



TREASURE VALLEY
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

TVDSA Newsletter

In this Issue

The July issue is dedicated to introducing you to your current TVDSA Board. TVDSA would like to thank Angela Bowman, Mary Anne Murphy, Wayne Blakeman, and Trish Vranish for their dedication to TVDSA this past year. They have each decided to step down due to different reasons, but will be greatly missed for their contributions to TVDSA every day.

There are currently openings on the 2012-13 Board of Directors. If you would be interested in volunteering, please contact [Paul Auger](#).

September 22nd, NDSS will kick off the Down Syndrome Awareness Month and Buddy Walk season in Time Square, in NYC, with a video presentation of more than 200 individuals with DS across the country and around the world. [NDSS is accepting submissions through July 13th](#). To submit a photo online, [click here](#).

Did you miss the TVDSA End the R-word video? You can see it [here](#).

Newsletter Editor: [Celena Auger](#)

July 2012

29th Annual TVDSA Family Potluck Picnic



Bring the entire family for an evening of friendship, food and fun!

Enjoy dancing, music, a talent show, face painting, a bounce house, pet the personal ponies, and special surprise entertainment to celebrate 10 yrs at the Mager's.



When: Wednesday, July 11th 6:00pm-8:30pm (potluck to start at 6:30pm)

Where: The Mager's Party Barn: 4090 S. McDermott Rd., Nampa

What to bring: BOTH a main dish and a salad or dessert

Provided: Water, soda, paper plates and tableware

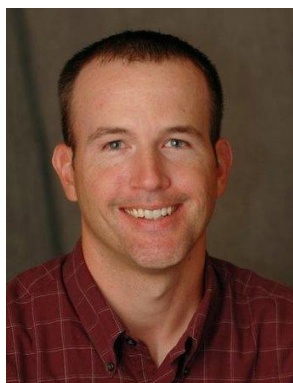
Talent show at 7:45pm.

Have a talent you want to share? Call or text Lynda at 590-1755.

Questions? Want to help? Contact: [Lynda Wells](#).



Meet: Paul Auger – Board President



Paul became the TVDSA President in May 2011 after serving as the Board Programs Chair since May 2010. During the day, he is a Project Manager at Scentsy, Inc. with responsibility for developing programs and functionality driving the success of Scentsy's Consultants. He grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, went to school at Texas A&M University and moved to Boise in 2008 after living in the Dallas, Texas area for eleven years. What brought him to Boise was his desire to find an inclusive school system for his daughter, Baylee, who has Down syndrome. It was the best decision he ever made. Rounding out his family are his wife of 16 years, Celena, his son, Trevor, and their Australian Shepherd dog, Sebastian. Paul is an advocate for all people with Down syndrome. He understands first-hand their potential, the challenges they face daily, and volunteers at TVDSA to make our community a better place for our members. Paul can be reached at president@idahodownsyndrome.org

Calendar of Events

July 11th:

TVDSA Annual Potluck Picnic
6:00pm-8:30pm, potluck will begin at 6:30pm
Contact: [Lynda Wells](#)

July 11th:

IPUL Parent Support Group - Topic: Community Supports and Resources
6:00pm-8:00pm, Boise
Contact: [Jen Zielinsk](#)

July 13th:

Deadline for [submissions](#) for the **Time Square National Buddy Walk** video presentation.

July 14th:

Lil' Buddies Playgroup
3:00pm-5:00pm at Journey's House in Kuna
Contact: [Kristie Yerger](#)

July 17th:

TVDSA Board Meeting
7:00pm-9:00pm at A New Leaf
Contact: [Paul Auger](#)

July 19-22th:

[National Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention](#)
Washington DC

September 15, 2012

[The Southeast Idaho Down Syndrome Association Buddy Walk](#)
At Brooklyn's Playground at OK Ward Park, Pocatello, ID

November 1-2nd

[Idaho Partnership Conference on Human Services](#)
Restore * Rebuild * Renew Strategies for Success
Riverside Hotel, Boise

"Having a child with Down syndrome has changed by life. . .

**my life is brighter
my life is more wonderful
my life is filled with love."**

- Lorene Kay

Kristie Yerger – Board V.P. and Program Chair

Kristie, an Idaho native, is the mother of three boys. Her Down syndrome journey began 4 years and 8 months ago when she was told that her youngest son would be born with Down syndrome. When asked how that moment felt when the geneticist told her the news she replied, "I felt as if my whole world had changed. I was devastated. But, I know now that I was just naive. I didn't know how great Down syndrome could be. It is nothing to be scared of. It should be cherished for the gift that it is. When I look back on it now, I can honestly say that I won the lottery that day, I just didn't know it yet."



Kristie classifies herself as a "stay-at-home" mom but in addition to being the current vice president of TVDSA she is also a Family Partner for the Children's Healthcare Improvement Collaboration, a member of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Family Directed Services Quality over Site Committee and a support broker for children in Idaho's region 3. She is a firm believer that when there is a passion for something, opportunities present themselves. Kristie can be reached at vicepresident@idahodownsyndrome.org.

Lucy Olmos – Treasurer & Spanish Contact



Lucy and her husband, Gustavo, along with their four children, Christopher, Gabriela, Annabel and Mikaela joined the TVDSA family in the spring of 2010. Lucy joined the board as the Spanish Contact in the summer of 2011. Lucy and Gustavo knew that by being part of TVDSA it would help them with their pursuit to equip their daughter,

Mikaela, with the tools and resources she needs to reach her fullest potential.

Mikaela has been a true example of unconditional love and has inspired the family to never give up hope and always be persistent! Upon joining the board Lucy and her husband made the commitment to educate themselves even more about the world of Down Syndrome and become Mikaela's biggest advocates. They both attended the National Down Syndrome Congress conference last year and came back with even more

passion to serve the Down syndrome community. Lucy and her family enjoy staying active and are involved in various activities with TVDSA and their local church community. Lucy also works as a CPA and is looking forward to using her accounting skills to serve as the Treasurer for TVDSA. Lucy and Gustavo recently teamed up with RODS Racing and Reece's Rainbow in an effort to support families looking to adopt children with Down Syndrome. Lucy may be reached at treasurer@idahodownsyndrome.org.

Lynda Wells – Board Advisor

Lynda has served as Treasurer for the TVDSA for the past 24 years. She is stepping down as treasurer, but will remain on the board as an advisor. Lynda and her husband LaVar are the parents of 8 children. Their youngest daughter Colleen, who just recently turned 29, has Down syndrome. Lynda's 24 grandchildren and her service to her church keep her quite busy, but in her spare time she does like to write music and poetry and do the crossword and Sudoku puzzles in the daily newspaper. She enjoys gardening and baking also. Lynda has seen TVDSA grow from a group of moms sitting around a kitchen table and discussing how they can reach out to other parents of children with Down syndrome to the organization that it is today! In the early years there was no internet or e-mail, so instead phone trees were organized to keep in touch with parents and inform them of events. Lynda has been privileged to serve with many devoted individuals who have given their time and talents to make it a little easier for new parents and families of a baby with Down syndrome. It is that same vision and passion that continues to inspire individuals to serve on the TVDSA board or in other volunteer positions. TVDSA is now the longest running parent support group in Idaho. For 30 years it has grown and continues to grow as we reach out to more families and educate our community. Lynda says, "If you are reading this newsletter or have participated in any event sponsored by TVDSA this year, it is because someone has given of their time and talents to make it happen. Each of us are busy and we may feel that we don't really have anything that we can contribute, but if each of us decide that we can do **one small thing** for TVDSA then it will continue to grow and be around for parents in the future who are given the news that their baby will be born with or has Down syndrome. Each of us deciding to do **one small thing** such as become a member of TVDSA, become friends with another parent, come to an activity, join a committee, attend a board meeting, or share the joy of your child or family member who has Down syndrome with our community, then our small things will develop into great things that will ensure that TVDSA will be around for at least 30 more years!" Lynda can be reached at advisor@idahodownsyndrome.org.



Malu Mulholland – Fundraising & Membership Chair



Malu Mulholland joined the TVDSA board after moving to the Boise area from Las Vegas earlier this year. She has a wonderful daughter, Journey, who is three and a half years old and has Robertsonian Translocation Down Syndrome, and Kaylee her two and a half year old who carries the gene for it like their mother does. After having two stillborns before their girls, to hear the news about Journey was a little shocking but it has made her and her husband, Jim, a lot stronger.

They moved up here from Las Vegas to be with family and to be in a better place to raise their girls, along with more options for her husband to be a medical assistant. Before having children, Malu worked in the accounting field with the biggest convenience store chain in Las Vegas. She is now looking forward to going back to school for her degree.

Malu has enjoyed being able to be on the board and be involved in everything with TVDSA, "It's been so exciting." She believes that everyone is created equal and everyone should be treated with the same opportunities no matter what the case is for the person. Malu can't wait to work with fundraising, and helping with membership, she also is helping out with social media and the Buddy Walk. Malu can be reached at fundraising@idahodownsyndrome.org.



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Lil' Buddies Update:

July Outing:

Lil' Buddies will meet **Saturday, July 14th from 3:00pm-5:00pm** at Journey's house at 612 W. Rams Hill Street in Kuna.

Need more information on Lil' Buddies Playgroup? Interested in helping organize the monthly gatherings? Please contact [Kristie Yerger](#).



Best Buds, Cool Club, Adults in Motion and D.A.D.S. Groups:

Best Buds, Cool Club, A.I.M. and D.A.D.S. will NOT be meeting individually during July. All groups are invited and encouraged to join TVDSA at the **Annual Potluck Picnic**, Wednesday **July 11th** from **6:00pm-8:30pm** at the **Mager's Party Barn in Nampa**.

For more information on **Best Buds** Elementary Group, please contact: [Kristie Yerger](#).

For more information about **Cool Club** please contact [Molly Benton](#).

For more information about **A.I.M.** contact: [Freddie Gallas](#).

For more information about **D.A.D.S.** please contact [Gus Olmos](#).

"A community that excludes even one member is no community at all."

- Dan Wilkins

Jason Woodard – Marketing Chair



I am the very proud father of a son with Down syndrome. Dare I say that I am a California native, but consider myself to be an Idahoan (I love

Idaho). I met my wife in Eugene, Oregon while attending the University of Oregon and relocated to Idaho, which is where my wife was raised. I work with Boise Property Management as an Asset Manager, which basically means I rent our single family homes and apartments throughout the Treasure Valley.

My wife and I have four sons, the youngest being Westin, who has

Down syndrome. Westin is the brightest light in our family and completes our family in the most special of ways. We established "Westin's Warriors," in 2008 for our first Buddy Walk and have added many to his team each year (this is our family's annual highlight now). My current position on the board is Marketing Chair and being a part of the Communications Committee. I can be reached at marketing@idahodownsyndrome.org.

10th Annual TVDSA Buddy Walk Saturday, October 13th, 2012

It's not too early to start thinking about the Buddy Walk! **Online Registration is NOW OPEN!** Online Registration will close, Tuesday, September 5th.

Do you own, work for, or know a company that may sponsor the Buddy Walk? Necessary forms can be requested from [Melody Witte](#).

Thank you to our current 2012 Sponsors:



Conferences, Workshops, Webinars & TVDSA Scholarship Information

Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL) Parent Support Group

July 11th 6:00pm-8:00pm
500 S. 8th Street, Boise

Topic: Community Supports and Resources

For more information, contact [Jen Zielinski](#)

The iPad as a Personal Learning Device

Webinar: July 26th Noon

[The Southeast Idaho Down Syndrome Association Buddy Walk](#)

September 15, 2012

At Brooklyn's Playground at OK Ward Park
Pocatello, ID

[Your Money Matters](#)

A **FREE**, Conference for the General Public (for teens to seniors)

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Personal and Household Finances

September 8th in Meridian
Hosted by the Idaho Financial Literacy Coalition

[Step UP for Down Syndrome Celebration](#)

September 22nd:
10:00am

Mirabeau Point Park,
Spokane Valley, WA

[r.i.s.e conference](#)

7th Annual Building Futures
Secondary Transition to
College and Employment

October 22nd-23rd
Portland, Oregon

[Idaho Partnership Conference on Human Services](#)

Restore * Rebuild * Renew
Strategies for Success

November 1-2nd, 2012
Riverside Hotel, Boise

[ID Miss Amazing Pageant](#)

February 8-9th, 2013
Boise

[TVDSA Scholarships](#)

Are you considering attending an upcoming workshop or conference?

Did you know that TVDSA supports members in gathering information at local and national conferences and/or workshops?

The TVDSA Scholarship program is NOT income based, so everyone is eligible.

Please see our [Scholarship application](#) for the guidelines and how to apply today.

Melody Witte – Buddy Walk Chair



Melody Witte is the proud mother of 3 sons and 1 daughter. Her eldest son, 14 year old Matthew, has Down syndrome. When Matthew was 2 years old Melody read about the NDSS "Buddy Walk" which was taking place across the United States to increase awareness about Down syndrome. She was anxious to participate but soon found that Idaho was only 1 of 2 states that did not yet have an organized Buddy Walk. Another 2 years went by without any Buddy Walks taking place in Idaho. When Matthew was 5 years old Melody decided to organize the first Idaho walk. The Buddy Walk in Boise has grown from 138 participants the first year to over 1400 in 2011. On Sat., Oct. 13, 2012 our 10th annual Buddy Walk will take place.

The Boise Buddy Walk is the major fundraiser for TVDSA and has allowed TVDSA to produce comprehensive informational packets for new parents, sponsor educational workshops and videos, offer conference scholarships, contribute to an all-abilities playground for our children, support parent groups, and much more.

It is a privilege for Melody to be a TVDSA board member and chair the Buddy Walk each year. She has found the TVDSA board members to be a very dedicated group of volunteers in spite of their very busy lives. If you are interested in helping with the Buddy Walk this year Melody can be reached at buddywalk@idahodownsyndrome.org.

Join the Celebration while Supporting TVDSA



The PGA Tour will return to Boise for the 23rd annual Albertson's Boise Open presented by Kraft, September 10-16, 2012 at Hillcrest Country Club. Thanks to Sara Lee TICKETS Fore CHARITY program, 100% of the ticket price will go directly to Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association.

"Having Down syndrome is like being born normal. I am just like you and you are just like me. We are all born in different ways, that is the way I can describe it. I have a normal life."

– Chris Burke

Order your tickets and support a worthy cause today by visiting and selecting TVDSA:

www.albertsonsboiseopen.com





TREASURE VALLEY
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1404
Meridian, Idaho 83680

208-954-7448

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.idahodownsyndrome.org

Check us out on
[Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

Audrey Byrum - Secretary



Audrey Byrum presently serves as the secretary for TVDSA. Her husband, Bryan Byrum is currently deployed in Afghanistan and they have two amazing (and very busy) sons: Axel, age 5 and Davis, age 2 (who has the attribute of Down syndrome).

Prior to their second son's birth, Audrey was a full time student at Boise State University working on a

degree in Sociology. She plans to finish her degree when both of her boys are in school.

Audrey enjoys camping, fishing, horseback riding, and many other outdoor activities. Audrey feels beyond privileged to get to share her hobbies with her family. Audrey can be reached at secretary@idahodownsyndrome.org

From the TVDSA Lending Library

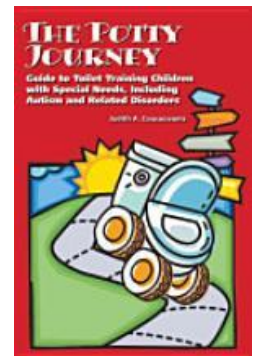
The Potty Journey by: Judith Coucouvanis

Summer time has plenty of advantages for teaching toileting skills. The weather is warmer, allowing for less than full dress indoors, and there are fewer distracting activities with more time at home. For some, this is an ideal time to teach a child to use the toilet. *The Potty Journey* by Judith Coucouvanis is written just for us parents who have children with special needs. Here are a few adjectives which adequately describe this approach: clear,

systematic, inviting, innovative, friendly, doable. The author anticipates the difficulties we may encounter and has great ideas for steering around them or avoiding them altogether. Are you wondering about taking this journey with your child with special needs or possibly even dreading it? This book may be for you.

This book is available from the TVDSA library. You may reserve it by contacting the librarian at library@idahodownsyndrome.org.

For a complete list of the books/DVDs available through TVDSA, please check out our [Lending Library](#)



The mission of Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association is to enhance the quality of life for persons with Down syndrome by promoting inclusive environments, providing accurate information to parents, families, and the community, and by advocating respect, dignity, and appropriate supports for people with Down syndrome.

Board of Directors:

President: [Paul Auger](#)

Advisor: [Lynda Wells](#)

Treasurer & Spanish Contact: [Lucy Olmos](#)

Buddy Walk Chair: [Melody Witte](#)

Vice President and Programs Chair: [Kristie Yerger](#)

Secretary: [Audrey Byrum](#)

Fundraising & Membership: [Malu Mulholland](#)

Marketing: [Jason Woodward](#)

For more information, articles, past newsletter and more, please visit our website: <http://idahodownsyndrome.org/>

Mailing: PO Box 1404 Meridian, ID 83680; Check us out on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)