



# DSPTC News



[www.dsptc.org](http://www.dsptc.org)

DECEMBER 2011

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## DSPTC HOLIDAY PARTY

Sunday, December 4, 2011

2 pm - 5 pm

Round-up Inn at Will Rogers



DJ

Bring your camera for pictures with Santa

### Bounce Houses

### Refreshments

RSVP by 12-1-11 to Jennifer at [jennifer@dsptc.org](mailto:jennifer@dsptc.org) or 817-390-2970

No charge for DSPTC members & families living in the same household. Guests and extended family members living in a different household are only \$5 each.

The Round-up Inn is located inside the Amon G. Carter Exhibit Hall at Will Rogers Memorial Center--3401 W. Lancaster Avenue, Ft. Worth, TX 76107-3045. Access Will Rogers Memorial Center via West Lancaster Ave., Montgomery St., or University Dr. to Harley Ave. to Gendy Street to the Amon G. Carter Exhibits Hall. \$5 parking is available in the large west parking lot; \$3 parking is available in the lot south of the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, across Harley Street. The entrance to the Amon G. Carter Exhibits Hall is on the West side under the canopy by the flags and bucking horse statue, through the glass doors.

Photos © FickleZeal Photography 2010



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Committees

New Parent Outreach:

Barbi Beard-Wolfe, Chair  
[twerps2@att.net](mailto:twerps2@att.net)Teresa Koch  
817-924-0360

Event Chairs:

Golf Classic - Newley Spikes  
[nspikes@a-animal.com](mailto:nspikes@a-animal.com)Pool Party - Amy Smith  
[achks@skybeammail.com](mailto:achks@skybeammail.com)

Down Syndrome Clinic:

Rhonda Hawkins  
682-885-2181

Sunshine/Angel Food:

Jennifer Mearns  
[Jennifer@dsptc.org](mailto:Jennifer@dsptc.org)

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Editor, DSPTC News:

Jennifer Mearns  
[Jennifer@dsptc.org](mailto:Jennifer@dsptc.org)**WANT TO RIDE IN A NASCAR CAR?**

Texas Motor Speedway is hosting Team Texas Charity Day on Saturday, December 3 from 11AM-5PM. For \$99, you get a 4-lap passenger ride in a real NASCAR car! Half of your fee goes to DSPTC when you designate yourself as a part of the DSPTC group. Call 817-390-2970 to learn when DSPTC's group time is; this means you won't have to wait in line to ride after registering and purchasing your ticket on December 3.



# Team Texas CHARITY DAY

sponsored by Texas Motor Speedway

Come visit  
Texas Motor Speedway for a

## 4 LAP PASSENGER RIDE

[ UP TO 160MPH ]

DECEMBER 3RD  
11AM TO 5PM

CALL  
817-390-2970  
FOR MORE INFORMATION!

THE DOWN  
SYNDROME  
PARTNERSHIP OF  
TARRANT COUNTY  
WILL  
RECEIVE  
HALF  
OF THE  
PROCEEDS  
from referred riders  
(\$49.50)

~~\$125~~  
**\$99**  
CHARITY  
DAY PRICE

Please Note: The content of this newsletter is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical or other professional advice. The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of the DSPTC directors, members or editors.



*Brooke Garbe, left, and helpful friend*

## **BROOKE GARBE CROWNED TEXAS STATE CINDERELLA TINY TOT!**

On Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, my three-year-old daughter, Brooke Garbe, was crowned the new 2011-2012 Texas State Cinderella Tiny Tot!

Brooke's journey to this day is three years in the making. She has been a "Cinderella Girl" since she was an infant! In her first year of competition, Brooke earned the title of "Cover Girl," awarded for a photo submitted through sponsorship/ad sales in the program book. The next year, she won "Photogenic Girl," thanks to an incredible photo

shoot with DSPTC's very own FickleZeal Photography. This year, we had just hoped Brooke would place high enough to earn another crown and state title. While we were sitting in the audience at Grand Finals, the emcee called out the top three Tiny Tot participants. I sat back in my chair feeling certain we would have to wait a little longer before all of the awards were given. To my utter shock and disbelief, and the biggest roar of applause and screaming you have ever heard, Brooke was called for the top three!!! While she didn't win the overall title, she placed as the FIRST RUNNER UP and went on to win the title of "Tiny Tot Personality." Well, you know what they say in Miss America... "should the winner be unable to fulfill her duties, etc.?" That is exactly what happened – the Texas State Tiny Tot, Kathleen Mueller, went on to win the International Tiny Tot title and passed her crown to her successor, my daughter Brooke.

This day was not something that I had envisioned for my daughter upon the morning following her birth when the doctor came in to request a test to confirm that Brooke had Trisomy 21. At the time, Brooke's older sister, Sheridan, had been involved in the Cinderella program for two years and had just been crowned the 2007-2008 Texas State Tiny Tot that summer. For many, a pageant seems to conjure up the idea of the much sensationalized "Toddlers and Tiaras". To think a child with Down syndrome would be accepted into that type of environment, much less that a mother would put her child out there to be "judged," seemed unthinkable. I always wanted Brooke to have all of the same opportunities as her big sister, so why should this be an exception? (This is the first time the title has been shared by sisters!)

I've always been realistic about my children, and I felt like Brooke's participation might just give the other kids the opportunity to see the abilities alongside the differences, and to grow up with an amazing kid like mine. Maybe Brooke's participation would inspire these families to see the abilities in all of our children. In my wildest dreams, I never saw this opportunity for my baby girl, but I'm so excited she will get to represent the 2-to-3-year-old age division across the state of Texas for the next year! I know Brooke will have obstacles ahead in the years to come through Cinderella – speech

*(continued on page 4)*

delays, maturity and talent will all be areas of challenge – but I cannot imagine a better training ground for Brooke to learn to be a confident young lady, eloquent public speaker and maybe find her own special version of “World Peace.” You have to start early if you want to aspire to become an International Global Messenger for the Special Olympics!!!

The Cinderella Scholarship Pageant was inspired by the same structure of Miss America, but was developed to include children as well; ages go from children to college-aged women. There are local and state pageants that culminate into the prestigious International Cinderella Pageant held annually in Las Vegas. Cinderella is a natural pageant which prides itself on “...searching for a natural, unaffected young lady to represent our program. She should be charming and personable; well-groomed and poised; self-confident; and, above all, have the character, humility and inner beauty that sets her apart as a leader. Cinderella does not place emphasis on physical beauty, but rather seeks to promote the beautiful inner person that should reside in everyone.”

With the help of our Cinderella family, our Buddy Walk Team “Brooke’s Beauties & Beaus” has been in the top standings of fundraising and walkers for the past three years. In 2010, we were recognized as the largest team with almost 130 people IN ATTENDANCE!!! This year, we were among the top three fundraisers and the top five for largest number of pre-registered walkers. Come see us next year– you can’t miss us in our hot pink and BLING!!!



*Among Royalty*



## 2ND ANNUAL

### MISS SWEETHEART SPECIAL NEEDS PAGEANT

Aspiring title holders, mark your calendars for the second annual Miss Sweetheart Special Needs Pageant, set for May 19, 2012 at Hillside Community Church in Keller. “Like” them on Facebook and watch their page for updates! (You can read a follow-up article about the First Annual Miss Sweetheart Special Needs Pageant in the April 2011 issue of DSPTC News, available at [www.dsptc.org](http://www.dsptc.org) under the “Resources” tab.)



# 2011 TARRANT COUNTY BUDDY WALK



Buddy Walk photographs may be viewed at <http://ficklezeal.com/proofing/#/set/918d/> photographs courtesy of fickleZeal photographers

## OPEN LETTER FROM TERESA KOCH

### *Long-term New Parent Packet Coordinator Passes the Torch*



To all of the families and friends of the DSPTC:

Effective immediately, Barbi Beard-Wolfe will be taking over the position of New Parent Packet Coordinator; while it may come as a surprise to most of you, she and I have been discussing this for several months now.

It has been my greatest honor to have been entrusted with this "job" for the past 8 years, but, as with all things, the time has come to pass the responsibilities to someone new. While I will miss being one of the first people that a family when their child gets a DS diagnosis, I know that future families will be in good hands in Barbi's capable care.

For those of you who may not already know, I have been having health issues for the past 18 months – in March, 2010, I went to see an ophthalmic specialist about a drooping eyelid. I thought I might be getting some minor plastic surgery; I left her office with an appointment to see a neurologist instead.

In the summer of 2010, I was positively diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis (MG) – a neuromuscular disorder which saps a person of his or her strength. While there is no known cure for MG, it is almost never fatal, and there are several medications that are very helpful in keeping the disease in check.

Generally, if a person is diagnosed with Ocular MG – as I was – the disease will progress to full-blown MG within 1-2 years. Once I started doing research on MG, I realized (and my neurologist confirmed) that I had been having symptoms for several years before I was diagnosed; the tiny problems that I had been attributing to age/weight/lack of exercise were actually due to undiagnosed MG.

I've known in my heart for several months now that it was time to have someone take over the New Parent Packet Coordinator's job; I've been trying to "bargain" with my biology, but I'm finally at a point where I have accepted the reality of my diagnosis. It doesn't take much to wear me out these days, and I have to budget my strength accordingly.

This "job" has given me more joy than any of you can possibly know – I have had an opportunity to meet so many wonderful families (even if it is just over the phone in some cases). The happiest thing for me has always been hearing from people a few months after our initial conversations and hearing how much fun they are having with their new baby.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Partnership for allowing me to continue doing this job for all of these years – it has been an honor and a privilege to have been entrusted with this responsibility. I have seen the Partnership grow by leaps and bounds during my tenure, and it is heartening to know that so many of the families who were reaching out for reassurance and support just a few short years ago are now assuming leadership positions within this wonderful organization.

The Partnership's future is in the best of hands.

--Teresa Koch



(This has been copied in its entirety at my blog; please feel free to leave comments for me there: [www.teresainfortworth.wordpress.com/2011/11/16/handing-over-the-reins](http://www.teresainfortworth.wordpress.com/2011/11/16/handing-over-the-reins) )

*Editor's Note: The DSPTC is eternally grateful to Teresa for the wonderful care, strong support, and invaluable reassurance she has provided, especially to new DSPTC families, over the past 8 years. We are COUNTING on her to continue helping with New Parent Outreach as a warm and comforting "voice on the phone"!*

## LOSE THE TRAINING WHEELS MAKES A DIFFERENCE



What a success! I really want to thank DSPTC and volunteers for the opportunity that was given to my son Ahmad. Twelve and a half years ago, Ahmad was born with Down syndrome. I accepted the fact many years ago that his abilities would be limited, and that it would take him more time to achieve milestones than typically developing children. I could have never imagined that Ahmad would already be successful at learning how to ride a bike. I am amazed that Ahmad learned how to ride a bicycle without utilizing training

wheels. A milestone that seemed like an impossible dream has now come true for Ahmad.

Look at all the possibilities; next, Ahmad will be driving a car!

When I looked at my son take off and successfully ride away on the two-wheeled bicycle, his excitement gave me tears of joy. His late father and I had several conversations regarding whether or not Ahmad would ever master this skill. My only wish was that his late father would have been able to share this same proud moment in time with me.

To the Down Syndrome Partnership of Tarrant County and Lose The Training Wheels, I want to extend a heart-felt *Thank You* for your commitment to making this event so successful.

*--Happy Mom Rhonda Harris*



DSPTC's 3rd Annual Lose the Training Wheels camp is being planned for the summer of 2012. Information for both participants and volunteers is available at [www.dsptc.org](http://www.dsptc.org), under the "Education" tab. Contact Jennifer at [jennifer@dsptc.org](mailto:jennifer@dsptc.org) or 817-390-2970 to be put on the interest list or sign up to volunteer. Being on the interest list enables you to be among the first to receive application materials.



### ADULTS, MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR UPCOMING EVENTS!

**Sunday, December 4, 2:00-5:00 p.m.**  
**DSPTC Holiday Party**

Round-Up Inn (inside the Amon G. Carter Exhibit Hall at Will Rogers Memorial Center)  
3401 W. Lancaster Avenue, Ft. Worth, TX 76107-3045  
This is a family event; there will not be paid staff. Please plan to come to this event with your family.



**Friday, December 9, 6:00-9:00 p.m.**  
**Club 321 Christmas Party**

Green Oaks School, 5508 Chaperito Trail, Arlington, TX 76016

Wear your favorite Christmas attire (sweater, shirt, tie, etc.). There will be a gift card exchange, so please bring a \$5 gift card with you, in addition to \$5 for the event itself. Dinner will be served.

*Club 321 is a collaborative project of the DSPTC and Green Oaks School. Membership is by application; Club 321 membership and events are for adults, ages 18 and older. An **RSVP for each participant is required.** For additional information or to RSVP, call 817-496-5100 or email [club321friends@hotmail.com](mailto:club321friends@hotmail.com).*

### NEW PLACE TO SHOP AND SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME

**Dollars & Sense Thrift & Gift** opened on November 1 by Green Oaks School. The "store" has several purposes, with the most important being: 1) to provide self-sustaining financial support for the school and 2) to provide an opportunity to learn and practice real job skills that will lead to employment for adults with intellectual disabilities. As we all know, finding a job in this economic climate is difficult under the best of situations. In addition to training, the store will provide paid positions to these adults. We would also like to invite other potential employers to see our student employees and paid employees at work, with the hope they will realize the benefits of hiring individuals with intellectual disabilities.

The store is open Tuesdays through Fridays 10-6 and Saturdays 10-5. **Dollars & Sense Thrift & Gift** is located at 2401 W. Pioneer Parkway, #161, Arlington (Pantego). To reach the store by phone, call 817-460-7774. Come check out our inventory, as we have a little of everything, including new and gently used, name-brand children's clothing and toys. Donations, which are tax deductible, are accepted until one hour before closing. Please consider donating your gently used items.

For additional information and to see some good press for people with Down syndrome, check out the following links:

<http://www.star-telegram.com/2011/10/24/3469504/green-oaks-schools-new-thrift.html?storylink=addthis#.TqbcdUj0ELo.aolmail>

<http://www.nbcdfw.com/video/#!/news/local/Program-Makes-Special-Needs-Employees-More-Marketable/133488348>

**Now Open!**

**Dollars & Sense**  
Thrift & Gift

**20% Off**

Discount good one time only. One coupon per person.

All proceeds from Dollars & Sense Thrift & Gift benefit Green Oaks School and Green Oaks Adult Learning.

**INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK 2011**  
**Awareness to Action: Moving Forward**

From December 5-9, 2011, the 11th Annual Inclusive Schools Week will be celebrated in classrooms, schools, and communities throughout the world. *Inclusive Schools Week (ISW)* highlights and celebrates the progress schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to *all* students, including those who are marginalized due to disability, gender, ethnicity, geography and language. It also provides an important opportunity for educators, students, and families to discuss what else needs to be done to ensure that schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate *all* children. Write thank you notes to teachers, aides, administrators, custodians, other students—anyone you know who has helped the cause of inclusiveness in any way. Host an essay or art contest that celebrates and promotes inclusiveness. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper to raise awareness of your local inclusive school and how it benefits all students. However you choose to do so, celebrate Inclusive Schools Week 2011!

ISW is sponsored by the Inclusive Schools Network at Stetson & Associates, Inc. For more information about the Inclusive Schools Network and *Inclusive Schools Week*, please visit [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org) or email [inclusiveschools@stetsonassociates.com](mailto:inclusiveschools@stetsonassociates.com).



**SPECIAL NEEDS**  
 PLANNING CENTER

**SPECIAL NEEDS PLANNING CENTER TO  
 OFFER INFORMATIVE WORKSHOP**

**The 7 Core Concepts of a Special Needs Plan  
 December 1st, 6:00 pm**

This workshop will help parents to better understand the planning which our children need during all stages of life. We will cover what Social Security is, whether or not a child is eligible and why it is important for our children to obtain these benefits. We will focus on using Special Needs Trusts to protect assets for our children. We will also be reviewing Guardianship, explain how to create a blueprint for providing care for the child after the parents are gone and help you understand how planning for your special needs child is different both legally and financially.

**Workshop will be held at:**

North Richland Hills Library

9015 Grand Avenue—North Richland Hills, TX 76180

For more information or to RSVP, contact the Special Needs Planning Center at 214-518-5805 or

[dwhite@thesnpcenter.com](mailto:dwhite@thesnpcenter.com).

# THANK YOU! 2011 BUDDY WALK SPONSORS

## MARATHON BUDDY



## RUNNIN' BUDDY



JK Custom Apparel & Marketing Designs

## WALKIN' BUDDY



All About Rehab LLC  
dba Pediatric Rehab  
Providing quality therapy services to children



Law Office of Angela Harvey



McReynolds Orthodontics

## CRUISIN' BUDDY

**BOMBARDIER**



**CookChildren's**

Law Office of Kathryn Craven



*Kar-Lynn Arts* Ben E. Keith

Muralicious Balloons Fantastique—Hurst Nestle Waters

## CRAWLIN' BUDDY

## BABY STEPS BUDDY

Arc of NE Tarrant County Carter Therapy  
Barnes & Noble Arlington at the Parks  
Harmon (Hank) Jacobs, DDS ANSERS Institute

KidsCare Therapy Cloverleaf Academy  
Target—Hurst Jordan Health Services

## DECEMBER

December 1 6 pm	Special Needs Planning Center Workshop - 7 Core Concepts of a Special Needs Plan (214-518-5805 or <a href="mailto:dwhite@thesnpcenter.com">dwhite@thesnpcenter.com</a> )	North Richland Hills Library 9015 Grand Avenue, NRH, TX 76180
December 4 2-5 pm	Christmas Party (RSVP by December 1 to Jennifer at <a href="mailto:jennifer@dsptc.org">jennifer@dsptc.org</a> or 817-390-2970)	Round-Up Inn, Will Rogers 3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Ft. Worth 76107
December 4 2-5 pm	Club 321 Event: Club 321 will attend the DSPTC Christmas Party (RSVP by Dec. 1 to <a href="mailto:jennifer@dsptc.org">jennifer@dsptc.org</a> or 817-390-2970)	Round-Up Inn, Will Rogers 3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Ft. Worth 76107
December 5-9	11th Annual Inclusive Schools Week ( <a href="http://www.inclusiveschools.org">www.inclusiveschools.org</a> )	
December 9 6-9 pm	Club 321 Event: Club 321 Christmas Party (817-496-5100; <a href="mailto:club321friends@hotmail.com">club321friends@hotmail.com</a> )	Green Oaks School 5508 Chaperito Trail, Arlington, TX 76016

## JANUARY 2012

January 10 6:30 pm	D.A.D.S. (Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome) (RSVP to Patrick Bierle at <a href="mailto:pbierle@gmail.com">pbierle@gmail.com</a> )	Cooper's BBQ 301 Stockyards Blvd, Ft. Worth 76164
January 20 6:30 pm	Mom's Night Out (RSVP to Amber D. Holmes at 817-874-1613 or <a href="mailto:amberdholmes@gmail.com">amberdholmes@gmail.com</a> )	Mimi's Cafe 301 Interstate 20 E., Arlington, 76018-1120

## A LOOK AHEAD

February 1-4	19th Annual Inclusion Works! Conference: <i>From Disability to Possibility</i> ( <a href="http://www.thearcoftexas.org">www.thearcoftexas.org</a> )	The Renaissance Hotel Austin, Texas
March 3, 2012	3rd Annual Boopa's Family 5K/10K Run/Walk	
May 19, 2012	Miss Sweetheart Special Needs Pageant <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miss-Sweetheart-Special-Needs-Pageant/176242832456302">https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miss-Sweetheart-Special-Needs-Pageant/176242832456302</a>	Hillside Community Church Texas Star Golf Course
June 11, 2012	11th Annual Our Special Heroes Golf Classic	

DSPTC Events



## Down Syndrome Awareness Ribbon Wear!

Fellow DSPTC members, Jorge & Kim Mesa, parents to Lucas, have created a DS Awareness Ribbon Wear Line through their business!!

Available in youth, adult, and ladies sizes with embroidered or bling ribbon and saying of your choice!



The Bling ribbon as well as the embroidered design can go on just about anything: jackets, fleece, bags, aprons, caps, and more!

Consider totes for your teacher gifts starting at just \$15!

JK Custom Apparel & Marketing Designs - 817-909-4808 - [jkcustomapparel@hotmail.com](mailto:jkcustomapparel@hotmail.com) or look us up on Facebook by just Googling JK Custom Apparel!

## Painless Fundraising with MindfulTHRED

Make your clothes make a difference!

MindfulTHRED donates 50% of its profits to charities, and offers customers the option to choose the charity that benefits from their purchases. They have shirts, hats, bracelets, and tanks. Visit their web site at [www.mindfulthred.com](http://www.mindfulthred.com); if you see a "must have," please consider designating DSPTC as the beneficiary of your purchase.

Thank you for your support!

# Notices!!

## DADS (Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome)

DADS is a community of fathers of children who have Down syndrome who come together to share insights and experiences, and who want to help create a better environment for their children with Down syndrome as well as for their typically developing children. The group usually meets monthly on Tuesdays at Cooper's BBQ (no meeting this month). For more information or to RSVP, contact Patrick Bierle at [pbierle@gmail.com](mailto:pbierle@gmail.com).

JANUARY 10, 2012 6:30PM

Cooper's BBQ  
(in the Fort Worth Stockyards)  
301 Stockyards Boulevard  
Fort Worth, Texas 76164  
817-626-6464

## BIENVENIDOS!

Tenemos un nuevo contacto

La Asociacion Syndrome de Down de Tarrant County provee recursos y apoyo para gente con syndrome de down y sus familias. Mas informacion: Favor de llamar a David y Laura Pabon, [dopabon@gmail.com](mailto:dopabon@gmail.com).

## Homeschooling?

We have a wonderful group of home schooling families who share lots of information, ideas and support for those who are homeschooling a child with Down syndrome. We welcome other families who would like to join in our discussions and find answers to questions, who are considering homeschooling or who would like to share resources about homeschooling in Texas. There is lots of learning taking place in this dedicated group of parents.

Please email Amy Powers at [powersaltx@gmail.com](mailto:powersaltx@gmail.com).

Also, check out the DFW Ds Homeschool Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dfwdshomeschoolsupport/>.

## Dual Diagnosis Group!

This group is for moms (or dads) whose child with Down syndrome also has a second diagnosis under the autism umbrella (Autism, ASD, PDD). The purpose of the group is to network with and support each other in our unique challenges. Contact Robyn Hardison at 817-905-6546 or [robyn\\_hardison@yahoo.com](mailto:robyn_hardison@yahoo.com) for more information.

## Mom's Night Out

No MNO this month.

Merry Christmas!



Accepting children at just 9 months of age beginning in January 2012!

Cloverleaf Academy is a Christ-centered preschool for children with special needs.

[www.cloverleafacademy.org](http://www.cloverleafacademy.org)

For more information, contact Erica Cates at 817-946-7775.