



FAMILY LINKS



Walla Walla Parent to Parent
Walla Walla Valley Disability Network.

Familiar Setting, New Experiences

By Leah Shaffner, Summer Intern, Whitman College student



Leah attending a fundraising event with board members and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity biking across the country raising disability awareness "Journey of Hope" - Photo/Daven Harshman

Some of the most terrifying information you can receive as an expecting parent is news that your child will struggle, that your child will face challenges different from ones you have ever experienced, that your child will have a life-altering disability. Will my child have friends? Will she ever live on her own? Will he be able to get a job? Will we have a normal parent-child relationship? Speaking not as a parent, expecting parent, nor anytime-soon-to-be-expecting parent, this is conjecture; however, my internship this summer has given me the chance to empathize with those parents about

what they face and to understand the resources they may require. The Walla Walla Valley Disability Network is a local non-profit organization that works to answer all of those questions. Formally, they work to "improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families through community access and support". Starting with the news that your soon-to-be-born child will have a disability, the network works with families to provide support, resources, recreation, and unity to any family in the community requiring services. Not only does it provide useful resources, but it does so with an optimistic and accepting attitude of any and all children.

I have spent the majority of my non-academic time over the last six years working with people with disabilities through organizations similar to this one; however, my thus far experience with the WWVDN has been wonderfully different. This summer I am learning what it takes to run and coordinate organizations like this one and learning the many other sides of working with a person with a disability beyond just the face-to-face interaction. I have the experience working one-on-one with people with disabilities, handling behaviors and running programming, but I have never before understood as much about the intricacies involved in the process and community network as a whole. While I absolutely love the one-on-one contact, I am thrilled to be learning a more expansive and comprehensive perspective.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

- 03 Dayton, P2P Picnic, City Park
- 05 Autism Parent Meet & Greet, 6:30pm
- 08 P2P Mamas Especiales
- 09 Journey of Hope Picnic/Potluck, 6pm
- 18-20 4-H Horse Camp, Fairgrounds, 7pm
- 22 & 29 Adaptive Swim, Mem.Pool \$2, 9-11
- 23 Sensory Movie - Incredibles 2, 10:30 am
- 25-29 Summer Camp, Pros. Point Elem.
- 29 Dayton, P2P Caregiver Dinner, 5:30pm

JULY

- Mondays: 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 – Adventures in July, Summer Camp (register: www.vdn.org)
- Fridays: 6, 13, 20, 27 - Adaptive Swim, Memorial Pool \$2, 9-11am
- Daily – Walks w/Mamas Especiales at Murr Park, 6am
- 07 Meet w/Angie, Child. Museum, 2pm
- 13 P2P Mamas Especiales
- 21 P2P PICNIC/POTLUCK, 6pm
- 21 Sensory Movie – Hotel Transylvania 3

AUGUST

- Fridays: 3, 10, 17 - Adaptive Swim, Memorial Pool \$2, 9-11am
- 04 Meet w/Angie, Child. Museum, 2-4pm
- 07 Columbia Co. Natl. Night Out
- 10 P2P Hispanic Support Group

SEPTEMBER

- 08 "I'll Push You" Documentary, GESA Powerhouse Theater, Tickets: phtww.com
- 22 Ability Walk & Roll

FOR MORE DETAILS...

Angie Witt, P2P Coordinator
#(509)540-9880 p2p@wwvvn.org
Ysabel Fuentes, Hispanic Outreach
#(509)525-9435
p2pespanol@wwvvn.org

One formative experience was attending a Parent to Parent (P2P) Autism Parent Support Meeting. I was clearly out of place in this setting, but listened to the many stories and was in awe at the sincerity and courage of the parents in that room. I heard parents retell horrible stories of hospital visits following seizures and frustrating parent-teacher meetings, but I also heard wonderful and inspiring stories about seemingly small, but amazing, accomplishments and successes that those parents never thought possible for their kids. Above all, I heard so much love and appreciation for all that their children have taught them. While I have previously been on the child side of those stories, to openly hear the parents' perspectives was enlightening. The two hours I spent in that meeting showed me just how important support and shared experiences are to families raising a child with a disability (for that matter anyone raising a child) to help turn those challenging moments into part of the success story. As I am not speaking from personal experience, I'm sure I cannot truly begin to understand the magnitude of the organization for these families, but even from an outsider's perspective, the Disability Network clearly provides a guiding light to many families.

In the next two months, I hope to learn as much as I can about this guiding light, but even in just my first week I am humbled by how much goes into a nonprofit organization. Support groups are just one aspect. Additionally I have already attended conferences, fundraising events, webinars, and countless meetings (and those were just the things I attended). Cyndy Knight, my boss and the executive director, has taken me under her wing to show me all that is involved behind-the-scenes of a nonprofit. Not only does she have about a million tasks on her calendar, but she handles all of them with compassion and genuine sincerity for everyone involved. While I am confident that my future career(s) will have me working with people with disabilities, the more I learn about this realm, the more possibilities I discover. Perhaps I could run a nonprofit, or work for public health, or provide therapy, or do public policy, or probably hundreds of other relevant positions. While it has become overwhelming, it also has become more and more exciting as I meet so many people in this field who love their jobs and are determined to improve the lives of people with disabilities. I am loving the connections I am starting to make with parents and professionals alike, and I am so excited to continue to learn all that I can about the disability world. I hope to be a part of the success stories that every child will have--no matter how long it takes to get there--and working under the guiding light of the Disability Network is a great way to get there.

Leah Shaffner, is a psychology major/biology minor at Whitman College and was awarded an internship through Whitman College to assist WWVDN with their family and volunteer database, nonprofit fundraising, etc.. Leah will be our Summer Camp Assistant in June and will lead the "Adventures in July" (see camps on page 4). This was the June 2018 blog post for the internship. Leah can be reached at leah@wwvnd.org

COFFEE WITH ANGIE – SUPPORT GROUP



MEET WITH ANGIE



Would you like to meet another mother with a child with a disability? Angie, Parent to Parent Coordinator would like to meet you and find ways to help you access services, resources, connect with other families and find support in our community. Bring your questions and your stories.

June 2 – Walla Walla Children's Museum, 2-4pm

July 7 – Walla Walla Children's Museum, 2-4pm

August 4 – Walla Walla Children's Museum, 2-4pm

To RSVP, contact Angie Witt, P2P Coordinator, (509)540-9880

SAVE THE DATE



COLUMBIA COUNTY
No Host Dinner
June 29th 5:30-7:00 PM
Location: Noble Hunt
RSVP to Angie Witt, (509)540-9880

What is a Sensory Friendly Movie at Grand Cinemas WW?

Once a month we show a Family friendly movie (rated G or PG):

- The auditorium lights are turned up.
- The volume is lowered slightly.
- The audience is welcome to get up and move around if they need to.
- Admission is \$5.50

Sensory Friendly shows start at 10:30 am



June 23 – Incredibles 2
**July 21 – Hotel Transylvania 3:
Summer Vacation**

4-H HORSE CAMP

June 18-20, 7-8:30pm – go to wwvdn.org to register/find forms!
\$5 for three days! Free petting zoo on Wed. June 20th!



ADAPTIVE SWIM

WALLA WALLA CITY PARKS AND RECREATION

FRIDAYS, JUNE 22-AUG 17



VA MEMORIAL POOL, Walla Walla

9:00–11:00 am FRIDAYS!

\$2.00

YOUR TIME IN THE POOL!

WW City Parks and Recreation is offering an Adaptive Swim series on Fridays from June 22 through August 17 from 9:00-11:00 a.m. as a swimming opportunity for children and adults with intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities and their families/caregivers.

Mama's Especiales Daily Walks – 6am

With the beautiful summer weather, join the Mama's Especiales as they walk and talk around Murr Park, Walla Walla. Bring your kids for a little exercise. Good for your health and heart.

Contact Ysabel Fuentes at (509)525-9435 for any questions.



SUMMER CAMP

JUNE 25-29, 2018

Summer Camp is designed specifically for kids with special needs in mind and offers arts & crafts, recreation, group time, snack making and guest visitors. Ms. Hersey is planning a fun filled week in June. More detailed information regarding daily themes will be sent to you after you register.

Register/pay online: www.wvvdn.org by Wed. June 20, 2018

Camp Director: Laurie Hersey, Spec. Ed Teacher, #(509) 520-3524

Camp Assistant: Leah Shaffner, Whitman student

Location: **Prospect Point Elementary**, Kindergarten Portable (east side)
55 Reser Road, Walla Walla, WA

Ages: 2nd – 12th grade (grade completed in June 2018)

Fee: \$50

Sponsored by United Way of Walla Walla



LOOK FOR
ADVENTURES IN JULY!
www.wvvdn.org

**Walla Walla Valley
Disability Network
Summer Camp**

**9:00am - 12:30pm
Monday-Friday**

June 25-29, 2018

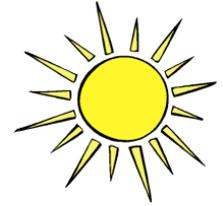
**Prospect Point
Elementary School**

Camp Fee: \$50

**WALLA WALLA
VALLEY DISABILITY
NETWORK**
PO BOX 1918
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Laurie Hersey
Camp Director #520-3524

Camp Location:
Prospect Point Elementary



ADVENTURES IN JULY

MONDAYS IN JULY!

THEME: Exploring the Walla Walla community with friends.

DATES: Monday's in July
(July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 2018)

TIME: 9:00am - 12:30pm

AGE: 2nd -12th grade
(grade completed in 2018)

FEE: \$50 online for all 5 days, or \$12 per day

REGISTER: www.wvvdn.org

On website: Go to News & Events, choose event on calendar, follow registration instructions.

**CAMP DIRECTOR:
LEAH SHAFFNER**

**7/2-Children Museum
7/9-Fort WW Museum
7/16-Campfire
7/23-Whitman College
7/30-Splashpad**

SNACK WILL BE PROVIDED

**9:00 – 12:30 p.m.
Register before 6/25:**

www.wvvdn.org



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

www.wvvdn.org

WW VALLEY DISABILITY NETWORK FUN IN PICTURES

Challenger Baseball was a huge success with 17 participants and a handful of peer mentors from week to week. Much thanks to John and Karen Zodnick from Pacific Little League for supporting the Challenger Baseball Program year after year, M-F Drive In for the sponsorship, Mike Spiess for coaching, Erin Scheidemann, Parent Volunteer for keeping things running smoothly, Lawson Knight for helping with batting line up and most importantly to the parents who brought your children each week and cheered loudly from the stands.



CHALLENGER BASEBALL



DYNAMIC DEVILS SOFTBALL 2018

Dynamic Devils 2018 had a 9-0 season this year. With 33 team members playing with such enthusiasm, they knocked it out of the ballpark this year. Thank you to Parks and Recreation for their accommodations, Amy Harris for organizing and coaching, Rick Clark for co-coaching, for the other teams for having a blast with our team, and to those who came to watch and cheer on the players each week.



TRANSITION EXPO 2018
was a huge success!

donate today



Your gift to the Walla Walla Valley Disability Network supports Programs that directly benefit families with children and adults with disabilities. www.wwvdn.org

- Your donation supports our ongoing programs and activities:**
- \$100 provides a gas/food card to a family traveling to see a specialist
 - \$50 provides a week of summer camp for a child/teen w/disabilities
 - \$25 covers the fee for the basketball program
 - \$10 provides a new parent with a resource binder
 - \$5 provides five sensory toys for elementary children

Checks, made payable to WWVDN, can be mailed to the following:

WWVDN, PO BOX 1918, Walla Walla, WA 99362

amazon smile

You shop. Amazon gives.

- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

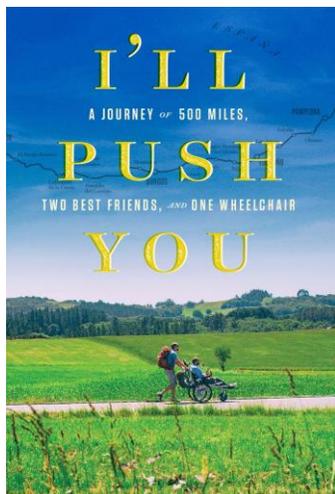
Wrap-up your holiday shopping at smile.amazon.com/ch/47-1298237 and Amazon donates to **Walla Walla Valley Disability Network!**

CHECK FACEBOOK AND WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

SAVE THE DATE – SEPTEMBER 22

SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2018

WWVDN is sponsoring the GESA Powerhouse Documentary:



A chance to witness the power of friendship. Visit the trailer on YouTube!
<http://phtww.com>



SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Fort WW Park, WW

(near Myra and Dalles Military Road)

Join individuals with disabilities and those that love them as we walk and roll along a paved path at Fort WW Park.

Lunch, medal or collectible pin and activities are included as part of registration –

\$10/person

Register on-line: www.wvvdn.org

Form a team?

Consider sponsoring?

Bring extra \$\$ for the baked sale and sweatshirts available for purchase.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

A special thank you to the following:

Carla Nibler – 2018 Champion of Families & Board Member

Shamra Baez – 2018 Website Volunteer & Board Member

Brenda Hernandez – 2018 Parent Advocate

Jeanne Walter – 2018 Columbia County Volunteer

Maria Luisa Jimenez – 2018 P2P Mama's Especiales Volunteer

Eric Matson – 2017 Ability Walk & Roll Volunteer

Erin Scheidemann – 2018 Challenger Baseball Volunteer

Ysabel Fuentes – Giving Above & Beyond

Rick & Sherril Clark – 2018 Basketball, Bowling and Softball Volunteers

Lawson Knight – 2018 Baseball & Board Development Volunteer

Loraine Valencsin – 2018 Senior P2P Volunteer

Julio Jimenez – 2018 Sibshop Volunteer & Board Member

On May 22, 2018 we were able to thank a few of our 196 WWVDN and Parent to Parent volunteers with cake and a small reception in honor of their dedication to our programs and families.



Parent to Parent Coordinators

Angie Witt, (509)540-9880

E-mail: p2p@wvvdn.org

Ysabel Fuentes, (509)525-9435

E-mail: p2pespanol@wvvdn.org



Executive Director

Cyndy Knight, (509)386-2356

E-mail: admin@wvvdn.org

DONATE TODAY at
www.wvvdn.org