

Buddy Walk Tucson 2006
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2006
Columbus Branch, Tucson Public Library

In attendance were:

Caroline Ganz, 2006 Buddy Walk Coordinator, SANDS Advisory Committee

Frank Ganz, 2006 Buddy Walk Coordinator, SANDS B.O.D.

Anne Simpson, 2005/06 BW Committee, SANDS B.O.D.

Rachel Quinton, Art Director, Sunflowers Art

Chad McKinley, Self-Advocate, SANDS B.O.D.

Kathy Getman, Down Syndrome Connection Director, SANDS B.O.D.

Carolina Freund, 2004/05 Buddy Walk Coordinator, SANDS B.O.D. President

Rachel Quinton described the services offered by Sunflowers Artwork, which has a program of training, recreation and art for adults with developmental disabilities at their facility located at 22nd and Country Club. They also offer a summer program for children 16 and up that begins in May. For more information call 358-3317 or email Director Victoria Gokhman at sunflowersart@yahoo.com.

The remainder of the meeting was focused on reviewing the 2005 Buddy Walk in regard to what worked, what needs improvement and suggestions for this year's event.

Everyone agreed that more participation from the adult Down syndrome community will be a great asset, and input from the ARC of Tucson will greatly assist that effort. Last year Kelly McLearn from the ARC suggested offering to partner adult walkers with DS with families with younger members, as well as seeking more volunteers with DS to assist throughout the day. Having entertainment provided by individuals with developmental disabilities was also proposed.

Improvements to the **registration** process were discussed: a tent of sufficient size for the registration table with permanent signs for the different areas; Bill Fields and Territorial Signs has offered his tent in the past (last year there was a conflict with Challenger's events) and may be able to provide signs; an option is for SANDS to purchase a tent. Contact Crecer Con Amor about Spanish translation of Buddy Walk registration form.

Volunteers: Recognition that the 2005 student volunteers did an outstanding job and will be invited to return, specifically Eagle Scout John Macko and troop 157, the Hayden HS Cheerleaders, and U of A students. A separate area for volunteer registration will facilitate the process; distinctive name tags to visibly identify volunteers. Suggestion to contact U of A Special Ed Director, Stephanie McFarlane, to invite participation of her students in the day's events as hand's on experience.

Kathy Getman urged that we ensure access for the inflatables to be delivered, as there was a problem last year.

Other suggestions:

Have the walk earlier in the day at 3:00, so families can return and enjoy the food, entertainment and exhibits at leisure.

Feature one hour as a dance, possibly with a DJ. Anne Simpson will look into a possible candidate. Possibly rent a dance floor.

Invite Neon Prophet to return.

Invite the Battle of the Bands winner to participate (if the music is appropriate).

Feature Mexican wedding instruments, hats and favors as part of the celebration.

Invite the Down syndrome group from Hermosillo, Sonora to come take part with us, and look into existing Mexican-American programs to help them make this trip.

Have awards for individuals who have made a difference to the Down syndrome community to be selected from nominations made by the DS community – one for each category of teachers, doctors, therapists, service providers, recreation directors, student volunteers, etc. A nomination form can be made available on the SANDS website and distributed by group newsletters.

Have more than one food sponsor so the burden is shared and there is a variety of food choices: i.e. Mexican, pizza, hot dogs, Subway are options.

Increase the cotton candy machine rental to 3 hours (last year it was sold out at 2 hours)

Possible loan of Sno-cone machine by Silvia Verdugo.

There was a great flow of inspiration and ideas from the core group, who invite further input and participation from those who were unable to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank and Caroline Ganz
Coordinators, Buddy Walk Tucson 2006