

Sorry I took so long guys.

Eleven days and counting! We are on our way to another cruise and to see the Western Caribbean this year. I got up this morning and it was -5 degrees here so I guess we picked the right time to go south and get warm. We are all ready! We will think of all of you as we sip our Frozen Strawberry Daiquiris around the pool in the SUN! We really are looking forward to going again this year on our cruise. Last year Stacy smile the whole week. She loves the sun and being out of her coats and sweatshirts and all the other layers we are wearing at this time. We have 22 people going this time including the Dyes from Utah. We are so excited and Jim thinks he is going to rest on this trip! Think again Jim!

I had a note from Margaret Thompson that her Chemo is over (and she is very glad!). Her strength is coming back slowly and they have gotten some help with caring for Greta. She definitely believes "Bald is Beautiful" and Margaret we know you will let everyone know that is true! Keep getting healthier and stronger and know we are all here for you.

I heard form Mary D'Aprile at the beginning of the month. Sam Estes passed away just before that. I am sure Heidi and the family know we all are thinking o them at this time but drop her a note. The new address should be in the chapter information page. God Bless you Heidi and your family and Sam will always be looking down on all of us.

The World Congress plans are shaping up and coming together. The initial brochure will be in this newsletter. In March you will be able to register on-line at the Chromosome 18 registry site. Remember to make your hotel reservations now as you don't want to not be able to get a room because everyone else already called. They are planning sessions on Grief and Coping, Mobility Choices, Sensory Integration, IEP's, IDEA and Rights, Grandparenting. That is just the first day. Grandparents you better make your reservations too because this is the time to learn for you also. This year will be a great opportunity to meet with families of children with similar disabilities. The kids have more in common than just the name. You better not miss this chance!

In March we will be traveling to Florida for a few days to try a booth at the American College of Medical Genetics conference. This is a first year for SOFT but we are hoping to be able to share our resources with Doctors and Professionals that need our information to support the families. Kris will be joining me there and possibly Gina Csontos. It will be good to share all our stories and the pictures of the kids.

Thanks goes to Michelle Wilson. She e-mailed and said she would love (well maybe it wasn't that strong) but anyway she is going to help me get all conference pictures set up in a scrap book. You saved my life Michelle, thanks. Tell Farina she can help too! If anyone has any pictures they could put together on scrapbook pages of different conferences just let me know and we can include them. For those who haven't sent in your family page for the SOFT Friends and Family scrapbook, it is not too late. Send them to me and we will include so we can have everyone at the San Antonio conference. I am hoping to get a SOFT Hospitality room so we can share our albums as we do in the memory room. This could also be a hang out for those they need to have time to group together with other SOFT families.

Hope everyone saw our Holiday card with all the VanHerreweghe new wheels! Stacy won the scooter and now we have to see if we can adapt it for her to use, if anyone has any thoughts let us know. She is doing great in her program. They go out everyday and volunteer in several nursing homes, the fire hall, meals on wheels. They actually do have fun too. They guys all love her and are great with her. You never know who will be pushing her around as they all enjoy working with her and helping her out. We have been blessed with her aid, the nurse, and all the staff that are at the program. There is a light after school! It is even brighter than when in school for us!

Well, I really do need to get to work so I can get home to pack our clothes for the trip. Not to rub it in, but next newsletter we'll send our sunny pictures to you so you can see how much fund we had! Until then, be safe, happy and healthy. God Bless and with love.

SOFTly,
The VanHerreweghes