



heart of illinois Down Syndrome Association Newsletter

October 2015

Contact Us:

c/o Bethel Lutheran Church
325 E. Queenwood Rd.
Morton, IL 61550
309-712-4852
info@hoidsa.org

The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association, Inc. is committed to improving the quality of life of persons with Down syndrome by providing support, advocacy, and educational opportunities to those individuals, their families and community advocates.

Please note our new address!!

HOIDSA's office has relocated to Bethel Lutheran Church's new location at 325 E. Queenwood Rd. in Morton, approximately 1/2 mile east of Field Shopping Center



Calendar of Events

- Wed. Oct. 18th** **Young Adult Cooking Class** - 7:00pm
Bethel Lutheran Church, 325 E. Queenwood Rd, Mort.
- Tues. Nov. 2nd** **Board Meeting** - 6:00pm
Bethel Lutheran Church, 325 E. Queenwood Rd, Mort.
- Sun. Nov. 8th** **Young Athletes Session** - 3:00pm-4:00pm
at St. Philomena School, 3216 N. Emery, Peoria
- Fri. Nov. 13th** **New Parent Breakfast** - 9:00am - 10:30am
Bethel Lutheran Church, 325 E. Queenwood Rd, Mort.
- Tues. Nov. 17th** **Grandparent's Group Meeting** - 6:00pm
Jason's Deli, 112 Spinder Dr., East Peoria
- Wed. Nov. 18th** **Young Adult Cooking Class** - 7:00pm
Bethel Lutheran Church, 325 E. Queenwood Rd, Mort.
- Mon. Dec. 7th** **Annual Holiday Party**
More details to come!!

2015 Board of Directors

Carol Nepolello, *President*
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Laurie Mattheessen
Becky McDaniels
Kim Sarff
Shelli Willoughby
Todd Willoughby

Editor: VACANCY
See Help Wanted Ad
on the back cover!

Send items to
c.nepolello@comcast.net

The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association, Inc. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

This newsletter publishes items of interest relating to Down syndrome and other disability issues. The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association, Inc. (HOIDSA) does not promote or recommend any therapy, treatment, institution, professional system, etc. Individuals or organizations referred to are not necessarily endorsed by this publication or its editor. We hope to bring together those interested in Down syndrome and attempt to create an optimistic future and attitude. The editor reserves the right to make corrections as are appropriate and in accord with established editorial practice in material submitted for publication.

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Greetings From The President

October 2015

As you know, October is Down Syndrome Awareness month. Our Buddy Walk® committee (Anita Hohimer, Meri Tucker, Laurie Mattheessen, Kim Sarff, Erica Hooker, Shelli Wiloughby, and Milly Howeler) did another fantastic job putting together the Buddy Walk® this year! Thank you to everyone who came out to show your support. We met a few new families and reconnected with other families. It was so heart-warming to see everyone come together.



I know it's not always easy to take time out of our busy lives, so I appreciate all efforts, big or small, to increase Down syndrome awareness and raise money for our organization. Thank you to our sponsors, volunteers, friends, and family members who came together to make this another successful event!

This year was especially awesome due to the large teams of walkers & fundraisers to honor Payton Mills, Rory O'Hanlon, Claire Schwarting, Elinn Hooker, Maggie Getz, and Jesslyn Schultz, as well as the outpouring of community support from Bradley University, Illinois Central College, and Eureka High School. It just keeps getting better and better every year!

Carol Nepolello

October

- Matthew Schultz
10/3
- Daniel Van Buskirk
10/3
- Jonah Johnson
10/5
- Zoey Melton
10/5
- Allie Cowden
10/9
- Juan Quintero-Vargas
10/13
- Katie Swenson
10/15
- Autumn Botkin
10/24
- Joe Willoughby
10/25

November

- Steven Knaack
11/3
- Courion Williams
11/10
- Reagan Dunaway
11/15
- Alex Tucker
11/15
- Uriah Tierra
11/16
- Logan Serrano
11/18
- Blade Glover



October & November Birthdays

Board of Directors Vacancies!

The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association would like to add at least 4 people to our Board of Directors to fill vacancies and expand our leadership. The Nomination Committee seeks candidates that are passionate about helping people with Down syndrome reach their full potential. Board members will serve a three-year term, attend monthly board meetings, participate on at least one committee, and provide input to direct the Board's efforts.

HOIDSA is specifically looking for candidates in the following areas:

- *represents adults with disabilities*
- *families with young children*
- *educational expertise/school districts*
- *relationship with the medical community*

We will accept nominations through December 7th, at which time vacancies will be filled by voting at the December Annual Meeting/Social. If you are interested, or know someone who would be a great addition to our Board, please contact us at 309.712.4852 or info@hoidsa.org.

Memorial/Recognition Donations

Our sincerest appreciation to all the family and friends who contributed to the following memorial donations:

- **Memorial donations in honor of Patrick Sweeney from Patricia Reed**
- **Memorial donations in honor of Clifford Moore**
- **Memorial donations in honor of Mary Otten from J.R. and Patricia McAtee, Mary Jo Paine, Owen and Geraldine Shurts, Francis and Mary Schlumberger, Martin and Therese Miller, John and Becky O'Conner, MJ and DM Gootee, Paula Hill, Michael and Theresa Mahoney, Mr. and Mrs. James Hudspeth, Nancy and John Machens, Jerry and Gale Hill, Joseph and Janet O'Neill, Craig and Patricia Sacco, James and Carol Otten**
- **Heritage Bank of Central Illinois "Casual for a Cause Day" produced a donation of \$1,023.08**
- **Accenture "Denim Days" produced a donation of \$240.00**

The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association, Inc. warmly accepts memorial donations of any amount. Since we are a volunteer organization, all dollars received go toward fulfilling our mission of improving the quality of life of persons with Down syndrome.

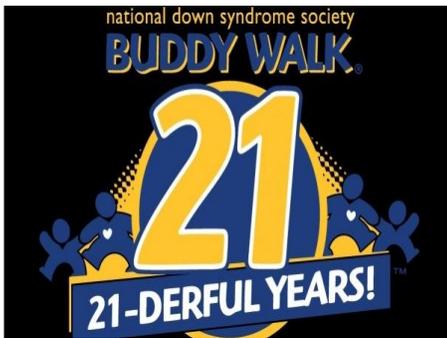
The Heart of Illinois Down Syndrome Association, Inc. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

For more information call 309-712-4852. Pre-printed memorial envelopes are available.

BUDDY WALK® NEWS

HOIDSA's 8th Annual Buddy Walk was a huge success!

Family members and friends gathered at East Side Center in East Peoria on October 3rd to help celebrate HOIDSA's 8th annual Buddy Walk®. The kids enjoyed games, Unique Twist balloons, face painting and making their very own Down Syndrome Awareness bracelets. The ICC Cougars baseball team and Bradley Braves basketball team were on hand to lead our walk. The two teams took an active part in helping with the games and, of course, playing basketball with the kids.



This year we celebrated the 21st anniversary of the Buddy Walk®. The Buddy Walk® was established in 1995 by the National Down Syndrome Society to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October and to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. HOIDSA uses the funds generated by the walk to offer educational opportunities, assistance and support for families and people with Down Syndrome.

Even though the walk is over for this year, HOIDSA's FirstGiving page will remain open until December 31st for donations. Donations can be made online at www.firstgiving.com/hoidsa or they can also be mailed to HOIDSA Buddy Walk c/o Bethel Lutheran Church, 325 E. Queenwood Rd., Morton IL 61550 or call 309-712-4852 to arrange pickup.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

For the 2nd year in a row, this year's Certificate of Achievement Award for having the most registered walkers participating in the walk went to Team Rory.



TOP FUNDRAISER



Our top fundraising team was Payton's Posse,
followed by Claire Schwarting, Rory O'Hanlon, and Maggie Getz.

HOIDSA would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the families, friends, fundraisers,
sponsors and volunteers that continue to make this event successful!

Kim Sarff
2015 Buddy Walk® Committee



THANK YOU
to ALL our **SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS** and **FAMILIES**



Pepsi Beverages Co.
Casey's General Stores, Inc.
Haddad's Market
Avanti's Italian Restaurant
Prairieland Band
Hy-Vee
Woodbine House
Taco Bell



for Making HOIDSA's 8th Annual Buddy Walk® a Success!







3 Things 2 Change 1 Mind Video Series

Created by Noah, Caleb, Meg, & Alina Hollis

Every year the Hollis Family in Elmwood passionately celebrates Down Syndrome Awareness Month. This year they created a video series called "3 things 2 change 1 mind" to create a better world for all people with Down Syndrome. There will be one a week throughout October.

Enjoy and please share if you want to help raise awareness as well!

Week 1 Facts About Down Syndrome

<https://www.facebook.com/anne.mcsorleyhollis/videos/10156185332650455/?pnref=story>

Week 2 Debunking Some Myths About People with Down Syndrome

<https://www.facebook.com/anne.mcsorleyhollis/videos/10156213449105455/?pnref=story>

Message from Five Senses Spa & Salon for Down Syndrome Awareness Month

We'd like to introduce to you Adam, a handsome little boy that loves Elvis and is a dancing machine! Adam is one of the children that will be drawing a lucky winner to win a spa treatment from Five Senses!

Visit this link to Five Senses Spa & Salon Facebook post:

<https://www.facebook.com/149235290050/videos/10156149446040051/?permPage=1>

Like, Comment or Share this post to be entered into our drawing for a Beautifying Body Treatment & Vichy Rain-fall Shower (\$120 value). Three lucky winners will be drawn on October 21, 2015!



Photo credit: [Studio Blunier](#)



Spreading awareness one step at a time
at the Pekin Marigold Parade
and Morton Pumpkin Parade

THE TEAL PUMPKIN PROJECT

Help support kids with food allergies this Halloween!

1. Buy low-cost non-food treats to hand out on Halloween (pencils, stickers, etc.)
2. Paint a pumpkin teal.
3. Place it by your door along with a sign indicating you have non-food items available.



Visit blog.foodallergy.org to
download a sign and learn more.



The next
**GRANDPARENT'S
GROUP** meeting

Tuesday November 17th @ 6pm

Jason's Deli
112 Spinder Dr
E Peoria IL

an informal evening with casual conversation

Contact Anita with any questions
309-241-8195
hohimer_home@comcast.net

Spotlight on...

Let us know if you would like to have your family member with Down syndrome featured in our newsletter. You can write your own article, tell us a story, or answer a few short questions on our interview template.

Send an email to info@hoidsa.org and we will contact you.

CI Heroes: One of a Kind Homecoming King Crowned at Limestone High School

<http://www.centralillinoisproud.com/news/local-news/ci-heroes-one-of-a-kind-homecoming-king-crowned-at-limestone-high-school>

Published 09/23 2015 10:58PM

BARTONVILLE

The homecoming football game and dance aren't happening until this weekend at Limestone High School.

But Wednesday night might have been the highlight of the whole week.

The homecoming court was announced, and so was the king.....

Limestone High School was rocking Wednesday night.

But the crowd went off the charts when the homecoming king was announced

"He's Levi Miller, he's the coolest guy, he walks around he knows everybody he's not afraid to talk to anybody."

That's what makes him so popular with the entire student body.

"I couldn't be any happier, he deserves it. He's really close to my heart and I wouldn't want anyone else to have it," explain Bailee Dunne, Levi's homecoming date.

Levi has Down syndrome, but that doesn't mean anything to his friends.

"At Limestone we look at him as one of us," explains Levi's friend, Calvin Peacock.

"I was excited," explains Levi of his nomination.

"I'm pretty excited, a lot of emotion, we're just so proud of him," says Levi's mom, Jodi Miller.

"We love him, you know, he's got a great personality and makes people smile. If you can do that then you're a great person," adds Peacock

"The kids at Limestone are just incredible; they've embraced Levi from day one," says his mom.

Levi's crowning is the cherry on top of an already stellar senior year...

"He actually just got his drivers permit the same week he was nominated for homecoming court. So, it was a pretty special week for us," adds his mom.

"We've never said there was nothing that he couldn't do," says Levi's dad, William. "And he's proved it this week."

When we asked Levi what he thought about making it this far--

"Because "I'm lucky, because my dad and mom, they're the nicest people ever."

It's clear they passed along those qualities to their son... Who, right now, is just ready for the dance...

Morton High School selects student with Down syndrome to homecoming court

By Steve Stein of the Journal Star

Posted Sep. 30, 2015 at 9:57 PM

MORTON — Jacob Urban is used to being in the spotlight.

He's performed in Penguin Project productions at the Eastlight Theatre in East Peoria for several years and he sings in the Morton High School choir.

So being in the high school's homecoming court this week will come naturally to him.

He was selected a senior class attendant and is in the running for homecoming king. The result of the vote will be announced Thursday night at the homecoming pep rally at Carper Field.

Jacob, 18, has Down syndrome.

"He is so proud of being in the homecoming court," said Rex Urban, Jacob's father. "He told everyone about it at the Penguin Project rehearsal the other night."

Rex and Annette Urban are proud parents. And a bit shocked, too, Rex Urban admitted.

"We knew the kids at school liked Jacob. We didn't realize how much," he said. "Their support for him says a lot about the students at the high school."

Jack Zern, a high school senior, has known Jacob since they were first-graders at Lincoln Elementary School.

"He's an awesome kid. Very funny," Zern said. "I voted for him for homecoming king. He got my vote. A lot of people I know voted for him, too."

High school special education teacher Megan Levitt has worked with Jacob for four years.

"He's laid back and funny, always laughing about something," she said. "When I walk through the halls, there's usually a group of kids around him."

District 709 Superintendent Lindsey Hall said she's excited about Jacob being in the homecoming court.

"It's an incredible sign of the inclusionary environment at the high school," she said.

The homecoming football game is Friday night against Pekin. The homecoming dance is Saturday night at the high school.

"Jacob is going to the dance with a friend from Mackinaw he knows through the Penguin Project," Rex Urban said.

Penguin Project productions involve youth with developmental disabilities playing roles in modified Broadway musicals alongside "peer mentors" of the same age. Rehearsals have begun for "Singin' in the Rain Jr.," which will be performed in January.

Steve Stein can be reached at 686-3114 and stevestein21@yahoo.com. Read his Stein Time blog on pjstar.com. Follow him on Twitter @SpartanSteve.



c/o Bethel Lutheran Church
325 E Queenwood Rd Morton IL 61550

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EDITOR'S REMARKS

Help Wanted: Newsletter Editor

We are still looking for a Newsletter Editor.

This is a volunteer position that requires:

- ◆ Approximately 8 hours 1 week per month
 - ◆ Attention to detail
- ◆ Excellent communication & follow up skills
- ◆ Collaboration with people who provide information for the newsletter
- ◆ Knowledge of Microsoft Publisher helpful, but there are other programs that could be used
 - ◆ File sharing through Dropbox

If you are interested, please contact us at info@hoidsa.org or call Carol Nepolello at 309.453.9221 for more information.

NEW PARENT OPEN HOUSE

This is a very informal, relaxed social time for newer parents to meet other families and little ones with Down syndrome.

Coffee, juice and snacks will be served.

Next Open House Dates:

Friday, November 13th

Friday, December 11th

9:00am - 10:30am



New Location:

Bethel Lutheran Church

325 E. Queenwood Rd., Morton

*Please call Milly for additional information
at 309-231-3689*