

# Down Syndrome Development Council

## FORUM- June 2007 volume 9



Please contact us at:

DDC  
PO Box 906  
Mundelein,  
IL 60060

Our Meeting Place:  
Community Protestant Church  
418N. Prairie  
Mundelein,

Second Mondays of the month

**Our Mission:**  
To promote a greater acceptance and understanding of Down syndrome, by enlightening the broader community to recognize the individuality, uniqueness and capabilities of individuals with DS.

### June Monthly Meeting:

Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 7pm.

Our June meeting will be important to anyone who loves the Buddy Walk. Plans will be discussed to make this year's event very special. **Our Buddy Walk** provides funds for all of our projects, parties, guest speakers and play- groups. If you have been helped by the DDC, then it is time to make space in your schedule to volunteer your time to volunteer at the Buddy Walk. Come to the meeting and get ready for some fun. *Or you could just come for the cookies.*

### Grab Grandma and Grandpa, It's time for the DDC Summer Picnic!

On Sunday August 26, from 12-4pm our DDC family will be gathering again for a sunny afternoon of food, fun and fishing. Bring the family to the Half Day Forest Preserve, Shelter A, located on Milwaukee Ave. between Rt.22 and Rt. 60, in Lincolnshire. This is a pot-luck event and you will need to call Mary Lou Paff to let her know what your family will be bringing. We will provide the BBQ entrée as well as a bunch of fun activities for the kids as well as those BIG

Kids aka moms and dads.



### UPCOMING DDC EVENTS:



- 6/11 Monthly Meeting, 7pm
- 6/9 Sat. Playgroup 10:30-12:30am
- 6/21 Thurs. Playgroup, 5:30 – 7:30pm
- 6/23 Sat. New Baby Social, 9:30-11:30am
- 8/26 Sun. Family Picnic, 12-4pm.
- 9/14 Fri. Tootsie Roll drive, 8am – 1pm
- 9/16 Sun. Buddy Walk, 12-5pm

We now have a website:

[www.TheDDC.org](http://www.TheDDC.org) It is a beautifully designed site that will provide access to our newsletter. You should email Terri to cancel your mailed newsletter. Postage and printing cost have risen.



**Calling all Babies and Parents.  
DDC New Baby Social will be on Saturday June 23,  
9:30 -11:30am.**

**What:** 2-3 DDC parents on hand (parents of kids age 5 and under) to answer any questions we can about Early Intervention, preschool, or recreation programs in our area. All members of your family are, of course, welcome to attend (though we will leave the rest of ours at home - it's a working day for us!) - A light breakfast will be served, coffee, juice, bagels for people to munch as they talk, a video viewing/play area (at one end of the same room) for any older kids in your family, and they can eat, bring their own favorite toys to play with, or watch the "movie of the week"!

**Who:** Families new to the DDC, with a "new arrival" 18 months or younger

**When:** Saturday June 23, 9:30-11:30  
(feel free to come and go as you can!)

**Where:** Fremont Public Library  
1170 N. Midlothian Road, Mundelein

\*\*\*\*\* Questions? Please RSVP by June 22 to Jennifer Jenkins \*\*\*\*\*  
(847/970-6797 only\_connect@msn.com)

**Join Law Enforcement Officers in a Relay to Raise Money for Special Olympics**



The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the single largest year-round fundraising event benefiting Special Olympics Illinois ([www.soill.org](http://www.soill.org)). The Law Enforcement Torch Run, which began in Illinois in 1986, raised more than \$2 million in 2006. The annual intrastate relay and its various fundraising projects have two goals: to raise money and to gain awareness for the athletes who participate in Special Olympics Illinois.

The Special Olympics Illinois is a nonprofit organization providing year-round sports training and competition to 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities in Illinois. Through training and competition, Special Olympics athletes enhance their physical fitness, motor skills, self-confidence and social skills.

Approximately 3,000 officers represent every branch of law enforcement across the state from local police officers to FBI agents will carry the Flame of Hope nearly 1,500 miles, running through thousands of Illinois communities via 23 different legs (routes) to its final destination - the Opening Ceremonies of the Special Olympics Illinois Summer Games on June 15 in Normal.

This year's annual intrastate relay is being held between June 10-15, depending, on the leg. The Wilmette Police Department, my department, is schedule to run 1.3 miles on June 10 at approximately 10:00 AM. If you are interested in participating in this relay or another one closer to home please contact Patrick Collins.



**THE 2007 BUDDY WALK**  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**LAMBS FARM**  
**LIBERTYVILLE, IL**  
**12:00 PM TO -5:00 PM**  
**WALK HELD AT 1:30 PM**



As you have probably read in May's newsletter, we are working hard to organize the DDC Buddy Walk. In 1995, the National Down Syndrome Society established the Buddy Walk to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome and to celebrate October, National Down Syndrome Awareness Month. In its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the Buddy Walk Event has continued to grow and been a successful event for raising awareness and raising funds to support our family members and friends with Down syndrome.

For DDC, the Buddy Walk has traditionally been a great opportunity to raise the level of awareness for our special needs family members and educate the general public about Down syndrome. It has been an opportunity to talk to other parents from other local support groups such as NADS, Ups for Downs, Gigi's Playhouse, etc. It has also been DDC's largest fundraiser. And most important, it has been a great opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness and special qualities that our children bring to our families and communities.

Besides the informational booths and the performances of some of our children, we have also decided to request assistance from our teenage and young adult members with Down syndrome. We believe that these special members are the best spokesperson for increasing acceptance and inclusion in our communities. We are looking for these special volunteers and, if needed, a coach to help with such activities as running the children's games, handing out information pamphlets, working at the food tent, assisting in guiding the walk and other tasks. Please contact us if you have a teenager or young adult who would like to help with this fun event. Also, if you or other family members would like to volunteer, welcome you with open arms.

The success of the Buddy Walk often depends on food donations and raffle prize donations that we receive. So if you know of a business or work for a business that may want to donate to this great event please contact us. If you feel uncomfortable about approaching a business, we have a standard letter that we would be more than willing to send to the business.

Specifically, we need food donations consisting of hot dogs and the items that go with hot dogs, chips of every kind, water, soda, juice boxes and individually packaged treats. For raffle prizes, we are looking for various items that can be a standalone prize (bicycle, weekend/night getaway, fishing charter, etc) or package prize (9 holes of golf and golf bag, dinner and movie, etc).

**If you want to volunteer or have a donation or know of a possible donation please contact one of the following Buddy Walk Chairpersons:**

- **DEBBIE POGOSE** 847-973-1622 EMAIL: [BEAUPV@SBCGLOBAL.NET](mailto:BEAUPV@SBCGLOBAL.NET)
- **Mary Lou Paff** 847.548.4852 EMAIL: [mlpaff@aol.com](mailto:mlpaff@aol.com)
- **Patrick or RaeAnn Collins** 847.265.8482 Email: [rjohncol@comcast.net](mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net)

# DDc Sports Page

This is our victorious Little League Team, the Libertyville Challengers. We all hit well and our defense was tough. Kevin was awesome at first base, as Max, Michelle and Kirsten knocked the ball down. Doug and Kyle picked runners off with



throws to first. Kelly and Ryan were our heavy hitters. We finished the game with a Happy Birthday cheer for Jake. Way to go team. Come out for our next game! Good game team! Thanks to Coach O'Donnell for rallying us to victory.



**Special Olympics**

## Special Olympics

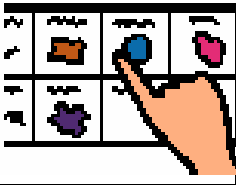
Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Our athletes range in age from 8 to over 80. All programs offered in Illinois provide athletes with the chance to develop physical fitness, sport skills, social skills and self-esteem. Athletes train for a minimum of eight weeks and compete locally before advancing to the next level of competitions.

Besides offering just team competitions; Special Olympics offers Individual sports competitions, individual skills competitions, Motor Activities Training Programs and Unified Sports. Motor Activities Training Programs are held for the severe and profound athletes, emphasizing training and participation rather than competition. MATP provides comprehensive motor activity and recreation training. Unified Sports combine an equal number of Special Olympics and non-special Olympics athletes of similar age and ability on teams that compete against other unified teams. Illinois has introduced 3 sports at the state level; bocce, tennis and golf with the hopes of expanding the program to additional sports in the future.

Illinois is proud to provide 19 different sports for our 20,000 athletes. Of those 20,000 athletes, over 2,150 are from Area 2 (Lake, McHenry, DuPage and Kane). For more information on Special Olympics, volunteering opportunities, donations or sponsorship email Amber at [apetersen@soill.org](mailto:apetersen@soill.org).

**Congratulations to Mary Clare Boyd and Doug Christolini for winning gold at their regional track and field competitions in Mt. Prospect on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Mary Clare really hurled that ball and Doug broad-jumped like a pro. Both of these Olympians were competing with their school, Clare Woods Academy in Bartlett.**

If you know of an Olympian that has competed this year please let Terri know so we can share the news with our DDC family.



On May 5th 2007, at the Grayslake Public Library Pat Bryant, SLP, taught us the nuts and bolts of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System). We had an eager group and Pat was great about giving demos, answering questions and giving us all a good base to start using

PECS right away. Everyone was able to create their own PECS kit to take home and Pat took the time to print out and laminate several extra picture cards to help us all personalize our own kits. Over all it was a very informative intro into PECS and how the system can be used as our children's communication skills and needs grow. Thank you Pat for a great workshop! We would also like to send out a special thank you to Cecilia Mendoza who was our Spanish interpreter for the workshop and to Mickey Sepulveda (grandfather of Gus Roeser) who translated the PECS workshop handouts for all our Spanish speaking families. Thank you everyone for making this workshop a success. Couldn't make it to the workshop.... well you are in luck! We have five PECS kits available for \$10.00 a piece. If you are interested please contact RaeAnn Collins at 847.265.8482

## Let's get together and make friends!!!

The "Playgroups" are therapist coordinated group sessions, geared toward preschool aged children with Down syndrome, but all ages are welcome. It is also a great chance for families to socialize and ask questions. Siblings are welcome. There is a Spanish translator at each session. Please RSVP if you would like to attend by calling Belinda Hidalgo at 847-838-4398 or Kris Murray at 847-630-4991

**Thursday Playgroup** is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs. of the month at 5:30-7:30pm. Location will be announced when you RSVP. A light dinner will be served.

**Saturday Play group** is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the month from 10:30am - 12:30pm. Location will be announced when you RSVP.

Celebrate the Buddy Walk's 12th anniversary by entering the **Times Square Video Contest**. The video, which showcases the contributions those individuals with DS make to their communities, will air on the Panasonic Astrovision screen in Times Square, Sept. 30 at 10:30 a.m. The NY City Buddy Walk will follow the video at the Great Hill in Central Park. Each year, NDSS receives thousands of photo submissions for the Times Square Video Contest. Because the Buddy Walk promotes acceptance and inclusion of individuals with DS, the winning photographs feature children, teens and adults with DS working, playing and learning with friends and family. **Please limit photos to no more than three per individual with Down syndrome.**

For more information, or to submit a photo The deadline for submitting photos is July 20, 2007. [Click here to view the 2006 Times Square Video.](#)

## June Birthdays

1	Robert Jacobs	32
4	Bradley Gieser	11
13	Nicole Elsey	14
15	Genevieve Ortega	12
19	Alexis Winegard	14
24	Maggie Filipiak	15
24	Joshua Lawson	8
27	Doug Christolini	12
27	Joshua Hintz	4
27	Nickolas Pesce	9
28	Max Kern	11
29	Josh Nykiel	20
30	Hope Michelotti	9





## LAST MONTH IN THE DDC:

### Last Month at the DDC . . . – May 2007

Our guest speaker for this month's meeting was Amber Petersen, who is the regional coordinator (Area 2 = Lake, McHenry, Kane, and part of DuPage counties) for Special Olympics Illinois. Although the structure of Special Olympics goes all the way from area competition up to an annual "World Games," Amber emphasized that the greatest involvement (in terms of number of athletes, coaches, family members and friends in the audience) happens on the local level. This enormous organized sports program encompasses 19 sports (for both team and individual participation) and over 20,000 athletes statewide, ranging in age from 8 to 80! Athletes train for a minimum of 8 weeks before competing, and every 2 years they must undergo a complete physical exam as part of their qualification; free medical check-ups are available in some cases, and a large scale "exam fest" will be held this fall in Lake County (modeled off of a similar event held in Chicago) in order to make this service more accessible to a broader field of potential athletes. To get more information on the specific sports already offered in your area, or to find out how to become a coach, you can contact one of several local agencies (many of which are connected with the local park districts); the biggest of these agencies are currently run through Lambs Farm and Warren SRA, with one at SEDOL on the rise as well, and these groups can place your child on a team or help to match him/her against competitors of similar abilities.

In addition to the typical competition level, there are also a number of additional programs that focus on other modes of participation in Special Olympics. The Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) offers those athletes with more profound disabilities to reap the benefits of intense physical training and social engagement without the pressure of competition, while the Unified Sports Program allows Special Olympians and typically developing athletes to participate in events as pairs. Members of the Athlete Leadership Program, or ALPs, train to act as "global messengers" for Special Olympics, becoming public speakers, coaches, and event officials. Amber also mentioned that Special Olympics is starting a pilot "Young Athletes Program" for kids under age 8 to work on developing skills now that can lead to competition later (not currently in our area - see the following website for more on this project, as well as volunteer opportunities and a calendar of fund-raising events:

[www.soill.org](http://www.soill.org)). Regardless of the form of participation, Special Olympic training functions as the best of all "therapies," building physical and social skills within an environment of great acceptance and encouragement. When the organization began 39 years ago, many of its athletes were seen as unable to attend "regular" school or to undertake any kind of employment; later generations of athletes would prove those assumptions false, as they demonstrated, through sport, their capacity to work toward goals and to build skills. The pledge taken by Special Olympians is well-known – "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me brave in the attempt" – but the organization lives by another equally valuable creed: "we don't break records, we break barriers."

- Jennifer Jenkins, Secretary

### DDC Board Members 2006-2007

President	Patrick Collins	847-265-8482	<a href="mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net">rjohncol@comcast.net</a>
Vice Pres	Mary Lou Paff	847-548-4852	<a href="mailto:mlpaff@aol.com">mlpaff@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Jennifer Jenkins	847-970-6797	<a href="mailto:only_connect@msn.com">only_connect@msn.com</a>
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Past Pres	Andrea O'Donnell	847-949-1975	<a href="mailto:odonnella@sbcglobal.net">odonnella@sbcglobal.net</a>
Playgroups	Belinda Hildalgo	847-838-4398	<a href="mailto:Hidalgob@comcast.net">Hidalgob@comcast.net</a>
Board	RaeAnn Collins	847-265-8482	<a href="mailto:rjohncol@comcast.net">rjohncol@comcast.net</a>
Newsletter	Terri Christolini	847-267-1169	<a href="mailto:christoliniben@comcast.net">christoliniben@comcast.net</a>
Foro (Spanish Issue)	Anna Roeser	847-362-0980	<a href="mailto:roeser1984@yahoo.com">roeser1984@yahoo.com</a>

Michael Doyle/McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON -- The Supreme Court opened the door yesterday for more parents with disabled children to challenge school districts over the quality of their children's educations. In a blow to school boards, the justices ruled that certain parents can sue without lawyers. That could be a green light to the courthouse for some of the 6.8 million families nationwide who have children who rely on special-education plans.

"It's hardly a novel proposition to say parents have a recognized legal interest in the education and upbringing of their child," Justice Anthony Kennedy said.

Kennedy's majority opinion grants parents "independent, enforceable rights" to obtain education free for their kids who have disabilities. This means that parents who are unhappy with school-district decisions about their children with disabilities can file their own lawsuits even if they aren't trained or licensed as lawyers.

The court's ruling in a case involving an autistic 9-year-old boy from Parma, Ohio, subtly tilts the balance of power away from schools and in favor of families served by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act.

The 1975 law requires that school districts provide "free appropriate education" to children with disabilities. School officials and parents collaborate in preparing an "individualized education program" for each child who's identified as having disabilities.

The disabilities cover a wide range, from blindness and dyslexia to mental retardation and speech impairments.

In Parma, Jeff and Sandee Winkelman fought over a plan written for their youngest son, Jacob. The Parma school district wanted Jacob placed in a public school. The Winkelmans wanted him in a specialized private school that costs \$60,000 a year.

Unhappy parents can first file an administrative appeal.

The Winkelmans sued after they lost their appeal in 2003, with Sandee Winkelman doing research at a law school near the Cleveland suburb. The Parma district, joined by school-board officials nationwide, contended that the federal education law protected only the child, not the parents. By this reasoning, non-lawyer parents are ineligible to sue on the child's behalf.

The court, though, concluded that because parents have the right to administrative appeal of the education plans, they should be able to follow that up with legal action. That extends to parents who can't afford lawyers, the court decided.

Six other justices joined Kennedy in the opinion. Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas agreed in part and dissented in part.

ADA-OHIO (The Americans with Disabilities Act)  
700 Morse Road, Suite 101  
Columbus, OH 43214  
800-ADA-OHIO (800-232-6446)  
614-844-5537 FAX  
adaohio@aol.com  
<http://www.ada-ohio.org/>  
ADA-OHIO is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Downs (Down Syndrome) Development Council, DDC, is a not-for-profit t 501(c) (3) organization and volunteer support group established in 1978 by parents of children with Down Syndrome.

Please note: The Forum newsletter is written on a volunteer, non-professional basis. Information presented should not be construed to be objective or definitive, but represents the opinions and understanding of the editor and it's contributors. Your contributions are welcome. Please contact Terri at [christoliniben@comcast.net](mailto:christoliniben@comcast.net)

For every newsletter we email, the DDC saves money. Please send Terri your email address so she can forward the news to you directly. Thanks for helping.

[www.christoliniben@comcast](mailto:www.christoliniben@comcast)