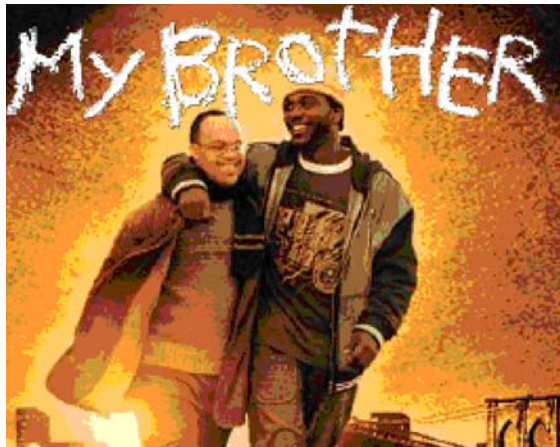


Down Syndrome *Information Network* of the Twin Tiers

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'MY BROTHER' --- A NEW MOVIE

The film *My Brother* features first-time performances from two young actors with Down syndrome. These actors, **Chris Scott** and **Donovan Jennings**, are the first African Americans with developmental disabilities to ever play lead roles in a feature motion picture. Not only that, Chris Scott won a Founder's Award at the HBO American Black Film Festival and Donovan Jennings won a Youth Spirit Award at the International Family Film Festival for their roles in this film! *My Brother* is an inner city story of two impoverished boys, Isaiah and James. Their mother creates an unbreakable bond of love between the boys hoping that bond will get them through life. Her prayers are answered as the boys overcome impossible odds on their way to adulthood, staying as close as ever as young men dealing with life's obstacles. See www.mybrotherthemovie.com for more information.

Anti-Bullying Law Study Gives NY Failing Grade

According to www.bullypolice.org, NY has no anti-bullying law, which places us with 20 other states with no protection from bullying in schools. NY has had bills before the House and Senate in 2003 and 2004, but they are currently dead. If these bills were passed, our grade would be a "B." Consider contacting your State congressman or senator about "The Dignity for All Students Act," Senate Bill S 1925. The website also has tips on dealing with the school, if you feel your child is being bullied. There is also a Bully Police NY organization (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bullypolicenewyork>).



2007 Rene Jones Memorial Buddy Walk

Don't forget, the fourth annual BW will be September 29th. We've decided to rename the walk in honor of Rene because of how much she meant to our group, her daughter Kally and all people with Down syndrome. Real planning for the walk is starting. Sponsor letters to businesses will be going out soon, and then we'll start focusing on publicity, t-shirts, starting teams, updating our brochure, organizing volunteers and activities for the day. If you would be willing to lead any of these, please call Michelle (739-0272), Chris (739-2229) or come to our next meeting. We're still trying to think of ways to make the Walk more interactive, maybe some laptops playing short movies. We really need your ideas and help.



Next Monthly Meeting:

April 18, 2007 6pm Chemung ARC

Sponsored by:



Meetings are now on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. The next meeting dates are:

April 18th from 6 to 8 p.m.
May 16th from 6 to 8 p.m.
June 20th from 6 to 8 p.m.

Meetings are still held at Chemung ARC located at 711 Sullivan Street in Elmira, and pizza/wings and child care are provided.



HEALTH WATCH: Down syndrome and Alzheimer's

www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/stories/2007/03/10/031meshdown.html

Until recently, people with Down syndrome usually died young before exhibiting the symptoms of dementia. In 1983, the life expectancy of someone with Down syndrome was just 25 according to the National Down Syndrome Society. Now, better overall health and advanced medical care have more than doubled that life expectancy keeping many people with Down syndrome alive into their 50s, 60s, and even longer. As they grow older, more of the 350,000 Americans with Down syndrome are developing Alzheimer's and developing it at a younger age and at a faster acceleration than the general population. In their exploration of human genetics over the last few years, researchers believe they have identified the link between Down syndrome and Alzheimer's, a progressive brain disease that destroys a person's memory and mental ability. By the time people with Down syndrome are in their 40s, almost all their brains will exhibit some of the changes associated with Alzheimer's. That's about 20 years earlier than in the general population. About 85 percent of autopsies of adults with Down syndrome show plaque in the brain associated with Alzheimer's. The first symptoms of Alzheimer's in developmentally disabled people are often behavioral such as increased stubbornness. The extent of dementia can be hard to assess in people with developmental disorders. Because developmental delays in people with Down syndrome can vary from mild to profound, health care professionals need to do "baseline" mental examinations of people in their 30s. When an older adult with Down syndrome is developing dementia, an accident or illness can seem to accelerate the symptoms.

Artist Loves to Paint Children and Pets



Michael Johnson is an artist living in Illinois. His skill was recognized and encouraged from an early age and he is now a well-known artist. He's been featured in the national publication of NDSS and has spoken at NDSC and NADS conventions and conferences. He has had his artwork accepted to several juried art shows. Michael believes in

giving back and is using his gifts to help other people with Down syndrome in many ways. He provides art for raffles at Buddy Walks or other fundraising events, he's helped families with art projects for home schooling, and he is a role model for younger artists. His mother writes: "Grandparents of a 3 year old girl with DS were amazed to see some of Michael's early artwork at a recent local Buddy Walk. Their granddaughter was painting color fields, the same kinds of paintings that Michael was doing at age 21! They had no idea that the little girl is an artist. That very day at the Buddy Walk they started having hope for the future and they made the commitment to support her and encourage her in any way they could." Please see <http://users.psln.com/sharing/Michael/mainMichael.html> for more information or to purchase some of Michael's artwork. We are working on acquiring a painting by Michael to raffle at this year's Buddy Walk.

On the Web...The "Up" Fund

<http://www.anniefortsupfund.org/index.html>

Annie Forts, who lives in New Hampshire, decided that the name Down syndrome didn't fit her view of her life. She created the non-profit "Up" Fund to provide enrichment opportunities to persons with Down syndrome and to help support individuals interested in pursuing a career in Special Education. Since 1997, she's donated \$65,000 in the name of Down syndrome, \$12,000 in 2006 alone. The money went to provide horseback riding lessons to people with Down syndrome, tuition for summer camps, or to help pay for college tuition. She has won the **Paul G. Hearne Leadership Award** from the American Association of People with Disabilities. Annie was one of seven recipients chosen from more than 400 nominees. Check out the website to make a donation or read her story.

Sunny the Dog visited during March Meeting

Deputy Lathrop takes at risk dogs and trains them to be therapy dogs. Her latest project, **Sunny**, came to visit us at our last meeting. We had 4 people with Down syndrome who were able to interact with Sunny. Three of them (Kim, Brandon and Megan) walked him and gave him commands. Lauren enjoyed looking at Sunny and wasn't too interested in touching him. Unfortunately none of us thought to bring our camera! However, Deputy Lathrop agreed to bring therapy dogs to the Buddy Walk this fall. It should be a good experience for everybody.



Your presence is requested

Chemung ARC presents its 4th annual signature event
Dancin' With My Friends - Swing Into Spring

Saturday, May 5th, 7-10pm
American Legion - Horseheads

Featuring an encore performance by the incredible band **FLAME**
Catered by **A Step Above**
Tickets \$25



Ticket Info:
607-734-6151
amw@chemungarc.org

Doorprizes / Raffle Gift Baskets / 50-50 / Cash Bar
Festive Dress Recommended
Proceeds to benefit The Chemung ARC Fund