



# Let's get Down to it...

October 2016

www.lldss.org

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## Upcoming Events

- SATURDAY October 8th, LLDSS Buddy Walk. Washington Park, 2:00PM
- NO MEETING for November due to a scheduling conflict at Erin's Pavilion
- SATURDAY December 17th, LLDSS Christmas Party, Erin's Pavilion 11:00AM

## Executive Officers

### President

Jared Owen

### Vice President

Rachel Jackson

### Treasurer

Jason Schnepf

### Secretary

Pam Rigby

## Board of Directors

Lynn Evans

Josh Houser

Heather Ivers

Becky Johnson

Tara Owen

Julie Ressler

Tim Rigby

Brenda Schnepf

Ben Simpson

Kristy Wagner

Ann Wells

## A Message from the President

Greetings LLDSS Members!

I cannot believe my term as President is nearly over. Two years certainly goes by quickly when you have such a busy group. Collectively, we should be very proud to have accomplished so many goals. Its inspiring to think that in just the last 730 days, LLDSS has supported State legislation to promote evidence based information for new or expectant families of persons with Down syndrome, we hosted two very successful golf outings that raised a considerable amount of money for like-minded charities, we hosted public awareness campaigns that landed us on media circuits, we worked telethons together, ran 5k's, some of us jumped into frozen lakes, and we even passed out tootsie rolls for the sake of promoting acceptance and inclusion of persons with developmental differences.

In the coming days we will work as a team to prepare for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual LLDSS BuddyWalk. Many of you have volunteered to help organize shirts, set up the day of the event, establish registration, work the bounce houses, or run the 50/50 operation. For this, I owe you an enormous thank you. As hundreds of people visit us at Washington Park to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month with a BuddyWalk, the success of our event will be attributed to our volunteers who make it look so professionally organized. We are a part of over 300 BuddyWalks occurring worldwide in October 2016, with each event certainly being unique in its own way. I like to think that what makes our walk so great is the passion our family, friends and community show through volunteering and active benevolence.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Saturday!

Very Kindly,

Jared Owen

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Oderaj78@yahoo.com

## News and Noteworthy

LLDSS has recently received a very gracious gift. Dorothy Riesmeyer, great-grandmother to Grace Houser, has decided to donate all of the proceeds of her new book "The Adventures of Freddie Fox" to LLDSS! To date we have received nearly \$4500.00 in proceeds! As you can tell, the book is rather popular... If you want to pick up your own copy, Amazon has it on sale for \$9.99. It would make a great Christmas Gift. Dorothy is truly an amazing person, at 95 years young she has the spunk of a

## Useful Links

Lincoln Land Down Syndrome Society  
<http://www.LLDSS.org>

National Down Syndrome Society  
<http://www.ndss.org/>

Sparc <http://www.spfldsparc.org/>

United Cerebral Palsy Land of Lincoln  
<http://ucpll.org/>

PUNS List Information  
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=47620>

LLDSS Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lincoln-Land-Down-Syndrome-Society/100514010032422>

Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis  
<http://dsagsl.org/programs/community-groups/>

LLDSS Moms Group  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/404921159550855/?fref=nf>

Special Olympics Illinois  
[www.soill.org](http://www.soill.org)

LLDSS Parents Group  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LLDSSParentsGroup/>

## Contact Us

Website  
[www.LLDSS.org](http://www.LLDSS.org)  
Facebook –click here  
Twitter @TheLLDSS

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teenager, with the heart of a saint. Moreover, we cannot thank her enough for her generous gift.  
[https://www.amazon.com/dp/1483576493/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_sms\\_c\\_api\\_dx78xbAP7958V](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1483576493/ref=cm_sw_r_sms_c_api_dx78xbAP7958V)

The 2017 LLDSS Meeting Schedule is in place! We are back to all Thursday dates, which I know many of you liked. For 2017, the dates of our meetings are as follows: 1/12, 3/9, 4/13, 5/11, 7/13, 9/14, 11/9, and 12/2 for the Christmas Party from 11:00AM to 2:00PM. All meeting times are subject to the incoming President's discretion, but we have the facility booked from 5:00 to 8:00PM each of those nights.

Just a quick reminder that there will NOT be a meeting in October or November. The BuddyWalk serves as the October Meeting, and Erin's Pavilion had a scheduling conflict with our preferred November date. The next time the group will get together as a whole, will be December 17<sup>th</sup> for the Annual Christmas Party. The party will be from 11AM-2PM, at Erin's Pavilion. We will then meet on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 for the election of new officers and board members. If you are interested in a position on the board or as an officer, we will discuss the various position details at that meeting, and then hold a vote.

## Member Spotlight

I recently spoke with the Special Olympics Area 17 Director Lynde Pavich about honoring Mary Ellen McNiece as this quarter's member in the spotlight. Interviewing Lynde, she had this to say; Mary Ellen has been volunteering with Special Olympics, IL for 15 plus years. However, she is more than a coach she is a mom, wife, nurse, volunteer and a friend to many. Mary Ellen has many accolades while volunteering, most notably when she was awarded the Coach of the Year for Area 17 in 2015. Her journey as a coach began when Hannah was only 8 years old and there were 3 athletes on her team. Due to her brilliant leadership, today there are over 100 Chatham Area Special Olympics Athletes!

Over the years, Mary Ellen has coached soccer, basketball, track, bowling, and golf. However, she currently focuses on 3 basketball teams, 20 plus basketball skills athletes, and 20 track and field athletes.

As a coach and volunteer for Special Olympics Mary Ellen has continued to grow Chatham Area Special Olympics and created opportunities for the Area 17 athletes to be successful. In January of 2016, Mary Ellen announced she would retire as the SOAD for Chatham Area Special Olympics. I know she will still be involved as her daughter, Hannah, who is a phenomenal athlete and joy to be around will still be participating. Mary Ellen will be missed as a Special Olympics Athletics Director but her and her family will always be a part of the Special Olympics Family!



Mary Ellen, thank you for all you did and continue to do for Special Olympics.