



AUGUST 2012

BUDDY WALK

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th

Register at 10:00 am,

Walk at 11:00 am

**Delaney Park Strip
(10th and I St.)**

**FACE PAINTING!
BALLOON ARTIST!
RAFFLE PRIZES!
MUSIC!
BOUNCE HOUSE!**



**Bring your buddies and come ready for a short walk –
rain or shine!**

Watch your mailbox for more information.

**If you would like to volunteer to help, or have
questions, please call Michelle at 980-7205.**

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CHAPTER WEBSITE:

www.alaskadownsyndrome.org

DON'T FORGET TO MARK THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR!

**Mom's Dinner Out
Table 6
August 29th, 6:00 pm**

Calendar of Events

<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>
7-9 Anchorage School District registration 16 DS board meeting and Buddy Walk meeting BP Energy Center 6:00 29 Mom's Dinner Out Table 6 6:00	15 BUDDY WALK 10th & I St. 11:00 a.m. 18 Bouncin Bears 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. 20 DS board meeting BP Energy Center 6:00 22 Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day	18 DS board meeting BP Energy Center - 6:00 27 - 28 Local Special O Bowling Tournament Dance - To Be Announced
<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!</u> <u>SOMEONE IS NEEDED TO PLAN THE HOLIDAY FAMILY POTLUCK!</u> <u>Contact Karen Schudel at 346 - 3191 if you would like to be this awesome person.</u>
4 Family Swim West High 2:45 - 4:45 15 DS board meeting BP Energy Center - 6:00 16 -18 Special O AK Bowling Tournament	1 HOLIDAY FAMILY POTLUCK Kincaid Park 1:00 20 DS board meeting BP Energy Center 6:00	

The Anchorage Museum of History and Art has an Olympics Exhibit with a Special Olympics section. The exhibit is on display until September 3rd.

Are you on FACEBOOK? Be sure to search ALASKA DOWN SYNDROME and join our group.

Our library has been moved to The Step Center, which is located at the Anchorage School district headquarters on the corner of Boniface and Northern Lights. Contact Karen Schudel at 346-3191 if you would like something mailed to you.

Click on over to our new and improved website:
www.alaskadownsyndrome.org

Constant Contact

Are you receiving e-mails from our chapter via Constant Contact? We have been using this website as a way to keep in touch with our members regarding social activities and other events. If you have not received any it could be because you have filters on your email settings that are blocking them. It might also be that we do not have your current email address. Please let us know if you would like to receive these emails by sending an email to Julie Broyles at akbroyles@yahoo.com

Have you moved?? Have you changed your phone number??

We struggle to keep our membership list up to date. If your address or phone number has changed, PLEASE go to our new website (www.alaskadownsyndrome.org), and click on the membership form to update your information. Or you can call Karen Schudel at 346-3191.

Donate

The United Way giving campaign is coming up and you can now donate to our Alaska Chapter National Down Syndrome Chapter by using the write in code 5102.

Our non - profit tax ID is #920133679

Pictures from the Annual Summer Picnic in June





Homer artist selected for show in New York

Erik Behnke's drawings displayed in DOWNrightART, one event that's part of World Down Syndrome Day

By Michael Armstrong

Staff Writer for HomerNews.com

A Homer artist known for his bold, bright color-pen drawings of animals and people has been selected for an international show opening next week at 28on27 gallery in New York City. Erik Behnke is one of 23 artists appearing in the show, DOWNrightART, part of a celebration of visual and performing arts for World Down Syndrome Day on March 21.

Behnke is the only Alaskan invited for the show and one of two from the Pacific Northwest. He displays his prints "Eagle Looking," "Happy Skier," "Bear Eating a Fish" and "Fox Sniffing a Flower." All show his trademark technique of stylized images colored with ink markers.

"This is so exciting. I am so jazzed," said Behnke's mother, Linda Thompson, who helps him market and sell his work through their company, Brown Bear Productions.

Behnke, who has Down Syndrome and autism, is entirely self-taught in his art. Thompson wrote about her son's discovery of his talent in her books, "It's OK Mom" and "Erik's Story."

"He never listened to me. I don't know if he listened to any art teachers," Thompson said. "He always listened inner, to what was inside him."

Thompson wrote her master's thesis on artistic savants with Down Syndrome like Behnke. Her son is one of an elite group of nationally known Down Syndrome artists, she said. Many of them will be at World Down Syndrome Day events.

"It's going to be so exciting to meet all these artists from Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia," she said.

One thing Thompson discovered is that Down Syndrome artists almost always use "bright, bright colors," she said. "I didn't see anyone that uses black ink pen. They love color."

On the theme "Abilities and Possibilities," the three-day celebration of art runs March 21-23 and also features movies with Down Syndrome actors and music by Down Syndrome musicians. Performing on the last day is Chris Burke and his Band. Burke starred as Corky in the television show, "Life Goes On," about a family with a Down Syndrome son.

Held at the United Nations, the celebration starts with a speech on World Down Syndrome Day by U.N. Secretary



Photo by Linda Thompson

General Ban-Ki Moon. It includes discussions on new research in cognitive abilities of people with Down Syndrome and the role of siblings of Down Syndrome children.

Thompson's son Christopher Behnke is a good example of that role, Thompson said. Erik Behnke speaks softly and quietly, and often is shy among strangers.

"He became the communicator between Erik and me for a number of years. He told me what Erik was trying to tell me," Thompson said of Christopher. "Siblings have an important role for any child with disability."

Thompson and Behnke visit New York for six days, and like any tourists to the Big Apple plan to take in many popular sites: the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty and Ground Zero at the site of the fallen World Trade Towers.

Behnke has been to other events honoring Down Syndrome artists, such as art shows in Phoenix and National Down Syndrome Congress meetings.

"He likes to go to things like this," Thompson said. "He likes people telling him they love his art."

Thompson is especially pleased an Alaskan has been invited to the DOWNrightART show.

"It's wonderful that Alaska can be recognized, that we've got a wonderful artist here and he gets international recognition for his art," she said. "I think it's important that people don't look at Down Syndrome and see a label. They look at all the possibilities."

A special education teacher at Homer High School, Thompson previously had spent her summers traveling with Behnke to art and craft shows. This year they'll be staying in Homer, where Behnke and Thompson run a gallery on the Homer Spit. Brown Bear Products opens for the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival, with regular summer hours starting the Memorial Day weekend. Michael Armstrong can be reached at michael.armstrong@homernews.com.

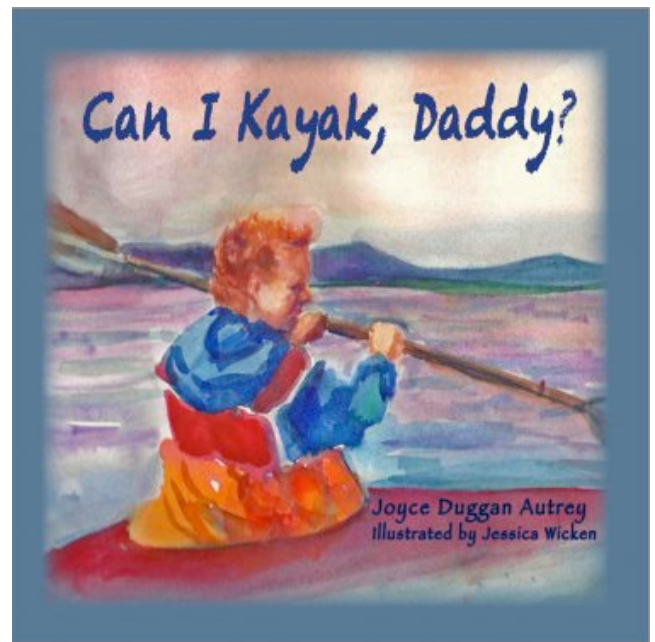
Can I Kayak, Daddy?

by Joyce Duggan Autrey

This beginning chapter book portrays a young girl, Bonny, with Down Syndrome, anxiously waiting to grow up so she can learn to kayak.

While she waits, her daddy teaches her about kayaking. Bonny, mommy and her brother have mini-adventures, discovering sea creatures and wildlife in Southeast Alaska. After the big day arrives, Bonny's world opens up to more fun adventures.

Hardcover and paperback copies are available at www.canikayakdaddy.com.



Alaska Chapter National Down Syndrome Congress

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www.alaskadownsyndrome.org

APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Name of Individual: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Item or Activity: _____

Cost: _____

Benefit: _____

Make check payable to: _____

(If check is for reimbursement, receipts must be attached.)

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

This scholarship may be used for summer camp, sports equipment, lessons, music classes, toddler gym classes, medical bills, nutritional supplements, preschool, therapies, etc. This scholarship may also be used to help a parent attend a conference on Down syndrome. It may not be used for toys, computers, travel, etc. Please consider sending the Chapter photos or stories for our newsletter about your child's experience.

*PLEASE NOTE: It is best if we can make checks out directly to the business or organization. However, we can reimburse you upon receipt of a fully filled out form **and** a receipt from the organization.*

For Treasurer's Use Only:

Date Recv'd: _____ Check# _____ Amount \$ _____ Date Sent: _____