



**DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION**  
of Central Oklahoma

# Upcoming News & Events

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## Chapter Planning/Board Meeting

**When:** January 13, 2005  
7:00PM to 8:30PM  
**Where:** Integris Baptist Medical Center  
Room C

All parents, caregivers and those interested in promoting awareness and acceptance of individuals with Down syndrome are encouraged to attend.

## Bi-Monthly Meeting

**When:** Saturday, January 22, 2005  
10:00AM to Noon  
**Where:** Integris Baptist Medical Center  
Room H  
**Topic:** Special Olympics with Special Guest Speaker Cathi Morris  
**RSVP:** For childcare to Sharon Domek no later than January 13, 2005  
(405) 945-4523

All parents, caregivers and those interested in promoting awareness and acceptance of individuals with Down syndrome are encouraged to attend. This would be a great opportunity to find out anything about Special Olympics and Stars of the Future.

\* If anyone would like to help or knows of anyone who might like to help with childcare, please contact Sharon Domek (405) 945-4523.

Disclaimer: The Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma does not promote, recommend or endorse any service, professional or organization. Decisions regarding use of any service, professional or organization are the sole responsibility of the family and/or caregiver (s).

## Bountiful Blessings Calendar Update

We still have some 2005 calendars. If you need to check out calendars, please call or email me and we will make arrangements. If you would like to purchase a calendar, please send a check for \$12.00/calendar written out to DSACO to my address and we will send you a calendar.

If you have any check(s) to turn in, please send them to me in a timely manner. Please make sure not to mail cash.

It is time to get started on the *2006 Bountiful Blessings* calendar!! If you would like your child's picture in the calendar, please fill out the calendar profile in this newsletter and mail it to me no later than February 15. (I need to receive it by that date.)

If you are interested in serving on next year's (2006) calendar committee, please contact me. There is work that needs to be done that does not require you to live in the Oklahoma City area.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call or email me.

Tami Arambula  
Calendar Committee Chair  
1321 Craig Drive  
Piedmont, OK 73078  
(405) 373-2854  
Email: [tamira@netzero.net](mailto:tamira@netzero.net)



## Gracias...Merci...Thanks!

A great time was had by all who attended the DSACO Deck the Halls Christmas party. Big thanks to Marji Robison, Joy Lee, and their team for putting together such a nice party. The kids loved all the Wiggles goodies, the visit from Santa Claus, and especially the magician (who made Joy wear a magic Santa hat). The food was yummy, and it was great just getting to visit with everyone. Can't wait till next year's party!! Thanks Again!

"Can't wait till next year's party!"

-Julia Trotter

Submitted by Julia Trotter  
DSACO Team

## 2006 DSACO Calendar Profile

The Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma is looking for individuals with Down syndrome to pose for its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Bountiful Blessings Calendar. We want to create a calendar that represents their beauty.

Filling out a profile does not secure your child a position in the calendar. It only means they will be considered. Decisions regarding calendar spots are at the discretion of the calendar committee. All calendar shots will be used in a variety of mediums (print, TV, ads, website, etc.) so if you have objections to signing over rights to ALL areas please DO NOT fill out this profile.

Applicant's last name \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Legal Guardian's full name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the DSACO activities or disability advocacy in which you have been involved.

Are you willing to commit to selling a minimum of 25 calendars? \_\_\_\_\_

DSACO is seeking companies or individuals to sponsor a month in the calendar. Cost per page is \$1000 or \$500 to co-sponsor a month (tax deductible). Do you know anyone who would be interested?

\*\*\*PLEASE ATTACH A RECENT PHOTO OR COLOR COPY THAT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR CHILD. IT WILL NOT BE USED IN THE CALENDAR. THE PHOTOGRAPHER WILL USE IT TO PLAN PHOTO SHOTS. IT DOES NOT MATTER IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN IN PREVIOUS CALENDARS. WE STILL NEED A PICTURE. IT WILL NOT BE RETURNED.

MAIL COMPLETED PROFILE AND PICTURE TO: Tami Arambula, 1321 Craig Drive, Piedmont, OK 73078

All profiles must be postmarked and mailed to Tami Arambula by February 15, 2005 to be considered.

**NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

# Use of Belittling Words Devalues Human Beings

By Thomas J. O'Neill

Retard, retarded, retardation, extra chromosome set - what do these words and this phrase really mean? What is the image they create in your mind? How and why are they used?

If you look up "retard" in the Random House dictionary, it states that to retard is to slow progress or growth. Look a little further in the same dictionary and you will find retarded and retardation, words defined as demonstrated slowness in intellectual growth. This is more of a clinical definition, often used for diagnostic purposes. The phrase "extra chromosome set" is a negative reference to people with Down syndrome. Such people have an extra chromosome, and this anomaly is the most common form of mental retardation.

When watching television or a movie, while listening to some of the talk shows or even some of the news shows, or merely listening to everyday conversation, you hear these words. The use of the words retard, retarded, retardation or extra chromosome set in these situations is too often not to demonstrate slowed progress or growth, or to clarify a situation related to slowed intellectual development. In these situations the meaning of the words is often abused, used to label, belittle or demean another person, and is also done in a degrading manner.

Take a moment and think of the impact of the distorted use of these words. There is an impact when someone says, "Oh, she/he is such a retard," or "I guess I don't get it, I'm just a retard," or "Oh, what could someone from the extra chromosome set know about anything like that." The person abusing these words or phrases may think that their use of the word is meaningless and without merit or unworthy of consideration. However, to the person who is intellectually challenged (mentally retarded), the abuse of these words is hurtful.

It promotes negative stereotyping; it unfairly degrades another person; and it gives an inaccurate message. Furthermore, it sends the message that it is OK to minimize the worth and dignity of another human being. And when the media abuses these words, they signal that it is OK for the rest of society to follow suit.

The abuse of the words retard, retarded, retardation or extra chromosome set knows no political or philosophical bounds. There were two prime examples of such abuse in recent weeks at movies. Both "Anchorman" and "Garden State" demonstrated this.

Also in recent weeks you could hear Maureen Dowd, writer for the New York Times, abuse these words as she was being interviewed and promoting her new book, "BushWorld."

You can also look back a couple of years and listen to the language of former President George H.W. Bush or former Vice President Al Gore. Both of them liked the phrase, "extra chromosome set."

And we seem to be deluged with the abuse of these words and phrases on some - "Last Comic Standing," "Real Time With of the TV comedy and political shows Bill Maher," "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart" and "Saturday Night Live," to name a few.

Given the abuse of these words, it calls into question how we as a society regard people. Do we truly believe that all people deserve respect? Do we believe that this includes people with a cognitive challenge?

Do we believe that it is acceptable to use negative labels to define people? Do we believe that it is OK to minimize the worth and dignity of another human being?

It is important that we as a society grapple with these questions. If we profess that the answer to the first two questions is "yes" and the second two questions is "no," then we need to think about how we demonstrate that respect. It starts with each of us.

*Thomas J. O'Neill is president of the National Down Syndrome Society and is a Fort Wayne, Indiana resident. He wrote this for The Journal Gazette.*

*"Take a moment and think of the impact of the distorted use of these words. There is an impact ..."*

-Thomas J. O'Neill

President of National Down Syndrome Society

## Hats off to the Buddy Walk Family Teams

This year's Family Teams did an AWESOME job of raising money for the 2004 DSACO Buddy Walk. The teams raised over \$50,000. We had 43 "official" teams this year, and eight of those teams were new families with babies under 1 year of age! The team contributions each ranged from \$100 to over \$5,000 and every bit helped! Money raised goes to support DSACO activities and programs as well as to fund national education programs, research, and advocacy efforts.

All the teams received a Buddy Walk t-shirt and a complimentary family team photo. Additional incentive prizes were awarded which included DSACO tote bags and calendars, and Buddy Walk caps, picture frames, and watches. The top five teams also received their choice of special prizes including a digital camera and printer, a \$250 Visa gift card, a Bed & Breakfast stay, and \$250 Lowe's and Quail Springs Mall gift certificates. The Revolving Family Team Trophy went to the team that raised the most money. This year *Drew's Crew* received the trophy for raising \$5,165. The 2nd place team is *The Chaney Gang* who raised \$4,920. The *T-Steppers* came in at 3rd place with \$4,894.45. Fourth place goes to *Tanner's Trotters* with \$4,577.50. And *Logan's Lone Rangers* raised \$4,209.20 putting them in 5th place.



All the teams did a great job so be sure to give them a pat on the back for all their hard work. Here are the teams (in alphabetical order):

Addison's Buddies, Ben's Buddies, Branscom Team, Bryce's Purple Pride, Bryson's Team, Danielle Robinson Team, Drew's Crew, Gretchen's Gang, Harrah United Methodist Youth/Amanda Eden, Hollman's Heroes, Holloway, Dobson & Bachman, Jamin' for Justin, Joe's Joggers, Joey's Blessed Buddies, Katy Ann's Kissers, Kylee McFarlane Team, Logan's Lone Rangers, Long One's, Maddy's Mile, Micah's A Team, Peter's Power Team, Reis's Renegades, Rhett's Racers, Rylee's Ramblers, Sally's Supporters, Shaw Family, Simon's Saints, Singleton & Taylor Team, Sitton Superstars, Steed Family, Tanner's Trotters, Taylor's Titans, Teah'tah's Teamsters, Team Cameron, Team Danny, Team Eric, The Adam's Family, The Allycats, The Chaney Gang, Tiffany Rodgers Team, Trafford's Troop, Trotter Walkers, T-Steppers.

Special Thanks also goes out to the Family Team Chair's Julia Trotter and Sharon Domek! We couldn't do it without you!

### Special Olympics Dates for Your Calendar

Winter Games = January 14–15th in Norman

Summer Games = May 11-13 in Stillwater



### DSACO Day at Johnnie's!

Don't forget DSACO Day at Johnnie's in the metro area. Johnnie's Charcoal Broiler has designated the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesday of each month as DSACO Day. All you have to do is eat at Johnnie's on the third Tuesday and tell them you are with DSACO when you are placing your order. The following month DSACO will receive a check for a percentage of all sales that were designated as DSACO sales.

It's easy, it doesn't take a lot of time or effort and anyone can participate - parents, grandparents and friends. All you have to do is go eat a burger, some fries, or whatever you want on the menu!

So remind everyone that wants to help raise money for DSACO!

## Parent-to-Parent Sharing Meetings

North - Added meeting - Saturday, January 8, 2005, from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon. Location - Church of the Servant, 14343 N. MacArthur Blvd. RSVP No later than December 30, 2004.

Childcare provided by RSVP only. Due to a change in staffing the RSVP must be in no later than the Thursday week before the meeting week. For information about topics of discussion or childcare contact Kevin and Becky Moore at 580-336-2773 or via email at [mooreorless616@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mooreorless616@sbcglobal.net)

South - Tuesday, January 18, 2005, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.. Location - First Baptist Church of Moore, 301 NE 27th Street. RSVP No later than January 17, 2005.

Topics for Discussion: Physical Activity and Therapies (Weight Management)

Childcare provided by RSVP only. For information about topics of discussion or childcare contact Lori Wathen at 405-329-8185 or via email at [wathenl@mdteam.com](mailto:wathenl@mdteam.com).

We will meet at Johnnie's at I-240 for DSACO Night at 5:30PM. Everyone is responsible for their own dinner costs.

### DSACO's Lending Library

DSACO is organizing a lending library for the benefit of our parents. This library will consist of books, tapes, movies, or other materials that are helpful in addressing Down syndrome issues. If you have books, tapes, movies or other materials you feel our families would enjoy or benefit from, or if you like to suggest an item for the library, please call Marji Robison at (405) 691-4560.



### Newsletter Information

If anyone would like to share your story, inspirational piece or just have something to share. Please contact Kerri Brooks, DSACO Newsletter Coordinator and we will see about getting you "published".

Kerri Brooks (405) 307-9207 or mail to 1608 Heron Drive, Norman OK 73071

### Pictures Needed!

DSACO would like to request pictures of our kids and family members with Down syndrome for the DSACO web site! We want to continue to put them in our Photo Album on the Web!

If you have any questions, or for a consent form, please do not hesitate to email me at [ckjbrooks@msn.com](mailto:ckjbrooks@msn.com) or contact me via DSACO's phone number (405)330-5025.

Please mail your pictures and consent form in hard copy to:

Kerri Brooks ~ 1608 Heron Drive ~ Norman OK 73071

### Special Olympics...Stars of the Future

If you would be interested in your son or daughter participating in the Special Olympics Under 8—Stars of the Future (ages 4-7) at the games in May, please contact the Special Olympics office and ask to be placed on their parent mailing list. This is to ensure that you will receive information about participation, etc. in a timely manner.



## DSACO's Calendar of Events

### JANUARY

- 8 Parent to Parent/North
- 13 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 18 Parent to Parent/South
- 22 Bi-Monthly Meeting

### FEBRUARY

- 10 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 15 Parent to Parent/South
- 19 Parent to Parent/North

### MARCH

- 5 Bi-Monthly Meeting
- 15 Parent to Parent/South
- 19 Parent to Parent/North
- 19 Easter Eggstravaganza

### APRIL

- 14 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 16 Parent to Parent/North
- 19 Parent to Parent/South

### MAY

- 14 Bi-Monthly Meeting
- 17 Parent to Parent/South
- 21 Parent to Parent/North

### JUNE

- 9 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 18 Parent to Parent/North
- 21 Parent to Parent/South

### JULY

- 7-10 NDSS National Conference—Chicago
- 16 Parent to Parent/North
- 19 Parent to Parent/South
- 23 Bi-Monthly Meeting
- 29-31 NDSC National Convention --Anaheim

### AUGUST

- 11 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 16 Parent to Parent/South
- 20 Parent to Parent/North

### SEPTEMBER

Buddy Walk - TO BE ANNOUNCED

### OCTOBER

- 13 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 15 Parent to Parent/North
- 18 Parent to Parent/South

### NOVEMBER

- 10 Chapter Planning/Board Meeting
- 15 Parent to Parent/South
- 19 Bi-Monthly Meeting

### DECEMBER

- 2 Deck the Halls with DSACO

\* All Dates are Subject to Change

# Heather's 411

By Heather Hancock

## The 411 on Matthew Newberry

Hello and Happy New Year! In this article I would like to tell you about Matthew Newberry who happens to have Down syndrome just like me. We have been friends since preschool so as you can imagine we share many of the same interests. Matthew is an 18-year-old junior who attends school with me at Westmoore High School. We attend every Westmoore football game together and cheer our Jaguars on to victory. Matthew is very popular and knows most of the football players. The players always give Matthew special attention when they notice him in the front row cheering loudly. He is truly a die-hard Jaguar fan!

Matthew loves school! In the mornings, Matthew attends the job sampling program through the Dale Rogers Training Center. Jeanetta, the job coach from Dale Rogers, picks him and a few other students up at school and takes them to their job sites. They have worked at many different places including Kohl's, Wal-Mart, and Denny's. Matt has learned how to do a variety of jobs including, stocking items, greeting customers, and food handling. This program gives Matthew the opportunity to see what different careers are available to him after he graduates. In the afternoon, Matthew attends classes at the high school. His favorite class is Weightlifting. Matthew has many friends in this class who help him with his weightlifting skills. Last year, Matt Wade, a fellow classmate was his coach for the Special Olympics weightlifting competitions. Matthew went on to win 4 gold medals at the summer state games in Stillwater. He bench pressed 275 lbs. and squatted and deadlifted 300 lbs., making him the overall winner in his weight division.

Matthew participates in many extracurricular activities including bowling and basketball with the Westmoore Special Olympic team. He also swims on the Sea Lions swim team with me during the Winter and Spring time. After school, Matthew enjoys working out at the YMCA with his habilitation aide, Tony. Tony and Matthew also do many things with me and my habilitation aide, Kristin. We go to the movies, out to eat, and bowling. During the summer we go to White Water and Frontier City and we love to swim in Matthew's pool! Sometimes we just hang out at each other's houses and watch movies or play video games. Matthew loves video games, especially his wrestling games. He is a fan of WWE and Smackdown and the Rock is his favorite wrestler. He loves to draw and write stories about vampires and he hopes to become an artist someday.

Matthew loves horror movies and I can't watch them because they make me have nightmares! But Matthew also likes comedies which I like to watch too. He loves to watch the Disney channel and is a huge fan of Hillary Duff.

Matthew has a great family. He lives with his mom and dad, Connie and Steve. Matthew has two older siblings, Brian and Sara. Brian lives in Lexington, Virginia where he is a defensive coordinator for the Washington Lee University football team. Matthew loves when his brother visits him during the holiday's and over summer break. Matthew's sister, Sara, is married to Justin. Sara and Justin have two young children, Hanna and Jackson. That's right, Matthew is a very proud uncle who loves to play with his niece and nephew. He also loves to spend the night with his sister and brother-in-law because Justin lets him play video games all night! One more important part of Matthew's family is his dog, Jack. Matthew treats Jack like a brother and Jack loves the special attention. He always makes me laugh when he dances around the living room with Jack. Jack is so big that he can stand on his hind legs and rest his front paws on Matthew's shoulders while they dance!

Well, I guess you can see why Matthew and I are such great friends. He is truly an awesome guy who shares many of the same interests as me. When I am feeling down, he can always make me laugh because he is so funny. I know that we will be friends forever. Matthew is important to me because we both have Down syndrome and because of this we can relate to each other in a special way.

I hope you enjoyed Matt's biography and I will definitely bring you more interesting biographies on people with Down syndrome in future issues.

Please send your bio's in care of Heather Hancock, 2400 Novona Place OKC, OK 73170. I would love to write about more of you interesting teens and adults out there. Keep watching for up and coming Teen and Adult events this coming year we will be planning some fun activities!

## Note from the President

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and is looking forward to the New Year and everything that it will bring. I am looking forward to 2005 and the things we have started planning for our organization. We have several events and parties that will be both exciting and fun. I would like to say "Thank You" to everyone who put in so much hard work in 2004 with all the events and committees. I know there has already been some work started on the calendar and Buddy Walk for 2005. If you would like to be on one of the committees please let me know and I can get you in touch with the people that are over them.

I would like to welcome the new families from 2004 and hope you have enjoyed the new relationships and new friends you have encountered. We would like to remind everyone that we have our bi-monthly meetings and our monthly Parent to Parent meetings. These are a great way to get involved while meeting new people. We hope that the Parent to Parent meetings are helpful and you find the support that you need there. As many of us know, Down syndrome is not always something that is easy to deal with and it helps to have a shoulder to lean on when you need it. Look at our website, [www.DSACO.org](http://www.DSACO.org), for a calendar of events. This will be updated as needed. We will also send out a calendar so everyone knows what all the frenzy is about. As I said before, I think everyone is in for an exciting year with plenty of things for everyone to participate in.

*Shaun Joy, DSACO President*



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Oklahoma City, OK 73112