

Support Makes a Difference During Walk Through Grief

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From Rebekah

Just before I was discharged from the hospital three days after delivering Jonathan, a nurse handed me information about the hospital's support group for families who had lost an infant. I politely thanked her although I knew I had no intention of attending. I cringed as I mentally pictured a few women sitting in cold metal chairs that were arranged in a circle in a dimly-lit room. I then imagined a nurse bluntly explaining to the grieving moms that although what happened to them was very sad, they needed to "go on" and, "after all, you can always have another one!" Furthermore, I was certain that support groups were only for those who were mentally ill and for people who "had something wrong with them."

My family and friends offered much comfort and help during my grief, but I knew that no one fully understood my feelings, thoughts and emotions. Many times I pleaded with God to send someone my way who had also experienced a stillbirth, but for several months my prayer seemed to go unanswered. In retrospect, I think I was allowed to experience the loneliness in order to realize what a need there is to reach out to others. I knew that if I felt alone, despite the support I had from my wonderful family and well-meaning friends, then what about the people who had absolutely no one?

Almost one year after Jonathan's stillbirth, Byron and I hooked up to the Internet, and I immediately searched for web sites pertaining to grief and infant loss. Someone told me about Bill Chadwick's site, Zoom (<http://www.premier.net/~zoom/>) and from there I linked to Tom Golden's Grief Page (<http://www.webhealing.com/>) where I posted my story of losing Jonathan. It wasn't long before several bereaved moms from across the United States responded to my message and shared their stories with me. One lady, Jeanette Wayne, who at the time lived in North Carolina and quickly became a good "cyber buddy" of mine, told me of the Internet listserv, Infanlos (e-mail: majordomo@taex001.tamu.edu). Joining this group allowed me for the first time to share some of my most intimate feelings, sorrows and hurts with women who knew exactly how I felt. Many nights I would stay on the computer until 2:00 a.m. pouring my heart out to virtual strangers, yet women of a kindred spirit.

Several weeks later I sent a letter to a family I read about in the obituary section of our local newspaper expressing my sorrow over the loss of their baby who was stillborn a few days earlier. The baby's mother, Laurie Ottinger, and I quickly became friends and she told me that she had contacted another bereaved mom, Lynne Böer. The three of us spent many hours talking on the phone to each other, meeting for lunch and even attended a grief seminar together. Laurie met another grieving mom, Stacey Lange, who had recently moved to Dallas from Seattle and invited her to come to some of our "meetings." After several weeks of these "get-togethers" I realized that we had started a support group. My previous negative notions of such gatherings quickly dissipated, and I became a strong advocate for "share meetings." I inevitably named our little group M.E.N.D. (Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death) and obtained a Charter from the State of Texas and one year later received our 501 (c) (3) status from the Internal Revenue Service. What started out as four grieving moms in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex has grown into a worldwide ministry (see pages 6-8 for accomplishments and goals)!

I'm not sure what mental state I would currently be in if I hadn't eventually surrounded myself

with other women who had also lost a baby. Certainly I would have not survived without the peace of God, but He also uses us to comfort one another. If you have the same negative thoughts I had about support groups, I hope after reading this issue you will reconsider. For those of you who have recently lost your baby, I urge you to find a group in your area - you'll be amazed at how comforting it will be! And for those of you who it's been a while since your loss, consider volunteering at a group and ministering to newly bereaved families and "...comforting those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God" (II Corinthians 1:4).

Rebekah Mitchell

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Support Makes a Difference During Walk Through Grief

Kathryn Padilla

My husband and I have been blessed with a beautiful daughter who is now two years old. However, the road to parenthood was very bumpy and not an easy one to travel. I experienced fertility problems and it took some time for us to conceive. Then, I lost my first baby to miscarriage and lost my second baby to an ectopic pregnancy. I'm not sure I would have made it through my losses without the help of the Neonatal Grief Support Group at the local hospital as well as the M.E.N.D. organization.

I had a miscarriage in September 1996 and had to have a D & C performed at nine weeks. As you can imagine, my husband and I were very heart- broken. I cried and cried before and after the procedure. When I was discharged from the hospital, the nurses gave me a pamphlet on miscarriages and told me about a support group sponsored by the hospital. My husband and I both attended the next support group meeting. I was scared to go but knew I needed help dealing with the pain that was ripping my heart and soul out. The grief support counselor greeted us as we came in and before I knew it, I was telling my story as tears rolled down my face. It hurt so much to talk about my loss, but at the same time, it was a relief. I continued to attend the monthly meetings. Although my husband did not feel a need to attend again, it was fine with me because he supported my need to go. I think he was glad I had somewhere to go and share with others beside himself.

The grief counselor provided us with educational materials about neonatal losses and the grieving

process. This helped me a lot. I had never experienced such grief and was overwhelmed with all the emotions you feel. I stopped taking care of myself by not eating much and not exercising. It was like I wanted to punish myself and feel some physical pain or deny myself any pleasure. The counselor explained how this was a very common reaction to grief. She helped me to understand that what I was feeling was normal and she offered valuable tips and suggestions on how to cope. This helped me to better understand what was happening to me.

Also, other women in the support group were able to validate my feelings. The support group became the one safe place where I could talk about what I was going through. My grief was not only for the loss of a baby but also the grief of not knowing if we would ever conceive again. The support group understood this sense of loss. Before long, I started to look forward to the meetings because I knew I would be given the chance to talk about my baby and to share what had happened to me. Many times, I did not want the meeting to end because I had so much to share and say. Many of us grieving mothers would gather after the meeting was officially over because we still had a need to talk.

During the meetings, the grief counselor offered many useful suggestions on how to work through one's grief. One, in particular, was to write or journal about your experience and feelings. Well, I was not one to do much writing, but one day I found myself grabbing whatever piece of paper I could find because I had a poem in my head that was spilling out. For several hours, I wrote and could not stop until my poem was done. It was a tribute to my baby. I couldn't wait for the next meeting to share my poem with the support group. I cried at the meeting when I read my poem aloud, but, for me, it was the beginning of the healing process. I don't think I would have ever attempted writing a poem if I had not been given the permission and understanding of the support group to do what is needed to deal with your grief. It would have been so much easier to run and hide. But the support group kept me aware of the need to press on and heal and live.

Six months after my first loss, I remember telling the support group that I was starting to feel happy again. A few weeks later I discovered I was pregnant. But the happiness did not last long. After four weeks of bed rest and spotting, I lost our second baby at eight weeks to an ectopic pregnancy; another loss, more pain, more grief. But I knew the support group would be there to help me. And again I attended the meetings with tears in my eyes. But it was different this time. It didn't take away the sorrow or hurt I felt, but I had a better understanding of what was happening to me and how to cope with the grief. I did not sink as far down the second time, and I believe it was because I was educated about the grieving process, had the emotional support of the group and knew I had somewhere safe to go for comfort and understanding. Only a few weeks later and I had written my second poem to honor this baby. Again, I couldn't wait to share it with the support group. The loss of my second baby was not less than the first. I was just better equipped to handle the pain.

It was at this time that I learned about the M.E.N.D. organization and I also started attending their monthly meetings. This gave me another opportunity to share with others and get the support I needed to make it through my second loss. Shortly after my second loss, we got pregnant again. I was on bed rest the first couple of months of this pregnancy and members of M.E.N.D. called several times to check on me and give me hope. When I was well enough, I attended several of the subsequent pregnancy group meetings. These meetings were helpful by allowing me to express my concerns and fears of losing another baby.

I can't say enough about the hospital and M.E.N.D. support groups. It meant so much to me to have others that understood the magnitude of my losses and allowed me the space to grieve. Whether it's a stillborn, premature baby who doesn't make it or an early pregnancy loss, all are

losses to these mothers and fathers. They desperately need the kindness and understanding support groups can offer. It can make a real difference in how these families deal with their grief once they leave the hospital. I commend the hospitals and other organizations that have developed neonatal loss support groups. It is a valuable service they offer the members of their community, and I thank you.

*By Kathryn Padilla
In Loving Memory of Baby Padilla I,
Miscarried September 19, 1996
and Baby Padilla II,
Ectopic Pregnancy, April 8, 1997*

*How M.E.N.D. Helped Me
"Get Through" My Grief by Shary Gentry*

In order to appreciate my gratitude toward M.E.N.D., one must understand the depth of my despair when I attended my first meeting over two years ago. Having just experienced a miscarriage, my second loss of an unborn child, I felt incomplete and feared I would never have children. After five months, I terminated my first pregnancy because the baby was going to die inside me. I had to endure not only the death of a much-wanted, much-loved baby, but also condemnation for having the abortion, in spite of the circumstances.

In that first meeting I learned I was not alone in grieving the loss of two babies, that others cared about me and that there were ways to ease my pain. In addition, I found comfort in the underlying philosophy that men and women who have lost babies but have no living children are still parents. Ironically, many people consider outliving one's child to be the ultimate tragedy, yet they would never think to empathize on Mother's Day with a woman grieving a child lost to miscarriage, stillbirth or early infant death. M.E.N.D. respected me as a mother and honored the memory of my babies.

In my first pregnancy, the twenty-week sonogram revealed an abnormally small baby with failures in nearly every major body system. The primary symptom was severe swelling around the head and limbs, which made the baby look, in the specialist's words, "like a marshmallow." Both of my doctors felt certain the baby would live less than six more weeks. John and I decided to end our baby's suffering, begin our own healing and embark on a new pregnancy as soon as possible. We were not, however, prepared for the depth of the emotional wounds this experience would leave.

Whereas most women deliver their babies in a hospital room surrounded by family and friends, I found myself at a clinic surrounded by protesters and women ending unwanted healthy pregnancies. Because of the frenzied chanting and waving of signs in the street, it took all my courage simply to walk from the car to the building. Inside I observed nonchalant teenagers napping until their names were called. John endured a long wait that ended not with the happy news of the birth of a boy or girl, but only the cold announcement, "John waiting for Shary, please go to the recovery area." Never mind that he was my husband of five years or the father of the baby!

Less than nine months later, when I started to miscarry on the eve of Mother's Day, sorrow overwhelmed me. Fortunately, I visited M.E.N.D., where empathetic women recognized my need to have someone tangible to mourn. I had never held my babies or even learned the sexes or the

specific problems that resulted in the losses, but these women encouraged me to accept the physician's belief that the first baby had Turner Syndrome, which only afflicts girls. We selected the name "Elizabeth." For the miscarried baby we decided that "Baby Gentry" was appropriate. Naming the babies was the catalyst in the grieving process.

Next, M.E.N.D. offered valuable ceremonies and keepsakes to celebrate the lives of my babies. The Walk to Remember served as the memorial service that the babies never received, and the plant that commemorated the first anniversary of Elizabeth's birth and death lives as a beautiful symbol of the baby! Remembrances such as these help characterize the first loss as that of a delicate, stillborn baby and the second as that of a potential baby who carried hopes and dreams.

The final step in the grieving process was filling the emptiness with a baby I could hold and get to know. When I became pregnant for a third time, I benefited from the company of women who shared a cautious excitement for the new lives inside them. These women were members of M.E.N.D.'s Subsequent Pregnancy After Loss group. Seeing others go on to deliver healthy babies helped me believe that I, too, would experience this happiness.

On July 16, 1998 I finally found myself in a hospital room surrounded by family and friends. The pain of my losses subsided as I participated in the glorious miracle of birth and held beautiful Alison Taylor Gentry in my arms. She completes me.

Thank you, M.E.N.D., for teaching me patience, giving me hope and encouraging me to share my story.

*by Shary Gentry
In loving Memory of
Elizabeth,
stillborn August 24, 1996
and Baby Gentry,
miscarried May 10, 1997*

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Never Alone

I am never alone
I have you near
I am never alone
I have nothing to fear
I am never alone
You hold my hand
I am never alone
You help me stand
I cry oceans of tears
You dry each and every one
You are my miracle
You are my son
I am never alone
I've reached out my hand

We together are strong
Together we stand

*By Jennie Davis
In Loving Memory of
Dylan Patrick O'Keefe
April 15, 1998*

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Angel

Our little angel, we love you so.
We wish you wouldn't have had to go.
We got to hold you...touch your tiny hands and face.
How our hearts long, for one last embrace.
Our time together was short, but the pain runs deep.
You looked so peaceful in our arms...
As if you were asleep.
Mommy and Daddy love you.
We would love to have you back.
But with God you must stay.
Until we are joined together at last.
Good bye for now our angel...until we meet again.
We love you and we miss you.
Slowly...our hearts will mend.

*by Jodi Anderson
In Loving Memory of
David Michael
September 18, 1998*

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M.E.N.D.'s Accomplishments and Goals

When M.E.N.D. began in 1996, never did we dream that it would grow to be what it has become in such a short period of time. When asked, "Is M.E.N.D. growing?" we never know quite how to answer. If it is growing, that means babies are dying and it seems irreverent and even morbid to excitedly answer "yes!" However, we know that it is a fact of life that babies will continue to die and we are thankful that we can provide comfort, healing, and hope to hurting families. M.E.N.D. has accomplished many things in 3 1/2 years primarily because of divine intervention and secondly because of our many volunteers. Our achievements also would not have been possible if it weren't for the very generous donations we have received from you - our subscribers. So as we begin a new year and a new millennium, we wanted to make you aware of what your gifts have accomplished and what our goals for the future entail.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Support Groups

1. Our first support group was in November of 1996 with only five women in attendance. The next month we had more than twice that amount and to date over 115 families in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex have attended one or more of our share groups.
2. Not long after we started our support groups for families who had recently lost their baby, some of our members became pregnant again. We realized they had new and different issues needing to be addressed that we felt were inappropriate for our "Thursday" group. In a timely manner the Lord sent Lori King to us who started our "Subsequent Pregnancy" group in the Summer of 1997.
3. During the fall of 1997 several of the dads who regularly attended our "Thursday" group expressed an interest in forming a group for just the men. They claimed that in a room full of women sometimes it was hard to get a word in! So Byron Mitchell agreed to host our "Daddies Group" which meets four times a year the same night as our regularly scheduled "Thursday" group.
4. After several women from M.E.N.D. delivered their subsequent babies, we again realized the need for yet another type of group. In the spring of 1999 Pam Morren graciously accepted the position as coordinator for our "Parenting After Loss Playgroup." Once a month moms who have little ones at home, whether born prior or subsequent to their loss, meet for play dates at various homes and entertainment establishments.
5. In January, 2000 we will begin our newest group. Jana Spigener will lead a 10 week course entitled, *Threads of Hope, Pieces of Joy*, a beautifully written Bible study by two women from Kentucky who have suffered the loss of a baby. This curriculum takes the participants through Scripture dealing with grief, suffering, and loss then directs them toward healing and hope.

Newsletters

1. The first issue of our newsletter was published in November of 1996. We had 200 copies printed thinking it would be impossible to distribute every one of them. Much to our surprise not long after they were printed we only had a few left over. To date we have over 1,050 subscribers in 47 states and 50 subscribers from eight other countries.

Web Site

In February of 1997 Max and Jody Friz kindly volunteered to create and maintain a web site for us. To date we have had over 19,000 hits to the site which has allowed us to reach out to bereaved families all over the world. The web site includes postings of past newsletters, resources, upcoming events, tips for healthcare professionals, and a guest book. Families can visit our guest book and respond to the posts of others and develop a "pen-pal" relationship with fellow grieving parents. The Internet has been a vital tool in the growth of M.E.N.D. and we are very thankful to the Frizs for making this means of outreach possible.

Media

In our short existence we are privileged to have been guests on several television and radio shows and have filmed a documentary. In the fall of 1997 we were asked by Wescot Communications to assist them in making a documentary for nurses that aired in over 800 hospitals across the United

States. Not long after that several of us appeared on Good Morning Texas which is a local morning talk show and in the winter of 1998 Byron and Rebekah Mitchell were guests on a local TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network) talk show. In February of 1998 Rebekah was a guest on a Dallas-based radio show, Money Talk with host, Don Spear and in the fall of 1998 DaLana Barsanti was interviewed on an early morning program on radio station, B97. We have also had several articles written about M.E.N.D. in publications such as The Dallas Morning News, Dallas Family magazine, The Pentecostal Evangel, and Around Our Town magazine.

Events

M.E.N.D. hosts two major ceremonies each year. In October we host our Walk To Remember which is an event to commemorate National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month. In 1999 we had more than 300 people in attendance representing over 60 babies. During the Christmas holidays we host a beautiful candlelight ceremony in which we give bereaved families the opportunity to come forward and light a candle in memory of their baby. In 1999 more than 130 family members and friends came to remember over 35 babies who had died. With the decorating direction of Denise Gradel and the musical ability of DaLana Barsanti, as well as tireless help from volunteers, M.E.N.D. has been able to make both of these events beautifully memorable.

Outreach

1. Since M.E.N.D. began with Rebekah contacting a family from the obituary section of the newspaper, we have made it a practice to search the obituary section of the two major newspapers in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex on a daily basis and send sympathy cards to the families of those who have lost an infant. The cards introduce the families to M.E.N.D. and invite them to attend our support groups.
2. Several times a year M.E.N.D. is invited by local hospitals to conduct workshops for healthcare professionals. Those attending the seminars include nurses, chaplains, social workers, and anyone else who is involved with grieving families. We discuss a list of "Do's and Don'ts for healthcare professionals" that we as bereaved parents have put together. This list contains suggestions of things that were most and least helpful to us after the death of our babies. Often times these workshops are the only opportunity hospital personnel have to ask questions of bereaved parents and serves as a day of valuable insight and learning.
3. On a few occasions Rebekah has been asked to speak in local Sunday School classes and MOPS (Mothers Of Pre-Schoolers) groups where she shares not only her testimony of losing Jonathan and subsequently starting M.E.N.D., but also how to help friends and loved ones in times of loss and suffering.
4. This past Christmas we began what we hope to be an annual tradition in M.E.N.D. With the help of the local grocery store chain, Tom Thumb, we obtained over \$375 worth of food vouchers. We contacted a large Dallas hospital and requested the names of six underprivileged families who had recently lost an infant. We put together beautifully decorated food baskets that consisted of a turkey, vegetables and fruit which enabled these families to provide a Christmas dinner for their household that they otherwise may not have been able to provide.

Committees

Due to the continued rapid growth of M.E.N.D., it is becoming necessary for us to establish several committees. Not only will the committees help M.E.N.D. fulfill our responsibilities and commitments, it will also give every grieving parent in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex the opportunity to become involved. The committees will include focuses such as fundraising, decorating for events, public relations, resources, hospital visitation, correspondence, etc.

24 Hour Help

In the future we would like to make ourselves available to any family, hospital, doctor's office and funeral home 24 hours a day. This would include phone counseling and visiting families in the hospital any time we are needed.

Grants

With the help of Paula Miltenberger and her fundraising committee, M.E.N.D. is in the process of requesting grants from various foundations. It is extremely necessary to obtain large sums of donations in order to accomplish even a handful of our future goals.

Office

Since the conception of M.E.N.D., the day to day operations have been run from Rebekah's home - a corner in her bedroom, to be exact. The mail goes to a post office in a neighboring city. The support groups are held in Rebekah's father's law firm and several volunteers complete their tasks from their individual homes. As M.E.N.D. continues to grow, it is becoming quite difficult to not have one central location where everything pertaining to M.E.N.D. is conducted. By having our own office we would also be able to provide grieving families a place to come during the day to talk to someone, use our lending library, or help with daily responsibilities. Having our own facility would also allow us to have a larger, more appropriate meeting place for our support groups. We have completely outgrown our present meeting place and people have had to sit out in the hallway due to lack of room.

Staff

Once M.E.N.D. obtains an office it will become necessary to have a small paid staff. This will enable us to reach out to more families and in a more efficient manner.

Chapters

Currently M.E.N.D. support groups are only in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex. We have had several women from all over the United States interested in starting a chapter of M.E.N.D. in their area. This is definitely a goal of ours. Our board of directors is presently in the process of creating an application for those interested in starting a branch. Hopefully, this goal will be a reality in the near future and someday there will be chapters of M.E.N.D. all across the country.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Not one of our goals will be made possible without the divine help of the Lord. So your prayers are first and foremost requested and cherished. Secondly, any advice, suggestions and concerns

you may have as a bereaved parent are greatly valued. Thirdly, any knowledge of fundraising and grant writing is appreciated. And lastly, your donations, whether monetary or in goods, will be spent and used wisely to help us reach our goals of effectively helping hurting families. We pray God's richest blessings on all of you who have helped us in the past and to those of you who plan to help us in the future.

Although none of us wish we had a reason to be a part of M.E.N.D., we thank you for helping us make this special group of families what it is today!

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!" Ephesians 3:20 - 21

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1999 Revenues & Expenses

(Actual through 9/30/99 + Projected 10/1/99 through 12/31/99)

Revenue

Business Foundation Contributions	\$ 6,425.00
Individual Contributions	\$17,435.00
Fundraising Revenue	\$ 2,805.00
Total Revenue	\$26,665.00

Expenses

Program Expenses	\$13,200.00
Newsletters, Walk, Christmas Program, Directories, Postage/Shipping, Flowers, Resources	
Operating Expenses	\$ 6,405.00
Office Equipment, Phone, Office Supplies, Bank Charges, Dues/Subscriptions, Meals/Food, Sales Taxes, Other	
Total Expenses	\$19,605.00

2000 Expenses - Projected

<u>Program Expenses</u>	\$18,100.00
Newsletters, Walk, Christmas Program, Directories, Postage/Shipping, Flowers, Resources	
<u>Operating Expenses</u>	\$ 5,500.00
Office Equipment, Phone, Office Supplies, Bank Charges, Dues/Subscriptions, Meals/Food, Sales Taxes, Other	
Total Expenses	\$23,600.00

Did You Hear Mommy Weeping?

Did you hear Mommy weeping
As you slowly slipped away?
And did angels carry you gently
From my arms where you lay?

Did you hear your daddy sobbing
As he stood by Mommy's side?
And as he gently touched your skin
Did you sense his glowing pride?

Sweet Mommy yes I heard you weeping,
And heard everything you said
Just as I felt your loving tears
Fall so softly on my head

Your deep love for me I felt,
Cuddled in your warm embrace
And I felt your sweet devotion
As you gently caressed my face

The angels tenderly picked me up
And caressed my little hand
As they carried me to Heaven
To be with Jesus and see Raeanne

And darling Mommy, Raeanne greeted me
With loving open arms
Jesus held us close,
Promising to keep us from all harm

I heard Daddy sobbing
And I sensed his glowing pride
I know he was thinking what he would miss
Without me by his side

All the things a daddy
And his little boy should do
Now because of my leaving him,
Never would come true

His heart aches for me dear Mommy
And his grief he tries to hide
As he still cannot understand
Why I had to die

I'm proud to be his son

And I love him so very much
I know he misses me so,
Longing for one more touch

So please tell him Mommy
That not long from now he and I will be
Doing daddy and little boy things
In Heaven for all eternity
Tell him that until then
His loving son is always near his heart
And that when we meet in Heaven,
From then on we'll never be apart

Raeanne is full of such beauty,
Glowing bright with Jesus' love
Just as I am now too Mommy
As we watch you from above

We are waiting for you Mommy,
Standing at Heaven's Gate
It won't be too long now,
God has already set the date

We are always near you,
In your heart and in your mind
So just look around you mommy
And both of us you will find

For our memory lies in Katy,
In her deep love just for you
In her eyes, her looks, her laugh
And when she's sleeping too

Look for us in Daddy,
In his sense of humor and warm embraces
In your dreams, search for us
And you will see our faces

For we will fill your nights
With complete warmth and love
And when you wake up
You'll sense our presence from above

So my little babies
Do you know your mommy loves you so?
And that I miss you so much more
Than anyone can know?

Yes Mommy we know that
And we love you dearly too
So be gentle on yourself
And we will see you soon...

You both are my special angels
And forever my children you'll be
Goodbye for now little ones...
Soon we'll be together for eternity

Goodbye Mommy...
Goodbye angels...

by Cathy Russell
In Loving Memory of Raeanne Ethelyn Russell
Born August 25, 1996, Died August 27, 1996
and Joshua Darcy Russell
Born and Died May 28, 1999

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Subsequent Births

Cindy & Bubba Grubb
and big sister, Jourdan,
of Kenner, Louisiana
proudly announce the birth of
of their dream come true,
Ashlinn Grace.
Ashlinn was born August 3, 1999.
She weighed 8 lbs. and was 21" long.
With grateful, loving hearts,
they remember
Katherine Angelena "Katie Angel,"
born still February 26, 1998
and *Madison,*
miscarried June 28, 1998.

Evelyn & Karl Baker
of Los Angeles, California
brought home a new bundle of joy
in September.
Rebekah Joy Yue-ming
was born
September 9, 1999
weighing 7 lbs. 7 oz.
and measuring 19 1/2" long.
The Bakers thank God for
His goodness in taking them
through this pregnancy and for
His wonderful gift.
They lovingly remember their
twin girls,
Julia and Elisabeth Baker,
stillborn December 27, 1997.

Jana & Grant Spigener
and their son, Wyatt,
of Arlington, Texas
with great joy announce the birth
of their son,
Ford Harmon.
Ford was born October 23, 1999.
He weighed 7lbs. 7oz.
and was 19" long.
They remember with love
Mercedes Ruth,
stillborn September 21, 1995
and *Twin Blossoms,*
miscarried July 1996 and August 1996.

Maria & Don Kutzner
of Hurst, Texas
announce the birth of their son,
Adam Wesley.
Adam was born
November 4, 1999,
weighing 7 lbs. 4 oz. and
measuring 20 1/2" long.
The Kutzners lovingly remember
Jamie Lynne,
stillborn January 20, 1998
due to Trisomy 18.

Kristie & Mac Melnik
of Columbus, Ohio
welcome with love
their daughter, *Allison Lauren.*
Allison was born on
September 12, 1999.
She weighed 9 lbs. 3 oz.
and measured 21" long.
The Melniks
humbly remember
their firstborn son,
Jacob Christopher,
January 20, 1998.
He died due to a true knot in the cord.

Heidi & Rodney Matney
proudly announce the birth of two surviving children,
Anna Marie, May 1, 1996
and *Nathan Mitchel,* March 31, 1998,

while remembering
the loss of three children,
Fall 1991 - miscarriage
Nov. 1995 - loss of Anna Marie's twin
May 24, 1997 - Morgan Leigh

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Be Gentle My Friend

You tell me it was for the best.
You tell me to move on.
But if it was your child who died,
Would you be able to go on?

He was torn from my life and it hurts.
I so long to have him near.
I hope you never come to lose
A precious child so dear.

For then, my friend, you wouldn't be
So quick to dry my tears.
You'd understand the pain inside,
And hold me gently near.

So bear with me my dear friend.
One day I will have the strength to move on.
But for now the pain is oh so deep.
My baby boy is gone...GONE!

by Jennie Davis
In Loving Memory of
Dylan Patrick O'Keefe
April 15, 1998

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In Loving Memory

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing this newsletter and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the [M.E.N.D. address](#) listed at the bottom of the newsletter. **Thank you so much!**

In Loving Memory of

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr. and big brother, Byron, Jr.

Given by grandparents,

Sue & Dennis Brewer

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Given by parents,

Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr.

and big brother, Byron, Jr.

Michael Joseph Böer

Stillborn July 17, 1996

Trisomy 18

Given by parents, Lynne & Paul Böer

and siblings, Paul, Jr., and Maggie

Kayce Dolores Bramlett

March 14 - 15, 1999

Premature

Parents Deidre and Kyle Bramlett

Given by Tony and Caryn Salinas

William Joseph Kowalski

Stillborn August 12, 1997

Premature Labor due to Fibroid Tumor

Given by parents, Sheri & Robert Kowalski and little brother, Robert Joseph

Liam Olson

Stillborn June 10, 1999

Unknown Cause

Mom, Dee Dee Olson

and big brother, Anders

Given by Jan Noel

Sarah Ann King

Stillborn June 22, 1995

Cord Accident

Parents, Lori & David King

and siblings, Brooks and Kaylee

Given by grandmother, Sharon James

Bay William Miltenberger, Jr.

Stillborn December 9, 1998

Preterm Labor

Given by parents, Paula & Bay Miltenberger

Baby Rios

Miscarried May 1998

Given by parents,

Cheryl & Paul Rios

and big brother, Paul, Jr.

Patrick Lanham

May 15, 1994

Cord Problem

Given by parents, Carol & Sean Lanham

and siblings, Andrew and Michael

Matthew Aaron Bengtson

Stillborn July 12, 1999

Parents, Nancy & Kyle Bengtson

and brother, Christopher

Given by Donna Johnson

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr. and

big brother, Byron, Jr.

Given by grandparents,

Marnie & Lyle Mitchell

Chandler Allred

March 4, 1999

Fetal Acrania

Parents, Amy & Mark Allred

Given by grandparents,

Doris & Billie Yancey

Rianne Ellisa Scrivner

March 4 - March 7, 1997

Severe Hydrocephaly

Given by parents,

Rae & Bill Scrivner

and little sister, Chaney

Travis Stone Cates

Stillborn August 24, 1999

Abnormal Placenta

Given by parents, Jodie & Michael Cates

Michael Joseph Böer

Stillborn July 17, 1996

Trisomy 18

Parents, Lynne & Paul Böer

and siblings, Paul, Jr., and Maggie

Given by grandparents, Jo & Dennis Askew

Braden Alec Carson

Stillborn August 3, 1999

Parents, Jennifer & Billy Dan Carson

and big brother, Ansel

Given by Donna & Steve McCove

Braden Alec Carson

Stillborn August 3, 1999

Parents, Jennifer & Billy Dan Carson
and big brother, Ansel

Given by Dorothy Carlson

Braden Alec Carson

Stillborn August 3, 1999

Given by parents, Jennifer & Billy Dan Carson
and big brother, Ansel

Grace Riddick

Stillborn May 22, 1998

Incompetent Cervix

Given by parents,
Shundria & Christopher Riddick
Caleb Riddick

Stillborn December 22, 1998

Incompetent Cervix

Given by parents,
Shundria & Christopher Riddick

Gift of Love

Given by the Presbyterian Women of
Highland Park Presbyterian Church

Travis Stone Cates

Stillborn August 24, 1999

Abnormal Placenta

Parents, Jodie & Michael Cates

Given by grandfather, Jerry Dewees

Anna MacDonald

July 2, 1999

Parents, Meg & Stan MacDonald

Given by grandmother, Alice Ogalin

Gift of Love

Given by Elizabeth & Peter Lauer

Cheyenne Rene Evans

Stillborn October 28, 1999

Trisomy 18

Parents, Barbara & Bobby Evans

Given by aunt and uncle,
Laura & Harvey Earles

Online Resources

Resources published in the printed version of this newsletter can be accessed on the Internet directly from M.E.N.D.'s resource pages. To access the resource pages, navigate to the following URL:

URL: http://www.mend.org/resources_internet.asp

In the M.E.N.D. resource listing, you will find resources which include internet web sites, national organizations, and family bereavement pages.

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Contact Information

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