

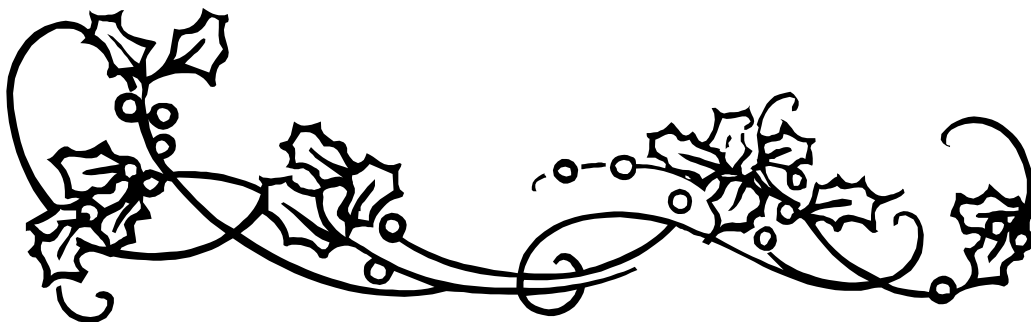
Remember by Reaching Out

Last year was the first Christmas we went through since our little Blake passed away on April 21, 1999. Because I was pregnant again at Christmastime, most of our friends and family were so excited about the baby that I felt like our first little son was overlooked a little. I expected to have a quiet Christmas and remember our little baby in my heart. A wonderful friend surprised me with cards and gifts and poetry on each of the twelve days of Christmas to remember our baby. It was the most special Christmas I had ever had. I didn't realize myself how much I would feel the loss during the holidays. We acknowledged our baby at Christmas by lighting a special candle and reflecting on the endless love we have for him. I would encourage everyone who has been through the holidays after a loss to reach out to someone who is experiencing this for the first time by a phone call, cards or some meaningful way to you to show support - it really does help, or at least it did for me.

Jan Allen
remembering Blake Leland Allen 4/21/99 and Lauren

Special ways to remember your baby during the holidays

- * Light a special candle during family gatherings.
- * Buy an ornament in your baby's memory and hang it on your tree.
- * Purchase a poinsettia to decorate your church in memory of your baby.
- * Donate to your favorite charity in your child's memory.
- * Give a gift to a needy child.
- * Include angel stamps, stickers, or cut-outs in your Christmas cards as a way to honor your baby's memory.
- * Wear your baby's birthstone to holiday functions.



Walk to Remember

We have prayed for rain in North Texas for months as we have experienced a horrendous drought. In His unique timing, God opened the flood gates of heaven the weekend of October 21 for our 4th annual Walk To Remember. What could have been a disastrous day turned out to be very special and beautiful in its own way. My sister made the comment that the rain drops were symbolic of all the tears that we parents have all shed over the loss of our babies. More than 250 people came with umbrellas and raincoats to participate in the memorable event. Pastor Fred Durham, Pastor of Tyler Street Methodist in Dallas, Texas, and the grandfather of Faith Elizabeth Durham, who was stillborn September 25, 1999, delivered a comforting message filled with hope and reminders of God's grace during our sufferings.

If you missed the MEND Walk to Remember due to not living in the Dallas/Ft.Worth metroplex, most perinatal loss groups across the country host similar events every year during the month of October to commemorate National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness month. If you have never made plans to attend a Walk in your area, I strongly encourage you to do so. It is a wonderful opportunity for all our families to come together to remember our much loved and longed for children.

Rebekah Mitchell

Kroger Shoppers Can Now Help M.E.N.D.

Those of you who shop at **Kroger** can help M.E.N.D. Kroger will donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers who have and use a Kroger Share Card. To obtain your Kroger Share Card, Please call or e-mail Rebekah via one of the ways listed on page 12 of this newsletter. Be sure to let us know how many you would like.

Do You Shop at Tom Thumb?

Anyone who is a Tom Thumb shopper can help M.E.N.D. with their purchases. If you have a **Tom Thumb Reward Card**, please ask the cashier to link your card with M.E.N.D. **Our number is 6265**. If you are already linked to another organization, they will split your purchases between the organizations. Tom Thumb will donate 1% of all sales back to M.E.N.D. If you don't have a Reward Card, it only takes about five minutes to get one.

The Reward Cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.

January/February Topic

When a Loss Occurs During Multiple Births

Deadline – November 30, 2000

March/April Topic

Living with a Loss After Five Years or More

Deadline – January 31, 2001

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcomed. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the newsletter. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please see the back page of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our website indefinitely unless we receive notice in writing that you are only granting permission for your submission to appear in the printed version of the newsletter.

Reprint Policy:

Articles printed in the M.E.N.D. newsletter are copyrighted by M.E.N.D. and/or by the individual authors of certain articles. Articles may not be reprinted without permission from the editor, Sharlene Libby, or president, Rebekah Mitchell. The newsletter may be reproduced for the purpose of providing it to pregnancy loss support group members or other bereaved families so that they may also have access to the information. The material may not be reproduced in any way, shape or form for profit. Some authors of articles included in the newsletter may carry their own copyright and their articles may only be reprinted with permission from the author.

M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings

Join us in a time of sharing experiences.

Regular M.E.N.D. meetings

are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Mommies AND Daddies are both welcome at all of our meetings.

Threads of Hope, Pieces of Joy Bible Study

Please contact Jana Spigener at (817) 468-9963 or gaspigen@aol.com if interested.

Playgroup

For families with children born prior to or subsequent to a loss
Contact Pam Morren
At (972) 335-8202
ashtonsmom98@hotmail.com

Our Daddies Group

meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, September, and December
From 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

This is a special time for Daddies to get together and discuss concerns unique to them as fathers. Our moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion

For more information or directions,
Call (972) 459-2396.

Subsequent Pregnancy Group

meets the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss

All support group meetings are held at:

1159 Cottonwood Lane, Suite 150 Irving, Texas (Las Colinas) 75038
(This is on the west side of MacArthur Boulevard, across the street from the Four Seasons Resort.
There is a Holiday Inn Express at the entrance of Cottonwood Lane.)

Birthday Tributes to Our Special Angels

My Precious Joshua and Jeremy,

I do not know where to begin! I have so many thoughts and emotions within that I am having trouble putting them into words. I keep thinking that after four years certainly this will get easier but so far it hasn't. I guess you can say that your dad and I have "moved on with life" as best we can. It is so obvious that no matter how many years pass by I will never be the same. My personality is so different than when I was pregnant with you. The hollow space in my heart has partially been filled with fear and anxiety. I know that you are in a better place. I keep telling myself that! My heart still hurts!

Your little brother, Taylor Wesley, says, "Mama, let's go see Joshua and Jeremy." I feel myself crumble inside each time he says that. I am glad that he wants to go. In the same breath I am just so sad that he can't actually see his brothers! When we go it is a special time for us because we always share a picnic lunch under your tree.

Little Collin isn't old enough to say your names yet ... I can't wait till he is. I love to hear your names aloud. I want him to know about you and how much you are loved.

I know that too soon I will have to explain your death to both of your brothers. I pray the Lord gives me the right words. I don't even comprehend why you are gone, so how can I help them understand?

I can never utter the words "I love you, Boys" enough! I find myself saying them any place or time. I am so hoping that you know how much you are loved! No matter how much time passes I will never forget you! You are my first born. You are my sons!

I love you, Boys!

Mom

*In memory of Joshua and Jeremy Barranti
Stillborn November 21, 1998, due to Anencephaly
Parents: Randy & Dalana Barranti*

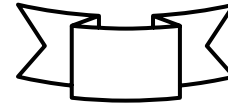


You are forever in our hearts
and we miss you every single
day.

Happy 1st Birthday!

Ashley Renee Dedear
10/29/99 - 11/1/99

Placenta abruptia/Prematurity
Parents: Tim and Cindy Dedear
Twin Sister: Laura Elizabeth



Dearest Angel,

We miss you so much and not a day goes by without thoughts of you. We can't believe it has been a whole year since we saw your face and held your tiny body in our arms. You have touched our lives in more ways than we ever imagined. As the sun continues to shine and God's perfect plan unfolds before us, we long for the day we'll be reunited with you and our Father in Heaven.

We love you, little one!



Mom, Dad, and
baby brother Trent (on the way!)

*Submitted in loving memory of:
Angel Connolly
Stillborn November 11, 1999
due to complications of Downs Syndrome
Parents: Chuck & Katie Connolly*

Happy 1st Birthday
to our special baby girl,
MADELYN JANE BOYCE
NOV. 29, 1999 - DEC. 4,
1999

A special angel in heaven
watching over us all

*Parents: Michael and Denise Boyce
Madelyn died from Ebstein's Anomaly,
a rare heart disorder.*



One Year Ago ...

*They took you from within me, with all kinds of hope
that you would breathe and scream in life ...
but I guess you just couldn't cope.*

*I do remember you, all freshly scrubbed for me to see,
that you were the little angel boy I'd seen in all my dreams.*

*I'm sorry we didn't spend much time with you, only a day or two.
It really was so very hard and I just didn't have any clue.*

*I couldn't believe you had left us, when all our love was there.
I still cry for you every day, and scream that life isn't fair.*

*I carry your memory within my heart and know I'll never forget
That you are my little angel boy, the child I barely met.*

*You live within my heart and in every breath I take.
I know I'll meet you again someday, when the time is just more
right.*

*So until happy that day, Joshua my little angel boy, I'll whisper
my good-night
and blow you lots of kisses, as you rise in your gentle heavenly
flight.*

Happy 1st Birthday Little Angel Boy!

*Sending you lots of hugs and kisses.
Mommy, Daddy and Jared and Aspen*



In remembrance of Joshua Alexander Shillito
Born & died on November 7th, 1999
Died due to delivery complications, shortly after birth.
Parents: Deborah and Glenn Shillito

1 Happy 1st Birthday, Lauren Elizabeth!

We love and miss you so much!
Love,
Mommy and Daddy

Lauren's Song Gift of God

*Words and music
by Scarlett Bertish*

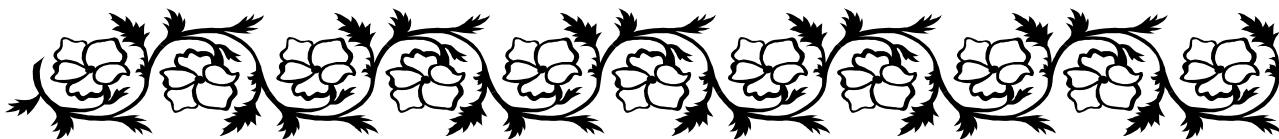
Tiny hands, tiny feet
So eager now this world to greet
Tiny fingers, tiny toes,
The road ahead only God knows.
He will keep you safe from harm.
Under his wing, he will keep you
warm.
God will grant you strength and
blessings
To sustain you your whole life
through.

Gift of God from Heaven above,
So full of life, and hope and love.
Gently clutching Mother's hand,
Ever trusting your Father's plan.
He will guide you on your way,
And give you grace and strength
each day.

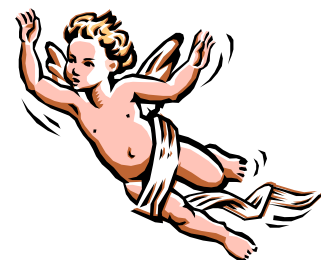
And a blessing you will be
To all the world around you,
Little gift of God to me.

*In loving remembrance of
Lauren Elizabeth Pearson
10/31/99 – 12/08/99*

*Died due to necrotizing enterocolitis
Parents: Darrell and Lorraine
Pearson*



October 15, 2001, is the target date for the first annual
Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day. If
you would like to sign the petition to put this day on
the national calendar, visit the following website:
<http://www.pain-heartache-hope.com>, or e-mail
Robyn Bear at pain-heartache-hope@ev1.net.





Often when a couple experiences the loss of a baby, their names still end up on promotional mailing lists for formula and diaper coupons, baby catalogues, and other baby-related mail. These may be painful for parents to receive after experiencing the loss of a child. To request that your name be removed from these mailing lists, write to the following address and say, "Please delete my name and address from any and all mailing lists."

Direct Marketing Association
Mail Preference Service
P.O. Box 9008
Farmingdale, New York 11735-9008

To get your name off some catalogue lists, you may have to call the catalogue companies directly on the 1-800 numbers listed in each publication.

For those of you who shop at Tom Thumb and have your Reward card linked to M.E.N.D., you spent over \$25,000 this quarter. That means M.E.N.D. will get a check for about \$250. Thank you so much! If you don't have your Reward card linked to us, our number is 6265.



#

**Mommy please do not cry
I belong up here.**

**Up here is where
I got to pet a deer.**

**Up here is where
I'll hold you in my arms.**

**In Heaven is where angels
watch over me and you.**

**Where God loves everybody
very true.**

**Up here is where I learned
to walk, talk, and play.**

**Up here is where
I love you true.**

*In loving memory of Jordan
Ashley Heffley
July 5, 1999 (lived for 9 hours)
Trisomy 13
Parents: Jan and John Heffley*

*Written by Jonathan Heffley,
Jordan's 7 year old brother,
right before her
first birthday.*



The 1st annual MISS (Mothers in Sympathy Support) Foundation's Retreat for the Grieving Family will be held Friday & Saturday, June 29-30, 2001 in Paradise Valley, Arizona, at the Orangetree Resort. Mark your calendars now and be on the alert for upcoming information on speakers and presentations. Saturday will be an all-day bereaved children's retreat in addition to the conference for the adults.

For more information, call Joanne Cacciatore at 623-979-1000, or e-mail her at jgarard1@home.com.

Subsequent Births

Michael and Jodie Cates

of Forney, Texas,
proudly announce the birth of their
twin daughters,
born Monday, September 11, 2000.
Abbie Lynn: 4 lbs., 8 oz., 16 3/4 inches
Sadie Collin: 5 lbs., 18 inches
The Cates lovingly remember
Travis Stone,
born and died August 24, 1999,
due to abnormal placenta.

Michele and John May

of Rockwall, Texas,
announce the birth of
Alyssa Hope,
born September 6, 2000, at 1:05 p.m.
Alyssa weighed 8 lbs., 2 oz.
The Mays lovingly remember their daughter
Kaitlyn Marie,
stillborn October 29, 1999,
due to a cord accident.

Chris and Shundria Riddick

of Carrollton, Texas,
announce the arrival of
Joshua Chase Riddick,
born August 25, 2000, at 10:57 a.m.,
6 lbs., 2 oz., 18.5 inches.
The Riddicks lovingly remember
Grace,
May 22, 1998,
due to incompetent cervix,
and
Caleb,
December 22, 1998,
due to incompetent cervix.

Deborah and Deryl Franklin

of Desoto, Texas,
joyfully announce
the birth of their daughter
Adrienne Faith,
born May 19, 2000, at 10:35 p.m.
She weighed 2 lbs. and was 13 inches long.
Adrienne went home with her
mommy and daddy
on August 5, 2000.
The Franklins lovingly remember
Baby Franklin,
miscarried on September 7, 1995,
and
Danielle Alyse Franklin,
stillborn July 22, 1999,
due to prematurity.

David and Marie Crowe, along with big sister Hannah,

of Dallas, Texas,
announce the arrival of
Andrew David Crowe,
born Wednesday, August 16, 2000,
at 1:07 p.m.,
7 lbs., 11 oz., 20 inches.
The Crowes remember with love
Jackson David,
born August 22, 1998,
died September 9, 1998,
due to heart failure.

Loren and Dee Dee Olson and son Anders

of Grand Junction, Colorado,
announce the birth of
Annika Wynne Olson,
born May 5, 2000.
She weighed 7 lbs., 13 oz.
The Olson family remembers with love
Liam Karsten Olson,
stillborn June 10, 1999,
due to a possible cord accident
or viral infection.

Jeff & Kati Walker, along with big sisters Jessica and Abigail,

of Arlington, Texas,
proudly announce the birth of
Madelyn Danielle,
born June 30, 2000,
at 2:30 p.m.
She weighed 7 lbs., 6 oz.,
and measured 20 1/2 inches long.
The Walkers lovingly remember their son
Zachary Cole,
stillborn July 29, 1998,
due to an unknown cause.

Kristen & Jason Walton and their daughter Jessica

of Carrollton, Texas,
welcome
Laura Diana,
born June 3, 2000, at 2:30 p.m.
She weighed 6 lbs., 14 oz.
and measured 19 1/2 inches long.
They remember with love
their son,
Kyle Charles,
November 19, 1998,
due to Group B Strep and lack of
proper nourishment from placenta.

Jan and Sean Allen

of Grand Prairie, Texas,
announce the birth of
Zachary Chase Allen,
born February 13, 2000,
1 lb., 5 oz., 13 inches long,
and miraculously doing great.
The Allens lovingly remember
Blake Leland,
born and died April 21, 1999,
due to preterm
labor/incompetent cervix
and
Lauren Grace Allen,
stillborn February 13, 2000,
due to unknown cause.

Wim and Sharlene Libby, along with big brothers Will and John,

of Abilene, Texas,
announce the birth of
Mary Grace,
born October 16, 2000,
at 9:24 p.m.
She weighed 6 lb., 8 oz.
and measured 20 inches long.
The Libbys lovingly remember
Joseph Charles,
stillborn May 26, 1999,
due to a cord accident.



**Seven years of waiting
Endless hopes and prayers
Then God sent Joshua Allen
To wipe away our tears**

**The 22nd of December
At 2:14 on a Wednesday morn
Our 4 pound, 13 ounce Peanut decided
1999 was the year to be born**

**Though entering this world so tiny
Measuring just 1 ½ feet tall
Our strong little boy has grown so quickly
Bringing joy to one and all**

**For health of body we are thankful
A blessing too is his sharp little mind
But our greatest prayer for this child is to
know Jesus
Who would build his spirit to be gentle,
loving and kind**

By Jennifer Saake
© 2000 Jennifer Saake

*Parents: Rick and Jennifer Saake
In celebration of their son Joshua Allen
And in memory of his sister Noel Alexis,
Died due to miscarriage 12/1/94*

A Gift from God

An angel was sent from heaven above
A special one that would bring much love.
God knew that his precious life would be short
So he looked around for a tender heart.

He made his choice and the gift was sent.
In what seemed like a moment the angel went
Leaving treasured memories, and a heart full of pain
A void, an abyss, tears flowed like rain
But ...

Wait just a moment, I wish you could see
The wonderful thing that has happened to me,
Jesus was waiting. His arms opened wide,
And He and His angels brought me inside
Such a beautiful place I cannot describe,
A new home for me from the moment I arrived.

I'll wait for you here, so dry up your tears.
And go bravely on with your life free from fears
Know that God's with you to love and to guide.
He'll never desert you, He's there by your side.
So speak to Him daily from inside your heart
And let Him assure you we're not really apart.

*In loving memory of
Sergio Anthony Rodriguez
Stillborn 6/23/00
due to unknown cause
Parents: Alfredo and Leonora Rodriguez*

M.E.N.D. *Christmas Candlelight Ceremony*

Tuesday, December 5, 2000

7:00 p.m.

Calvary Temple

3000 West Airport Freeway

Irving, TX 75062

For reservations or information, e-mail Rebekah at Rebekah@mend.org or call (972) 459-2396.



**Written October 22,
The morning following the Walk to Remember**

The earth was tired and thirsty.
 For what seemed eternity she had endured this drought.
 Her heat parched covering was cracked and weathered,
 Longing only for a cool drop of water from the sky.
 Day in and day out the scorching rays were directed upon her.
 No clouds appeared to give her rest, a break from this season of suffering.
 In despair, she cried out for the flood gates to open.
 The pain now reached the core of her existence.
 Was there no mercy from her Creator?
 Would He withhold that which was intended for His creation?
 The heavens were silent.
 She would have to bear another day.
 She would have to wait.
 But her distress did not escape her Creator's eyes.
 Gently, softly, in the quiet stillness the raindrops began to fall;
 Showers of blessing arriving at a time only He could understand.
 Faster, more abundantly they came,
 Like tears from the very face of God,
 Who had hurt with her--
 Nurturing, sustaining and reminding her that her Creator was
 the Source of Life;
 her Comforter;
 her Provider.
 And she knew, though she did not understand His ways, He would never fail to
 meet her deepest need. In her Creator she could trust.

By Jana Spigener

© 2000, Jana M. Spigener



Ah, Christmas Time

Ah, Christmas time, with happy family gatherings,
 Wrapping presents for the children – oh, such fun!
 Joyful carols, heavenly praises ringing ‘round me,
 Thoughts of Him, in celebration,
 Fill our hearts with adoration,
 Thoughts of a baby boy, God’s precious Son.

Ah, Christmas time – but some are missing from the
 gatherings,
 Some we’d planned on being with us for this day.
 Unfulfilled, the dreams we had are playing ‘round us ...
 Though they’re missing from their places,
 In our hearts we see their faces,
 And the emptiness we feel won’t go away.

Choosing presents – and we always face the question,
 What about the little ones we wish were here?
 The gifts we buy for them they’ll never open,
 Wrap it tight, and hide away,
 Waiting for the coming day,
 Unwrapped by our own hands with silent tear.

There’s a minor in the carol, said the poet,
 And deep inside we feel it as we sing.
 Memories dance upon the notes of Christmas carols,
 Mixed with joy, we sing our sadness,
 Song of mourning joined with gladness,
 As we lift our voice in praises to the King.

Ah, Christmas time, the birth of baby Jesus!
 God’s precious Son, His love, His blessing – oh the joys!
 Assailed with memories by season, song and story –
 Time of birth, the silent cries,
 Newborn angel lullabies –
 Sweet memories of our dear baby boys.

Arlene Stamy

*In loving remembrance of
 Logan Douglas Stamy, 12/15/91 – 12/27/91,
 and Shane Logan Stamy, stillborn 9/2/95.*

Reprinted from Nov. 1996 *Bereaved Parents Share II*

**Holiday Shopping Suggestions
for Bereaved Parents**

Daily lists made out the night before or in the morning may prove very helpful. Lack of concentration is part of grief; lists help us remember things.

Shopping will be easier if you make a list ahead of time. When one of your Better Days comes, you can get more accomplished by following your list – this reduces confusion, frustration, and time loss.

Try to shop on less busy days, as early in the day as possible. Maybe ask a friend or someone helpful to go with you as decisions can be difficult when grief is fresh.

Allow time (an extra hour a day) for the unexpected! Traffic will be heavier, checkout lines slower and longer, tape and paper supplies run out, or someone drops by, the phone rings or you run out of stamps and misplace your keys when you least appreciate such inconveniences.

Shopping early by catalogue is another solution.

Carol Ruth Blackman

Reprinted from Nov. 1991 *Bereaved Parents Share II*; revised Nov. 1995.

M.E.N.D.

would like to recognize the sponsors of our fourth annual Walk To Remember. We are very grateful for your support.

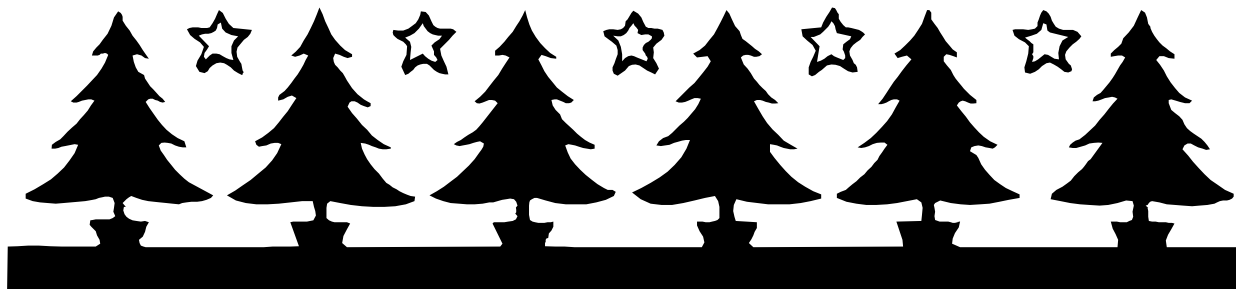
Channel 8 
 DeHay, Elliston, L.L.P.
 Byron L. Mitchell, D.D.S.
 Nationwide Insurance,
 David H. King
 Mayday Pest Control
 Penske
 Mark Shelton Productions
 Calvary Temple
 Southwest Airlines
 Remember Me Bear
 Ozarka Water
 Sisk Photography

Emery Bay Apartments,
 Lewisville
 Barber Shop
 First Baptist Church of
 Grapevine
 Jason's Deli of Grapevine
 Subway of Colleyville
 Kroger Grocery Stores
 Albertson's Grocery Stores
 Tom Thumb Grocery Stores
 Winn Dixie Grocery Stores
 Haltom City Police
 Department
 Target

Denise & Ashley Gradel
 Hobby Lobby of Arlington
 Richard & Laurie Fantine
 Texas Women's University
 Rail Fence of Aubrey
 GS Services
 911 Ice
 Frito-Lay
 Tim & Pam Morren
 The Photographers
 Don Barnes & Associates
 Office Depot of Lewisville
 DeLa Porte & Associates
 Sean & Jan Allen

Thanks to the following committee members for their hours of hard work and dedication. Without them, this ceremony would not have been possible.

Mary and Lynn Steen, remembering Chrissie Peyton, miscarried 5/3/00
Jana Spigener, remembering Mercedes Ruth, stillborn 9/21/95, and Twin Blossoms, miscarried 7/96 and 8/96
Diane Smith, remembering Richard James, stillborn 3/1/00
Rebekah Mitchell, remembering Jonathan Daniel, stillborn 6/24/95
April and Tony Mayer, remembering Garrett, 10/12/99 – 12/18/99
Samantha and Joe Iliff, remembering Logan David, stillborn 5/5/00
Brenda Hampton, remembering Samantha Angel, stillborn 5/22/00
Paula Grimes, remembering Lauren Paige, stillborn 3/6/99
Denise and Ashley Gradel, remembering Aaron Philip, stillborn 9/22/97, and Angel, miscarried 5/14/93
Laurie Fantine, remembering Hallie Anne, stillborn 9/22/97
Nicole Didier, remembering Cole Matthew, 8/25/98
Marilyn Brown, remembering Sydney Lynne, 5/18/00
Lynne Böer, remembering Michael Joseph, stillborn 7/17/96
DaLana Barsanti, remembering Joshua and Jeromy, stillborn 11/21/96



The Blessing of Thorns

Sandra felt as low as the heels of her shoes as she pushed against a November gust and the florist shop door. Her life had been easy, like a spring breeze. Then in the fourth month of her second pregnancy, a minor automobile accident stole her ease.

During this Thanksgiving week she would have delivered a son. She grieved over her loss. As if that weren't enough, her husband's company threatened a transfer. Then her sister, whose annual holiday visit she coveted, called saying she could not come. What's worse, Sandra's friend infuriated her by suggesting her grief was a God-given path to maturity that would allow her to empathize with others who suffer. "She has no idea what I'm feeling," thought Sandra with a shudder.

"Thanksgiving? Thankful for what?" she wondered aloud. For a careless driver whose truck was hardly scratched when he rear ended her? For an airbag that saved her life but took that of her child?

"Good afternoon, can I help you?" The shop clerk's approach startled her. "I...I need an arrangement," stammered Sandra.

"For Thanksgiving? Do you want beautiful but ordinary, or would you like to challenge the day with a customer favorite I call the Thanksgiving Special?" asked the shop clerk. "I'm convinced that flowers tell stories," she continued. "Are you looking for something that conveys 'gratitude' this Thanksgiving?"

"Not exactly!" Sandra blurted out. "In the last five months, everything that could go wrong has gone wrong." Sandra regretted her outburst, and was surprised when the shop clerk said, "I have the perfect arrangement for you."

Then the door's small bell rang, and the shop clerk said, "Hi, Barbara...let me get your order." She politely excused herself and walked toward a small workroom, then quickly reappeared, carrying an arrangement of greenery, bows, and long stemmed thorny roses. Except the ends of the rose stems were neatly snipped. There were no flowers. "Want this in a box?" asked the clerk.

Sandra watched for the customer's response. Was this a joke? Who would want rose stems with no flowers!?! She waited for laughter, but neither woman laughed.

"Yes, please," Barbara replied with an appreciative smile. "You'd think after three years of getting the special, I wouldn't be so moved by its significance, but I can feel it right here, all over again." she said as she gently tapped her chest.

"Uhh," stammered Sandra, "that lady just left with, uhh... she just left with no flowers!"

"Right... I cut off the flowers. That's the Special...I call it the Thanksgiving Thorns Bouquet."

"Oh, come on, you can't tell me someone is willing to pay for that?" exclaimed Sandra.

"Barbara came into the shop three years ago feeling very much like you feel today," explained the clerk. "She thought she had very little to be thankful for. She had lost her father to cancer, the family business was failing, her son was into drugs, and she was facing major surgery."

"That same year I had lost my husband," continued the clerk, "and for the first time in my life, I had to spend the holidays alone. I had no children, no husband, no family nearby, and too great a debt to allow any travel."

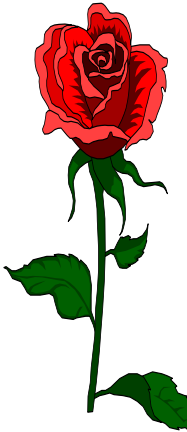
"So what did you do?" asked Sandra. "I learned to be thankful for thorns," answered the clerk quietly. "I've always thanked God for good things in life and never thought to ask Him why those good things happened to me, but when bad stuff hit, did I ever ask! It took time for me to learn that dark times are important. I always enjoyed the 'flowers' of life, but it took thorns to show me the beauty of God's comfort. You know, the Bible says that God comforts us when we're afflicted, and from His consolation we learn to comfort others." Sandra sucked in her breath as she thought about the very thing her friend had tried to tell her. "I guess the truth is I don't want comfort. I've lost a baby and I'm angry with God."

Just then someone else walked in the shop. "Hey, Phil!" shouted the clerk to the balding, rotund man. "My wife sent me in to get our usual Thanksgiving arrangement...twelve thorny, long stemmed stems!" laughed Phil as the clerk handed him a tissue-wrapped arrangement from the refrigerator. "Those are for your wife?" asked Sandra incredulously. "Do you mind me asking why she wants something that looks like that?"

"No...I'm glad you asked," Phil replied. "Four years ago my wife and I nearly divorced. After forty years, we were in a real mess, but with the Lord's grace and guidance, we slogged through problem after problem. He rescued our marriage. Jenny here (the clerk) told me she kept a vase of rose stems to remind her of what she learned from "thorny" times, and that was good enough for me. I took home some of those stems. My wife and I decided to label each one for a specific "problem" and give thanks to Him for what that problem taught us."

Continued on page 13

In Loving Memory



Sierra Nevada Belle Gregory
August 31, 2000
Parents, Keith and Francesca
Gregory
Given by Elizabeth Nelson

Carson Mitchell Shaw
Stillborn April 1, 1999
Cause unknown
Given by parents,
Randy and Aimee Shaw
and big brother Blake

Gift of Love by
The William Cromwell Family

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. Please refer to
the back page of this
newsletter for more
information regarding
where to send your
donations and what
information to include.
Thank you so much!

Michael Joseph Böer
Stillborn July 17, 1996
Trisomy 18
Given by parents,
Paul and Lynne Böer
and siblings Paul, Jr., and Maggie

Blake Leland Allen
April 21, 1999
Preterm labor/incompetent cervix
Lauren Grace Allen
Stillborn February 13, 2000
Unknown cause
Given by parents,
Jan & Sean Allen and
Lauren's twin, Zachary

Kyle Charles Walton
November 19, 1998
Group B Strep and lack of proper nourishment
Parents, Kristen and Jason Walton
Sisters, Jessica and Laura
Given by Mayday Pest Control

Mercedes Ruth Spigener
Stillborn September 21, 1995
Intramembranous Insertion
of Umbilical Cord
Twin Blossoms Spigener
Miscarried July and August, 1996
Parents, Jana and Grant Spigener
and little brothers Wyatt and Ford
Given by Spigener Enterprises, Inc.

Baby Franklin
Miscarried September 7, 1995
Danielle Alyse Franklin
Stillborn July 22, 1999
Premature
Given by parents,
Deborah and Deryl Franklin
and little sister Adrienne

Madison Angela Moore
Stillborn May 3, 2000
Turner's Syndrome and Fetal Hydrops
Given by parents,
Andy and Jennifer Moore

Noel Alexis Saake
Miscarried December, 1994
Given by parents,
Rick and Jennifer Saake
and little brother Joshua Allen

Sarah Anne Holland
September 14 - October 16, 1998
Ebstein's Anomaly
Parents, John and Nancy Holland
Given by J. Holland Corporation

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord accident
Parents, Rebekah and Byron Mitchell, Sr.
Given by grandparents,
Dennis and Sue Brewer

Charles William Bunnett
Stillborn August 7, 1998
Possible heart failure
Parents, Andrea and Brad Bunnett
Given by A'Dina Smith
and Nicole Johnston

Sydney Lynne Brown
May 18, 2000
Cord problem and other unknown
conditions
Parents, Marilyn and Brian Brown
Given by friends, Chad and Sara Seely

Sarah Ann King
Stillborn June 22, 1995
Unknown cause
Parents, Lori and David King
Siblings, Brooks, Kaylee, and Brady
Given by David H. King Insurance Agency

Timothy "Schuyler" Morren II
September 28- December 23, 1997
SIDS
Given by parents,
Pam and Tim Morren
and little sister Ashton

Rianne Ellisa Scrivner
March 4 - 7, 1997
Severe Hydrocephaly more consistent with
Anencephaly
Given by parents,
Bill and Rae Scrivner
and little sister Chanie

Blake Leland Allen
April 21, 1999
Preterm labor/incompetent Cervix
Lauren Grace Allen
Stillborn February 13, 2000
Unknown cause
Parents, Jan and Sean Allen
and Lauren's twin, Zachary
Given by Terrel and Pamela De La Porte

Chandler Allred
Stillborn March 4, 1999
Fetal Acrania
Parents, Mark and Amy Allred
and little brother Christopher
Given by grandparents,
Bill and Doris Yancey

Pregnancy Loss/Grief Materials

Birth and Life

141 Commercial St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
(503) 371-4445

Centering Corporation

PO Box 4600
Omaha, NE 68104
(402) 553-1200

Wintergreen Press

3630 Eileen St.
Maple Plain, MN 55359
(612) 476-1303
www.Wintergreenpress.com

Perinatal Loss

2116 N.E. 18th Ave.
Portland, OR 97212
(503) 284-7426

ICEA Bookmarks

P.O. Box 20048
Minneapolis, MN 55420
800-624-4934



The Blessing of Thorns

continued from page 11

As Phil paid the clerk, he said to Sandra, "I highly recommend the Special!"

"I don't know if I can be thankful for the thorns in my life," Sandra said to the clerk. "It's all too... fresh."

"Well," the clerk replied carefully, "my experience has shown me that thorns make roses more precious. We treasure God's providential care more during trouble than at any other time. Remember, it was a crown of thorns that Jesus wore so we might know His love. Don't resent the thorns."

Tears rolled down Sandra's cheeks. For the first time since the accident, she loosened her grip on resentment. "I'll take those twelve long-stemmed thorns, please," she managed to choke out.

"I hoped you would," said the clerk gently. "I'll have them ready in a minute."

"Thank you. What do I owe you?" asked Sandra.

"Nothing," said the clerk. "Nothing but a promise to allow God to heal your heart. The first year's arrangement is always on me." The clerk smiled and handed a card to Sandra. I'll attach this card to your arrangement, but maybe you'd like to read it first."

It read: "Dear God, I have never thanked you for my thorns. I have thanked you a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my thorns. Teach me the glory of the cross I bear; teach me the value of my thorns. Show me that I have climbed closer to you along the path of pain. Show me that, through my tears, the colors of your rainbow look much more brilliant."

Reprinted as circulated via e-mail

Music Resources

The following music has been helpful to others during their time of grief.

Angel Unaware

Words and music by
Shari Buie and Tamara Miller
HeartSong 96
P.O. Box 450204
Garland, TX 75045-0204



Home Free

Words and music by Wayne Watson
Watson's *Home Free* CD can be found at most Christian bookstores.

Together We Can Heal

A beautiful collection of music for bereaved families. Call or write:
Source Music
P.O. Box 1543
Colorado Springs, CO 80901
719-442-0152/ 800-338-4312 (orders)
<http://www.sourcemusic.com>
<http://www.sourcemusic.com/heal>
(This URL takes you directly to the recording.)

Thought You'd Be Here

Words and music by Wes King
From his CD *A Room Full of Stories*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

I'll Meet You in the Morning

By Karen Ritchey
<http://www.members.cnx.net/kritchey/>
e-mail: kritchey@cnx.net

With Hope

By Steven Curtis Chapman
From his CD *Diving In*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

Goodbye for Now

Words by Kathy Troccoli, music by Scott Brasher and Kathy Troccoli
From Troccoli's CD *Corner of Eden*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

Glory Baby

Written by Nathan and Christy Nockels
Found on Watermark's *All Things New* CD, can be purchased at Christian bookstores



M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly meetings, this newsletter, and our web site.

For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the newsletter, contact us at

M.E.N.D.

P.O. Box 1007
Coppell, TX 75019
(972) 459-2396

1-888-695-M.E.N.D.

Fax (972) 459-2396

E-Mail: Rebekah@mend.org

Sharlene@mend.org

Donations make the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible.

Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to:

M.E.N.D.

P.O. Box 1007
Coppell, TX 75019.

If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

Visit our web site at:
<http://www.mend.org>

Board of Directors

Founder/President

Rebekah Mitchell

Vice President

Lynne Böer

Secretary

Byron Mitchell, D.D.S.

Medical Advisor

Gonzalor Venegas, M.D.

Directors

Lori King

Jana Spigener

Pam Morren

Officers

Denise Gradel

DaLana Barsanti

Rae Scrivner

Editor

Sharlene Libby

Co-Editors

Rebekah Mitchell

Byron Mitchell, D.D.S.

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

P.O. Box 1007, Coppell, TX 75019

USA

(972) 459-2396 or Toll Free 1-888-695-M.E.N.D. (1-888-695-6363)

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Coppell, TX 75019

Permit No. 139