory away from her family and came home more confident and independent. She has been successfully and very happily employed as a courtesy clerk at Kroger since she was sixteen. She is now taking one class a semester at Collin County Community College in their office technology division and working about 30 hours a week. She has a cute boyfriend, Chad Turner, whom she met in Roswell and sees about once a month. He has Down syndrome as well, and lives on his own in Colleyville.

Alana loves her family and friends, the Dallas Mavericks (especially Dirk Nowitzki), Broadway musicals, sushi, playing cards and keeping score, the television show "Friends", purses, texting her siblings from her iPhone, listening to music, working out to her Denise Austin tape, babies in the checkout line at work, and helping out, among many other things. Her sophistication in some



in all communities, including the public schools. I became a board member of the DSG. Our family grew. Her sister

Katie was born, then her brother, Thomas, and finally, her second sister, Maeve. All four children attended Montessori school in Dallas and then public school in Fairview, where we had moved when Alana was entering fourth grade.

Alana accomplished almost all the typical childhood milestones, just at a slower pace and in her own way. In grade school she was in an Indian Princess tribe, took dance and gymnastics lessons, played the piano, was in a Girl Scout troop, played basketball on a team Scott coached, sang in the church children's choir, and was fully included in typical classes at Lovejoy elementary.

Middle school and high school in Allen brought new challenges and enriching experiences. Alana managed girls basketball teams, was a staff photographer for the yearbook and newspaper, took trips with the photography department

areas is amazing. She reads very well, balances her own checkbook, and knows as much about sports as any typical avid fan addicted to Sports Center on ESPN. At the same time she can be very sweet and innocent. Her siblings adore her. She makes all of us smile. She teaches us patience and determination and is a terrific example of good self esteem.

The path we have traveled from February 8, 1985, to the present has sometimes been very hard and challenging. It has been full of surprises, successes, and setbacks. Often, perhaps ironically, Alana has been my easy kid. Please know that the DSG exists to support your family in your journey, wherever it may take you. Give yourself time to adjust. Ignore the well intentioned but poorly informed. Come meet us when you are ready. You are most welcome.

Kelly Drablos, Alana's mom

*Editor's note: Kelly is the newly elected President of the DSG Board of Directors and begins her two year term on June 1, 2008.*

## New Policy for Kroger

**A**ttention! Kroger has changed its donation policy as of May 1, 2008. In order for the Down Syndrome Guild to benefit from your purchases when you swipe your Kroger Card, you must present to a cashier—once a year—a copy of the DSG Customer Letter. This letter can be found on our website at [www.downsyndromedallas.org](http://www.downsyndromedallas.org). You must re-enroll every year now. This is new! We encourage you to do this since the Down Syndrome Guild receives hundreds of dollars every year from this process.

## Parenting To-Do List

**T**he following is a list compiled by Jo Ann Simons, a parent. It's a good list—one we should all take to heart no matter the age of our children and actually no matter the ability level. I wish I had come across this list when my son was younger. I might have done a few things differently. — Nancy Davenport, DSG News editor

From Jo Ann:

Like the hit song several graduation seasons ago, I'll start off by telling you to use sunscreen—because it is the only advice that has been scientifically proven. The rest is based on my observations over the past 20 years of being a parent and someone who is responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

### THE LIST

- Teach your children how to use the bathroom—by themselves.
- Resist the temptation to wipe them at an age when they should be doing it themselves. Invest in moist toilet wipes, if necessary; but do not do it for them.
- Make sure your children know how to shower—ALONE. It is not a group activity.
- Make sure they know that showering is, however, a daily activity. It's also a rule. Make no exceptions to this rule. If in doubt, shower twice a day.
- Wearing clean clothes is essential. Changing them every day is important. If this creates too much laundry, teach your children to do their laundry. Show your children stains on clothing so they know what to look for and not to wear clothes with stains.
- Food is not love. Food is fuel. The wrong types slow you down, and the good food gives you energy. If

our children eat the wrong food, they will look wrong. If they eat the right foods, they will look right. It's that simple.

- Do not let anyone tell you that your children can not learn to read or not read better than they read today. Learning does not end.
- Beware of group homes. They are not the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. They are like taking a lover. They will make you very happy for a time, but they will inevitably let you down.
- Respect. We all want it. Too many of us want our children to receive it; but truth be told, you must be willing to give it. This includes our children.
- It also means doing what the boss tells you—whoever the boss may be.
- I want to remind you that daytime is for being awake and nighttime for sleeping. Some people still don't get it.
- Adults work. Most teenagers work too. Even some pre-teens work. Our children should work. Somewhere.
- SSI does guarantee a monthly income. It does not guarantee self-respect.
- Don't blame someone else for mistakes. You set a bad example. Mistakes are inevitable. Move on.
- Don't expect the siblings to be the parents. Brothers and sisters want information—lots of information. That is not the same thing as wanting responsibility.
- Finally, if you don't teach your children to cross the street, they will never know what's on the other side. Neither will you.