

Shining Star

Megan Miller

At each year's Buddy Walk, Megan Miller has been a top fundraiser. We believe it is time for our readers to get to know little Megan and "Team Megan", the amazingly large and caring family that surrounds her.

At age 3 1/2, Megan Theresa Miller is not a very big girl...she is just over three feet tall and weighs 32 lbs. Yet this little girl has made a very big impact on the lives of those people who are closest to her. She attends preschool at Park Hill Learning Center, and enjoys her teachers and friends. Megan's favorites include the color red, music and singing, playing outside, and especially books. Through her love of reading, she has learned to sight read, and can recognize her letters, numbers to 12, colors, shapes and animals. Reading has also developed her language skills-she's loves to talk and sing along with her favorite movie characters: Barney, Spot, Blues Clues, and Dora and she sings the theme song from the movie Titanic!

According to her mother, Chriss, Megan adores her Daddy, big brother Zach, and big sister Rachel, who teach her things she could never learn from a book or from therapists. Chriss says she can be very strong-willed at times and has mastered the words "stop" and "no"! It is obvious, in speaking with members of Chriss' family, the

Bickels, that little Megan has had a big impact on everyone who knows her.

Megan's Uncle Steve says,

I never knew much about Down syndrome. On the day Megan was born, I could only think about what type of life she would have, thinking initially that it would be very limited. That thinking has changed very quickly, as I have seen in three years and what a special and amazing child Megan is. Her abilities and capabilities are endless! Megan has helped me see that every child in this world has something special to offer. My two boys, Jacob and Joshua love her unconditionally and enjoy every moment they get to spend with her. Megan is a special gift from God and I am proud to be her uncle.

When talking about Megan, her Papa Bickel has much to offer,

When Megan was born and we were informed that she had Down syndrome, we were surprised, not knowing exactly what this meant. A couple days after Megan's birth, a representative from DSANI met with us and provided materials and information on Down syndrome. We were taken aback, trying to cope with the fact we had a handicapped child to raise. Immediately our thoughts turned to such questions as, "How are we going to take care of her? Why us? What will we do now?" And the questions just kept coming, all about our own personal concerns and what problems Megan's Down syndrome would present for us, not even thinking of what the future had in



store for her.

Then this young lady began to explain the Down syndrome movement and the important work and research they were doing to further the education and training of not only children, but their parents and the public alike. As she continued to visit and explain more about the potential and possibilities possessed by children with Down syndrome, our thoughts turned from ourselves and focused instead on what we could do for Megan.

Helped by the assistance of DSANI, Chriss became more knowledgeable of Megan's situation and the opportunities available to her as she grew. Megan started to develop and grow almost as well as a typical child. As we watched the progress she made in those first few months and years, Megan became an inspiration to all of us.

Being able to provide first-hand testimony to the work, research,



and development of training skills DSANI offers, it is very easy to support DSANI. And as other relatives and friends see the progress Megan has made, it has proved beyond any doubt that this organization is making inroads to provide awareness of the abilities of those who have Down syndrome. Watching Megan develop into a talking, laughing, happy, and well-adjusted young girl has been a real inspiration to our whole family. We believe she has brought our family closer together, and her immediate family to encourage, teach and be a part of her progress and developments.

Chriss sums it all up best when she says, "Megan continues to inspire and amaze us all. We believe God has a special plan for her and we watch in awe as His plan unfolds before us; blessed by this beautiful child he created."