



What Thomas has taught...

By Laura McClees

The baby's name was
Thomas
His birth was very
blessed.
His parents were over-
joyed,
to finally have their baby
boy.

At first no one noticed
how different he looked,
until the doctor handed
them a disabilities book.
The joyful parents began
to worry, the next few
days were blurry.

Inside they were feeling a
little sad,
What happened to the
dreams they had?
How would they deal
with an extra
chromosome?
Would Thomas be happy
in their home?

This special child has
touched many lives,
He runs and plays and
laughs and cries.
He's so normal in many
ways,
And yet so different some
of the days.

Thomas loves music,

Barney, and ice cream
cones.
He struggles to talk and
sometimes moans.
He attends a class for
children with special
needs.
He likes to listen to books
his teacher reads.



...what happened to the dream they had?

Thomas requires a lot of
care,
His parents know good
sitters are rare.
The commitment is tough
for a teen,
But nothing can compare
to the joys I've seen.

Thomas has taught me
much about life and
trust; in his world food,
love, and family are a
must.
It is so simple when you
contemplate,
The real purpose of our
fate.

My life is better because
of him,
Without Thomas my life
would be dim.
I thank God for our rela-
tionship,
And I ask His protection
on this special child
He sent.

Mary Zahn submitted this
poem along with a letter.
In it she wrote:

*"This was written by our
sitter that cares for our
five year old son,
Thomas. Thomas
has Down syn-
drome and au-
tism. Laura came into our
lives two and a half years
ago. In the past five years
there have been many
people that have touched
our families life. Few
have had the impact that
Laura has! Sometimes I
wonder as a parent will
Thomas ever have friends.
I know as long as Laura
is around he has a
friend...someone who
accepts him for who he is
and brings out the best in
him. Laura is a talented,
mature young woman that
has brought our family*

Inside this issue:

Letter from the Chair	2
Notes from the Board, Special "thank you's"	2
Calendar Items, Birthday <i>Superstars!</i>	3
Fundraisers, Nat'l Down Syndrome Congress	4
Help for Travelers, Informative Websites, Friendship	5
Adoption Awareness Program	6
Conferences, Sunshine Committee, Disability Solutions	6
Upcoming Special Events, Newsletter Info	7
New Phone Number for <i>Information Line</i>	8

TDSN Officers

- **Chair**— Leigh Menconi
- **Co-Chair**— Allison Jourdan
- **Secretary**— Ann Garrett
- **Treasurer**— Billy Zahn

Letter from the Chair

The 2003 Buddy Walk committee has met to start planning this year's event and there will be many changes from the previous Buddy Walks. One of the biggest changes is due to how successful the Buddy Walk has become—we've outgrown Crowder Park and need to move to a larger location! Committee members are investigating other parks but the preliminary conclusion is that Bond Park would best suit our needs for space, proximity, and for the walk itself.

We're trying to make the Buddy Walk more of a festival atmosphere with games and activities, focusing more on the kids, the families, and the community that supports them. We will again serve lunch, but this year will be

simpler and more kid-friendly with hot dogs and a few side dishes.

Although the Buddy Walk will not be our only fundraiser for the year (the Cut-A-Thon on May 17 and the Buddy Bowl on June 14), it is still our primary one. The brochures will include pledge sheets that registrants will use to solicit donations in support of Triangle Down Syndrome Network. The only prizes will be for those hitting specific pledge goals; we are not planning to do door prizes, gift baskets or any raffles at this point. We would like to focus more on getting corporate sponsorships: if you work for or patronize a business that would be willing to sponsor the Buddy Walk, please contact me I will send a letter requesting their participation and

support. Many companies plan their charitable donations early in the year so please contact me as soon as possible before the deadlines pass.

TDSN has grown so much since it's inception as a support group for new parents to reaching out to the disability community at large, hosting the Spring Fling Teen Dance for the teenagers in April as well as the IEP Workshop for the parents that we co-sponsored with ECAC in March. Many thanks to the volunteers who help make these and other upcoming events possible! I hope to see everyone at the picnic in May!

Leigh Menconi

Notes from the Board

Board Highlights from the March and April meetings

The TDSN Board meets the first Monday of each month. Meetings occur at 7 p.m. at Cary Travel. For directions or more information, please contact Leigh Menconi, the Board Chair, at 856-0391 or by e-mail lmconci@earthlink.net.

- △ Raleigh Printing and Typing will be printing the TDSN newsletter.
- △ As of April, 50 to 60 members have elected to become registered.
- △ A committee has been formed for Buddy Walk 2003.
- △ The First Annual Buddy Bowl is being planned for June.

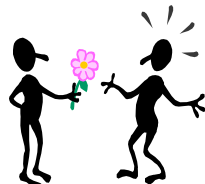
- △ SibShops has been put hold.

*The TDSN Board meets the
first Monday
of every month.*

Special "thank yous" to Special Individuals

Spring Fling Teen Dance

Thanks to Dona Hess, Paula Goldberg and all the volunteers for making the Spring Fling Teen Dance such a huge success! Due to the superb planning of this wonderful group of volunteers, the dance occurred without a hitch. A giant thank you to DJ Ross Merle. He can be reached at 773-1724 if anyone requires the services of an excellent DJ for future events.



Buddy Walk 2003

TDSN thanks Julie Lanning and Kelly Nestle for graciously volunteering to co-chair the committee charged with planning the Buddy Walk 2003 event. It is tentatively scheduled for October 11, 2003 at Bond Park. The next planning meeting is scheduled for May 2 at 6:30 at Dona Hess's home in Cary.

Contact Julie Lanning at jbeplanning@aol.com if you are interested in volunteering.

Special Needs Spring Carnival

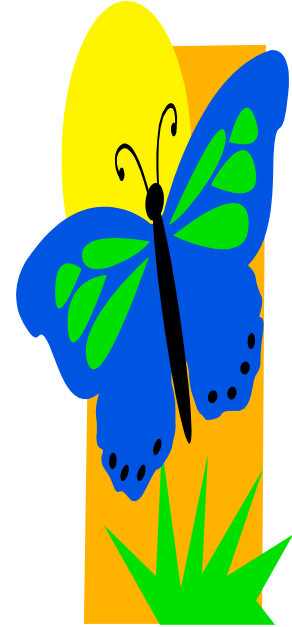
I want to express my sincere gratitude to Paula Woodhouse and all the extraordinary folks at Brooks Avenue Church of Christ. The Special Needs Ministry hosted their Third Annual Spring Carnival for kids with special needs and their siblings on April 12th. Our family has gone every year and we have a blast each time. This year, Matthew (age 5 and with Ds) can not stop talking about petting the pony and the baby bunny while his 2 year old brother, Ben, tells everyone about the guitar he got in his complimentary Easter basket. I want to encourage every one to attend next year. Thank you!

Michelle Schwab

TDSN Calendar Items

MAY

- 5/2 Buddy Walk 2003 planning committee meeting (6:30 at Dona Hess's home. Contact Julie Lanning at jbemlanning@aol.com for more details)
- 5/5 Board Meeting at Cary Travel at 7 p.m.
- * *No Mom's Night Out scheduled for May*
- 5/17 TDSN Spring Picnic (Picnic begins at 4 p.m. Additional details are located on the TDSN website and page 7)
- 5/17 Cut-A-Thon fundraiser at *Who Does Your Hair?* salon in Wake Forest (see article on page 4 for more details)



JUNE

- 6/2 Board Meeting at Cary Travel at 7 p.m.
- 6/14 Buddy Bowl fundraiser at Buffalo Lanes North (Additional details located on page 4)
- 6/30 Mom's Night Out (Meet at the home of Denise Lloyd in Durham. Contact Stephanie Bednar @ 752-0313 to RSVP and get directions)
- * *No Parent Meetings planned for the summer months*

For add'l info on activities
call the
Information Line at 919-788-3646
or visit the
TDSN web site at
www.Triangledownsyrndrome.org

Birthday Superstars!

MAY SUPERSTARS!

- 5/14/95 Matthew Howard
5/16/99 Wesley Dunn
5/28/99 Claudia Menconi

If your child has a birthday coming up and you would like to include it in the newsletter, please contact Leigh Menconi at 856-0391 or lmnconi@earthlink.net.



JUNE SUPERSTARS!

- 6/7/85 Tinsley Hess
6/10/96 Jacob Schell
6/13/01 Anna Merrills
6/15/97 Noah Watts
6/16/01 Kayla Pittman
6/20/87 Ilene Whitehouse
6/25/92 Cara Jean Zebrowski
6/28/99 Christian Corley

Up-coming Bowling Fundraisers

TDSN's First Annual Buddy Bowl

Triangle Down Syndrome is happy to announce the First Annual Buddy Bowl fundraising event! Kelly and Stephanie Bednar are the chair persons for this event. It will be held on June 14, 2003 at Buffalo Lanes North from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. Any one is invited to attend or participate. There are bumper rails and light weight balls for kids and any adults that may need them. There will be a silent auction for the adults and prizes awarded to the kids. Individuals that raise fifty dollars will receive a T-shirt. TDSN is hoping to make this an annual event. If anyone would like to vol-

unteer, please contact Kelly and Stephanie at 752-0313. Watch your mail as registration brochures will be arriving soon.



*Buddy Bowl registration brochures
will be arriving soon!*

Bowling for Champions

CARQUEST in association with Special Olympics is sponsoring bowler, Larry Parker (brother of Stephanie Bednar) in an attempt to break the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest consecutive hours of bowling. The event will occur on May 9-11 at Buffalo Lanes North. The current record is 47 hours and 15 minutes. Parker believes by attempting the bowling record, he will be able to raise significant funds and awareness for Special Olympics. Parker who has been touched by Special Olympics through his nephew who has Down syndrome, states "we can raise thousands of dollars for Special Olympics and also raise awareness about athletes with mental retardation that compete each year in games throughout the world." For more details, log on to www.carquest.com/torch_run_bowling_fundraiser.htm.

"Hair-Raising" Fundraiser Happening Soon!

Kathy Jordan, a TDSN parent of fifteen year old Joe and owner of "Who Does Your Hair?" salon in Wake Forest is sponsoring a Cut-A-Thon fundraising event for Triangle Down Syndrome Network. The hair raising event is scheduled to occur

on May 17 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Each stylist will contribute \$15 dollars per client service for appointments scheduled during Cut-A-Thon hours. The salon is located at 1241 South Main Street in Wake Forest. Please call 556-8915 as

soon as possible to schedule an appointment before the time slots fill up!



Call for nominations to the National Down Syndrome Congress Board

Article reprinted from the NDSC Down Syndrome News newsletter

Nominations are in order for new members of the National Down Syndrome Congress Board of Directors to be elected at the annual membership meeting in August.

Any NDSC member in good standing is eligible for nomination to the Board of Directors. Self and third party nominations are welcomed. Immediate Past President Kathleen Marafino chairs the Nominating Committee with general

membership representation.

The NDSC seeks wide representation in its board membership and considers factors such as geographical representation, age of person or family member with Down syndrome, parent/professional status, areas of expertise, minority representation, and prior experience on not-for-profit boards, including fund-raising experience.

To submit a name for the Nominating Committee to consider, please send the name, contact information (address,

phone number, e-mail and fax, if available) and a brief statement of the nominee's background and qualifications to: Kathleen Marafino, 6290 Wooderton Path, Cicero, NY 13039; Fax 1-315-699-6109; E-Mail :erainc@twcny.rr.com.

Deadline to submit a nomination is Thursday, May 15, 2003.

Help for Travelers with Children with Disabilities

Websites reprinted with permission from the Spring edition of the Family Support Network Newsletter.

With summer just around the corner, many of us are planning vacations. The websites listed below may offer special tips and resources for those travelers with special needs. Planning your trip wisely can provide an opportunity for all to actually enjoy the vacation.

Travelers websites:

△ www.access-able.com– Access-able

Travel Source provides information about accessible accommodations, equipment rentals, transportation, lists of travel agents with experience planning travel for individuals with disabilities and more.

△ www.frommers.com– Has a Special Travelers section on their website.

△ www.candy-charles.com/Horizons– Emerging Horizons-accessable travel newsletter.

△ www.sath.org– Society for the Advancement of Travel for the

handicapped.

△ www.wildernessinquiry.org– Wilderness Inquiry offers adventure travel vacations, including some trips designed for families whose members have varying physical abilities.

△ Trips Inc.-1-800-686-1013 Organizes special adventures for people with cognitive disabilities.



Plan your trip wisely!

Informative Websites

The Beach Center

The Beach Center's website contains research briefs and fact sheets on behavior management, links to support organizations and products. The website also contains good general information about behavior management, autism, fathers of children with special needs and sleep problems.

The website address is www.beachcenter.org

Family Support Network

Visit the Family Support Network website to find resources, information, links, and a current calendar on events happening in the community.

The website address is www.familysupportonline.com.



Allegro Foundation

The Allegro Foundation...a Champion for Children with Disabilities, is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization that combines movement instruction with educational and medical expertise, creating a new vehicle to teach children with disabilities and enhance their quality of life.

The website address is www.allegrofoundation.net.

Friendship

Revelations about the power and importance of friendships.

☺ If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one, so I never have to live without you. *Winnie the Pooh*

☺ True friendship is like sound health; the value of it is seldom known until it is lost. *Charles Caleb Colton*

☺ A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out.

☺ Friendship is one mind in two bodies. *Meniclus*

☺ Friends are God's way of taking care of us.

☺ If you should die before me, ask if you can bring a friend. *Stone Temple Pilots*

☺ I'll lean on you and you lean on me and we'll be o'kay. *Dave Matthews Band*

☺ If all my friends were to jump off a bridge, I wouldn't jump with them, I'd be at the bottom to catch them.

☺ Friends hear what you say. Best friends hear what you don't say.

☺ We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other

everywhere. *Tim McGraw*

☺ Don't ever forget your true friends, but don't be afraid to make new ones.

☺ A friend is someone that knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words.



Hold a true friend with both hands.
Nigerian Proverb

Adoption Awareness Program

The following article is included in response to a request made by the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati. The article concerns adoption of children with Down syndrome. Their goal is to identify individuals who have an interest in adopting a child with Down syndrome in as many states as possible.

Adoption Awareness Program

The Adoption Awareness Program of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati has provided information and support to birth parents, adoptive parents and adoption agencies throughout the United States since 1981.

Our goal is to ensure that every child born with Down syndrome has the opportunity to grow up in a caring family. We are contacted frequently by genetics counselors who are working with birth parents who are making difficult choices after receiving a prenatal diag-

nosis. We are contacted by social workers who are providing information to families who have recently given birth and are considering out of home options for their child. We are contacted by birth families for various reasons



who find parenting a child with Down syndrome more than they can handle. We are contacted by agencies who have custody of school age and older children with Down syndrome who are growing up in institutions or foster care.

In each case, we provide positive information on Down syndrome as well as assurance that there is a list of families waiting to adopt. The Adoption Awareness program presently has a list of over 100 families with completed home studies waiting to adopt. In 1981,

our program assisted four families in making adoption plans for their children born with Down syndrome. In 2003, our program receives an average of four calls per week requesting information on making adoption plans for a child with Down syndrome.

Most of the adopted families registered with us have had some connection or experience with an individual with Down syndrome in their life. They may be a birth parent themselves. They may have had a sibling with Down syndrome. They may be a professional who has a client with Down syndrome. Their decision to adopt is directly related to a positive life experience.

If you are interested in learning more about adopting a child with Down syndrome or would like to know more about the Adoption Awareness Program, please contact Robin Steele, Adoption Coordinator, Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati at 513-761-5400.

Miscellaneous

Sunshine Committee Chair Position Available

TDSN is looking for someone to chair the Sunshine Committee. Sunshine Committee provides baskets filled with goodies to individuals who are hospitalized. Basket items such as stuffed animals, lotions, perishables, etc. have been collected. The committee is responsible for delivery once a call or e-mail is made requesting a visit. Please contact Mary Angelini (current chair) at maryangelini@mindspring.com if you are interested.

Estate Planning Guide Available

The Professional's Guide to Estate Planning for Individuals with Disabilities is available for purchase through the Life Plan Trust office. To order, please send a check for \$21.20 (for family members) or \$31.80 (for professionals) to: Life Plan Trust, 122 Salem Towne Court, Apex, NC 27502

FREE Resource!

Disability Solutions is a free resource publication for families and others interested in Down syndrome and related disabilities. It is published by the Enoch-Gelbard Foundation six times a year. The goal of the Foundation is to make information widely available, free of charge, to families and professionals. To receive the publication, call, write or e-mail:

Disability Solutions
9220 S.W. Barbur Blvd. Suite 119
Portland, Oregon, 97219
503-244-7662

www.disabilitysolutions.org

Up-Coming Conferences

Please review the list below of up-coming, informative conferences related to individuals with disabilities.

5/9-10/03 Δ 2003 Client Right Conference "Building a Partnership for Rights, Protection, and Advocacy" – Contact Stuart.Berde@ncmail.net

5/12-14/03 Δ 2003 Best Practices in Community Support Conference -Greensboro, NC – For details go to www.unc.edu/depts/ddti

5/20-21/03 Δ Building Inclusive Communities -Durham, NC - For information call 919-781-3616 ext 228

5/22/03 Δ Engaging Fathers: The Other Important Parent - Southern Pines, NC - For information call 910-673-9111

7/10-13/03 Δ Making A Difference Together-Nat'l Down Syndrome Society Nat'l Con-



vention– St. Louis , Missouri - For information call 800-221-4602 or visit the website www.ndss.org

8/22-24/03 Δ Nat'l Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - For information call 800-232-6372 or visit the website www.ndscenter.org

Upcoming Special Events

Triangle Down Syndrome Network Spring Picnic

The Triangle Down Syndrome Network is sponsoring its Annual Spring Picnic. The picnic will occur on May 17, 2003 at Preston Village Playground from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Please bring an appetizer, main dish or dessert to share. Beverages and paper products will be supplied. Eating will begin at 5 p.m. The playground offers a covered picnic shelter, a great fenced playground area and a pond filled with fish, ducks and turtles. Go to the TDSN website to view pictures from previous picnics. Directions are supplied on the site as well.

Coffee House



The Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cary and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Raleigh are hosting a "Coffee House" for teens and adults with special needs. The get-together will be held twice a month with the churches alternating in hosting the events. Friends and families are also invited to join the group for live music, refreshments, and fellowship. Admission and refreshments are free. The Coffee House occurs from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Locations and dates follow. Please feel free to attend either or both each month.

Resurrection Lutheran Church

107 Lochmere Drive W
Cary, NC 27511

*Contact John and Kathy Sherman
at 467-2090

May 9

June 13

July 11

August 8

September 12

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

7000 Creedmoor Road
Raleigh, NC

*Contact Gail Vaughn at 847-8183

May 30

June 27

July 25

August 29

September 26

Newsletter Policy

General Information: TDSNews is published bi-monthly by the Triangle Down Syndrome Network, 109 Raphael Drive, Cary, NC 27511. Current circulation is over 550 issues. You can view the newsletter via the TDSN web site. Robyn Trueblood-Noll is the editor of the newsletter. Her e-mail address is rocknrobyn2@yahoo.com.

Change of Address: TDSNews is mailed 3rd

class bulk-rate and will not be forwarded if you move. Please send address changes to Leigh Menconi at lmconci@earthlink.net or leave a message on the TDSN Information Line at 919-788-3646.

Deadline: Submissions to the newsletter are due by the 12th of even numbered months. Any information received after that will be considered for the next newsletter.

Submissions: Submit ideas, articles and pictures for the newsletter to Robyn Trueblood-Noll at rocknrobyn2@yahoo.com.

June 12th is the deadline for the July/August newsletter.

TDSN Information

TDSN Website

The TDSN's website at www.Triangledownsyntax.org was established in January 2000 as a resource for our families and professionals that assist and support us with the well-being of our children. To include stories about your children on the site contact Patti Dudek at pdudek@nc.rr.com. Indicate if you have photographs that can be posted.

We also provide an e-mail list for those who would like to stay in touch and share information about local resources.

To subscribe, send an e-mail to TDSN-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Newsletter now available on the Web!

The newsletter can be viewed on the TDSN website. Information on how to download the Adobe Acrobat viewing software that you will need is also on the site. If you would like to receive a notification via email when the newsletter is available to view rather than receive a hardcopy in the mail two weeks later, please email lmconci@earthlink.net with your full name and email address.

The TDSN Website address is
www.Triangledownsyntax.org

TDSN Information Line 919-788-3646

Get the latest information about TDSN meetings and other activities and events by calling our new information line. A member of the TDSN Board will retrieve the messages and return calls as soon as possible.

Special Note:

Patti Dudek has a new email address at pdudek@nc.rr.com.



TDSN

Triangle Down Syndrome Network
109 Raphael Drive
Cary, NC 27511

Phone: 919-788-3646

TDSNews

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Raleigh, NC
Permit No. 2016

We're on the Web!
www.triangledownsyndrome.org

New Information Line Phone Number

The Triangle Down Syndrome Network
Information Line has a new phone number. Please
call **(919) 788-3646** for information in the
future.

