

# VOICES & CHOICES

NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR YOUNG ADULTS  
FROM THE DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA

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Kari Larson is a 22 year old young woman with Down syndrome. She is also a published author. Following are two of the Executive Director's favorite poems by Kari.



## The Storm

The raging sea turned and turned  
While the rain poured tears in my eyes.

As I watched them coming down to the earth  
I saw the hungry and the poor.

Help them, my Lord and they will see,  
A tomorrow will come into their lives.

The storm pulled away into darkness,  
Leaving the sunrise of hope.

*(published in The Family Digest,  
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## When I was a Tulip

When I was a tulip,  
I would swing to the music.  
When I was a rose,  
I would bloom in the sky so clear and bright.

When I was a bird,  
My heart would skip a beat.  
There is a tiny rainbow inside my heart.  
There's a ring of endless light.  
His stars are in the sky.

## My grandmother

*By Shaina Robb*

I remember my life as a young girl. I remember her warm touch. She touched my soft skin like healing rain because she is the one that could have my spirit. She truly kept her promises. I will be with her when I climb the golden stair into the open skies of heaven. I know so much that my Grandma Helen Donnelly is with the Angels in heaven. I remember the past and having her as a memory. I will never forget her smile. She is reaching from the heavens above. She was my first love and she wanted me to understand the ways of the past. Even when the sky is black and I am filled with tears she will return to my mind.



## Apartment Living

by Lori Turbenson

When I lived with my roommate in 2002, I discovered Independence! I lived with her 1/2 a year in Andover.



On August 1, 2003 we moved into an apartment in Blaine. I have lived with her for about 1-1/2 years. We are independent people. That's why we have our own place. It is a two bedroom apartment. It has a small kitchen and dining room, a patio and a big living room. Both my parents helped me to move my stuff. My Uncle Gallen decided to also help with my move.

Our landlord is Nancy and she is very nice. She manages the apartment building.

One nice thing about our apartment. We are near Cub Foods and lots of restaurants and we are also on the bus line so we can get to work.

We also have jobs. My roommate works at Wal-Mart in Blaine and I work at the Blaine Human Services.

In 2003 we won the Significant Achievement Award from Opportunity Partners Program for residential living!

We are living independently in our own apartment and we are proud of it.

## Playing Soccer

by Jesse Evans

In 2004 the Stillwater Ponies (C.I.—Cognitively Impaired) soccer team made the state high school tournament and won 4th place in the state! The Ponies had about 14 players and 3 coaches.

During the season we had a record of 8 wins, 5 losses and 1 tie. We practiced from 2:50 to 4:30 every day. We ran 3 laps and then stretched. For offense we did passing, dribbling and shooting. We also practiced defense and had scrimmages. The team did the Ponies cheer—"One, Two, Three, Go Ponies!"

We went on the bus to play away games. I played left or right defense for all the games. A large number of people came to the state tournament to see the Ponies play.



After the last game of the tournament we went to a party at one of the player's house. We had good food and played games at the party. We also had a banquet for families and friends and each player got an award.

Later there was one more party at Mike's house. Mike was a player in 1991 and graduated in 2003.

## Video Reviews

By Sean Maher

### The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King

This is a great film. It has a great ending. In the end, the ring is destroyed, Sam gets married and Aragon is the king of Gondor. Frodo went with Gandalf and the elves on another adventure. This movie is great. It has very good visual effects.



### 50 First Dates

This movie is about a girl named Lisa (Drew Barrymore) who lost her brain in a car accident. There's a guy named Henry (Adam Sandler) who is trying to help Lisa to remember him. In the movie, Lisa and Henry are trying to know each other. It has some comedy. I will give it 4 1/2 stars because there are not enough scenes with jokes. I think they should put a few more joke scenes and lots of laughter—just like in "Big Daddy" when Sandler is trying to take care of a 5 year old boy.

### Jersey Girl

This movie is about a man and his wife. The wife is giving birth to a child but somehow the wife died. So the man is going to take care of his little girl and spend time together with his own father. I give this movie 5 stars because it was based on real life.

My name is Laurie Schroeder. I live in northern Minnesota by Grand Rapids. I'm 27 years old. I have two sisters and one brother. I'm the fourth one in the family. I'm an aunt. I have two nieces and three nephews.

I'm a Christian and I've attended Grace Bible Chapel all my life. I do lots of church activities like helping in AWANA's with Sparky kids and singing in the church choir.

I've been involved in Special Olympics sports for 19 years. My favorite sports are volleyball, bowling, floor hockey playing as a goalie and softball. I love Special Olympics. It has had a big influence in my life. We travel with the teams going to area meets and state meets. I love doing Special Olympics and getting to spend time with my friends and getting to each other better.



I especially like singing, dancing, watching movies, visiting friends, working and talking on the phone with my friends. I like to get to know them and their families and doing fun things with them.

**Movie Review**  
**The Phantom of the Opera**  
**By Jake Sawyer**

A long time ago there was a man named Virumre de Chayay and he looks to his future. He loves one girl and her name is Christine. She went down in the labyrinth of the opera house and found the Angel of Music. He was her teacher. The Phantom disappeared. At a New Years Eve party, they see a figure of the Phantom with a skull. He created another opera. It is called Don Juan Triumphant. Christine lifted his mask so we know who he was.



*Nayef Albinali has been elected by his peers to serve a two year term on the DSAM Board of Directors. Following is Nayef's speech he gave at the recent Youth and Adult Conference.*

My name is Nayef Albinali. I am 21 years old. The reason that I am running for the board is because I like to volunteer at the Down Syndrome Association and the Congress. I also help out at the pancake breakfast and the Buddy Walk and lots of other events. I also worked at the Down Syndrome office and I know what I am doing. And I am sure that I will be a good board member. And also I am in Special Olympics for sporting events in Baseball and Basketball. Please vote for me for the Board of Directors. Thank you everybody.



*Pictures from the Recent Youth & Adult Conference*  
*By Amy Fletcher, Julie Topp and Nicole Verdon*

