



M. E. N. D.

Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Military Families and Loss

My main inspiration for starting M.E.N.D. in 1996 was the realization that there were desperate and lonely women grieving all by themselves following the loss of their babies. Several months after losing Jonathan, I joined an infant loss listserv on the Internet and was disturbingly surprised by the lack of support and compassion so many women were getting from those around them. Thankfully, my family and close friends lavished love and comfort upon my husband, Byron, and me, yet I still felt completely isolated and silently begged to talk to someone with whom I could relate. I decided that if I had such a deep sense of loneliness despite the care I was receiving, there had to be countless women all over the country who were emotionally dying in their sorrow.

It wasn't until well after M.E.N.D. began that I discovered it was not just women here in the United States who were lying on couches in dark rooms grieving by themselves. It never occurred to me that we have women and/or their husbands who serve in our military and are based overseas without a soul to comfort them. Thankfully their late night Internet searches (when most people "find" us) oftentimes lead them to M.E.N.D., and we are able to mail them our free bi-monthly newsletters, giving them a small ounce of help and hope.

Soon after this discovery, I met our former newsletter editor, Sharlene Libby (see her article on page 16). Her husband Wim was stationed at an Air Force base three hours away from where our support groups met when they lost their baby, Joseph. Desperate to attend a support group, Sharlene twice made the six-hour round trip to the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex by herself so she could share for 1 ½ hours with other grieving families. Not long after we got to know the Libbys, they were transferred to California, then two years later to Kansas, then to Virginia, then down to New Mexico, and will soon be heading back to the East Coast. This constant moving of military families opened my eyes to the unsettlement so many of them must endure, especially when working through grief. However, this ritual of uprooting so often also gives military families the chance to meet

other families they would in all likelihood never meet otherwise, thus giving them a ministry opportunity. I think when we as parents go through something as heartbreaking and tragic as losing a baby, after we get through the grieving process, we begin to notice the hurts of others and have an intense desire to reach out to them. Such has been the case for the Libbys. I know the Lord has used Sharlene immensely to be there for fellow grieving young families she has been privileged to meet on their journeys.

Denise Gradel-Wozniak served on the M.E.N.D. board of directors for many years. When I met Denise, six years had passed since the stillbirth of her baby, Aaron, and she had one living daughter, Ashley who at the time was nine years old. Even as a little girl, Ashley, was always a big help at our Walk and Christmas ceremonies each year. All of us M.E.N.D. "oldies" have such sweet memories of this child with curly, red hair whom we all still dearly love. Now Ashley is grown and married to a young man, Jeremy, who not long ago joined the Army. Five months into her second pregnancy (they suffered an early miscarriage a little over a year ago) they were ordered to move to a military base where they knew no one. With unpacked boxes still covering their apartment floor, Ashley began to notice she hadn't felt little Isabella moving in a while. She went to the clinic on the base and was told her sweet baby girl had died. Labor was induced, and Ashley spent three agonizing days in the military hospital waiting to give birth to her tiny daughter. Denise traveled to be with Ashley as soon as possible and immediately began giving "strong suggestions" to the seemingly untrained staff on how to care for a family when a loss has occurred. At one point Denise met the stoic army obstetrician in the hallway and reminded him that her small, but fully-developed grandbaby was not "tissue," and that the baby had a name: Isabella. This tough military doctor straightened his posture and said, "You're absolutely right. Thanks for the reminder."

Continued on page 2...

Nota Español

El artículo de Rebekah Mitchell aparece en cada emisión de nuestro boletín para la audiencia latina. Para ver el artículo de este mes en español, por favor vea la página número 15.

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

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Donations make the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. 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).

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*M.E.N.D. is a member of
First Candle/SIDS Alliance
International Stillbirth Alliance*



Continued from page 1...

From that point on, the attitude of that doctor, as well as Ashley's nurses, changed and much more compassion and support was given to this young couple. Hopefully that particular military staff will always remember Ashley and little Isabella, and will treat future parents suffering a loss with more love and gentleness. (See Ashley's story on page 12).

If you are a military family, I first want to thank you for your service to our country. Secondly, I want to let you know you are not alone. If you are currently stationed away from those who love you the most and feel completely isolated as you mourn the loss of your baby, chances are there are a handful or more families just like you who think they are alone, too. Maybe you could talk to a base chaplain and see if he or she knows of another family who has experienced a loss. Or try the local hospital chaplains; they may have information on families they can pass on to you. If you're not comfortable with that approach, we at M.E.N.D. will do all we can for you, even if you are overseas. We can give you the email addresses of other military families and/or civilian families who may live near you or have lost a baby the same time or way as you. Don't be afraid to reach out and seek the support others can give you. It's very likely there are a handful of families just like the Libbys who can love on you or a newly bereaved couple like Ashley and Jeremy who need the support you could offer them.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell*

mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell

Reader's Corner

I had M.E.N.D. on my mind today. You know, we all meet a lot of people who have lost babies after our loss, but there is just something about M.E.N.D. members that make you feel like they REALLY understand. As the years go by, it does get easier and we find coping strategies and peace, but some years come around that seem unusually hard. This is one of those, I guess.

Today my little Blake would be 11. I can't believe it. He has been on my heart all week, but today especially. Don't know where this is coming from or why. I just miss him so much today and still recall every vivid detail of that day in the hospital. I can replay it all over again.

Rebekah, I can't thank you enough for starting M.E.N.D. and helping me through that time 11 years ago when I couldn't even talk without crying. You provided a place where, in a way, he lived on and people recognized that baby as a real part of our families. No matter if you have ten kids afterwards, there is something special about that first little baby you hold in your arms. I just wanted to share that. My Blake shares this birthday with a special friend of mine and every year she gives me a yellow rose, and at dinner tonight he sat along with us.

Well, just felt like sharing that with you guys, I guess to make sure I am still sane and not falling off the deep end again.

♥ *Jan Allen,*

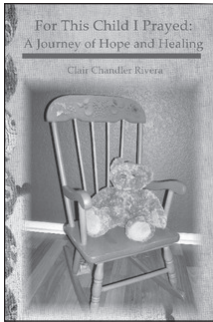
Mommy to Blake,

*April 21, 1999 due to incompetent cervix
South Carolina*

Book Reviews

For This Child I Prayed:

A Journey of Hope and Healing
By Clair Chandler Rivera
www.Lulu.com



For This Child I Prayed: A Journey of Hope and Healing tells the personal journey of Clair Chandler Rivera's life and the spiritual and emotional healing she has personally received from the Lord. Written like a novel, Rivera begins the book with the story of her birth mother making the brave choice of giving her up for adoption to the family she lived with while carrying Clair. The book continues with a significant loss Clair suffered as a little girl, then takes the reader into her college years and as a married woman. Rivera and her first husband suffered two miscarriages, which was the ultimate demise of her marriage.

Now remarried to her best friend, Victor, Clair joyfully shares how her years of suffering have been completely turned around. The book is mixed with Rivera's personal story and passages from the Bible that relate to what she was going through. Rivera also includes multiple uplifting and encouraging scriptures.

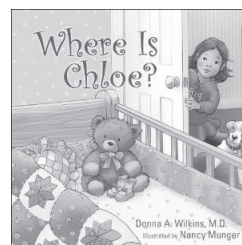
For Children

Where is Chloe?

By Donna A. Wilkins, M.D.

Where is Chloe? Is an absolutely beautifully written and illustrated book for children who have lost an infant sibling. This small, colorful book answers many questions children ask pertaining to the death of their baby brother or sister, including questions about heaven. This is the perfect book to read to children confused by the death of a baby brother or sister.

The book can be found at Amazon.com or by contacting Dr. Wilkins at newborns@aol.com.



♥ *Reviews by Rebekah Mitchell,*
M.E.N.D.—President

M.E.N.D. has a complete list of books, Web sites, organizations, and music resources available online at www.mend.org.

If you would like to submit a review of books, music, Web sites or other resources dealing with infant loss, please email them to our newsletter editor Heather Fann at heather@mend.org.

September/October Topic

New Situations—

When your life changes and how to include your babies

Deadline: July 31, 2010

November/December Topic

Holidays

Deadline: September 30, 2010

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 page two of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our Web site 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.

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Letters to the Editor should be sent to heather@mend.org. All letters submitted to the editor are subject to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests that it not be published.

Visit our Web site at:
www.mend.org



Birthday Tributes

Happy 10th Birthday, Chrissie!

Dear Chrissie,
10 years of loving you ~ 10 years of missing you.
Happy birthday, sweetie!
Love,
Mom, Dad, John Morgan, William, and Michael

Chrissie Steen
Miscarried May 3, 2000
Ectopic Pregnancy
Parents: Lynn and Mary Steen
Brothers: John Morgan, William, and Michael



Happy 1st Birthday, Mackenzie!

It's hard to believe you're one year old already! It's unbelievable how time can fly by and also seem to stand still. I think of you all day every day, and my love for you continues to grow. I get through each day by clinging to the promise that I will be reunited with you in heaven. I hope you know how much I look forward to holding you again. Thank you for sending me all the ladybugs! Each time I see one I feel you close. Lots of other people think of you when they see ladybugs, too. Look after Skyler for me until I can be there with you both. I love you with all my heart, sweet girl! We're so lucky to have you in our lives!

Love,
Mommy and Daddy

Mackenzie Noelle Frederickson
June 17, 2009
Stillborn at 41 weeks
Unknown cause
Parents: Mike and Ashley Frederickson
Also remembering Skyler Frederickson
January 2, 2010 - Ectopic Pregnancy



Happy 7th Birthday, Abby!

We love you and miss you.
Daddy, Mommy, Cami and Karli

Abigail Grace Crump
July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Parents: Gerald and Jaimie Crump
Siblings: Cameron and Karli



Happy 2nd Birthday, Henry!

Sweet Boy,
It has been two years since you went to heaven, and we still think of you every day.

Our short time with you has grown our relationship with God in ways we could not imagine. While we wish so much you were here with us, we are so thankful we know where you are. We know you are safe, happy, and whole, and we know we will see you again in heaven! You will always be Kate's big brother, and she will always be your little sister.

We Love You!
Mommy, Daddy, and Kate

Henry Ian Ilgenfritz
May 5, 2008
Cord accident
Parents: Jody and Rhonda Ilgenfritz
Little Sister: Kate Isabel
Also Remembering: Baby Ilgenfritz
Miscarried August 30, 2007



Happy 10th Birthday, Sydney! Happy 9th Birthday, Ashley !

"Until we meet again"
We love and miss you very much!
Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Samuel

Sydney Lynn Brown
May 18, 2000
Unknown causes
Ashley Mackenzie Brown
May 18, 2001
Premature at 24 weeks due to APLS
Parents: Marilyn and Brian Brown
Sibling: Brother Samuel



Happy 2nd Birthday, Gracey!

We love and miss you!
Love,
Daddy, Mommy, Brad, Emi and Breanne

Gracey James Adams
August 14, 2008
Hydrops
Parents: Chad and Carrie Adams
Siblings: Brad, Emi, and Breanne



Happy 1st Birthday, Esme

Our sweet Esme,

We are so grateful for you, our little angel. We miss you more than words can describe but take comfort in knowing that you are watching over our family.

We love you so much!
Mommy and Daddy

Esme Sage DePardo
June 15, 2009
Cystic Hygroma
Parents: Brian and Christy DePardo
Siblings: Holden and Grayson



Happy 2nd Birthday, Baby!

Sweet baby, what an honor and privilege it was to have you here with us, even for just a short time! We are so happy to be your parents and can't wait to see you and your brother and other siblings one day. Until then, know we love you and not a day goes by that you are not missed. You are a precious treasure and we are so thankful for you.

We love you!
Mommy, Daddy and C.J.

Baby Stephens I
June 30, 2008
Tubal Pregnancy
Parents: Rob and Melissa Stephens
Big Brother: C.J.
Also Remembering:
David Atkins, October 23, 2003
Baby Stephens II, January, 2009
Baby Stephens III, February 15, 2010



Happy 1st Birthday, Ethan!

I miss you more than you will ever know! There is never a moment that you are not the center of my world. Have a beautiful first birthday with God, all the other angel babies, and your grandfathers. I will be thinking of you and longing for you, like I always am. I love you, my son!

All our love,
Mommy and Daddy

Ethan Edward Suarez
August 11th, 2009 at 32 weeks
Preeclampsia/Placental Infarction
Parents: Christine and Anthony Suarez



Happy 4th Birthday, Micah!

We can hardly believe you would be turning four years old this year! We wonder what kind of birthday party you are having in heaven—we can only imagine!

Hugs and kisses!
Love,
Mom, Dad, Ainsley and Aubrey

P.S. Watch for your birthday balloons from us!

Micah Joel Fibiger
August 29-30, 2006
Trisomy 18
Parents: Brian and Mary Fibiger
Sisters: Ainsley and Aubrey



Happy 6th Birthday, August!

We can't believe that you've already been gone for six years. You were such an unexpected surprise to us after losing your big brother Caleb. We pray that you two are celebrating in style with Jesus. Madison is learning about you both and talks about her brother and sister in heaven.

We love you!
Mommy, Daddy and Maddie

Baby August
Miscarried August 13, 2004
Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann
Little sister: Madison Grace
Also remembering Caleb Scott Fann
December 1, 2003
PROM



Happy 1st and 2nd Birthdays, Little Ones!

You walked into and out of our lives so quickly. We only knew you for six and ten weeks, but we love you and miss you with all our hearts. We are thankful for the lessons about faith, trust and peace God has taught us through your lives.

All our love,
Daddy, Mommy, and big sister Emily

Baby Gold 1
Miscarried August 12, 2008
Baby Gold 2
Miscarried July 14, 2009
Parents: Greg and Kathryn Gold
Big sister: Emily Kathryn



NEW SUBMISSION PROCESS: In an effort to streamline our newsletter processes, M.E.N.D. will launch a new way to submit your birthday tributes. Beginning with our September-October issue, members are asked to go to the M.E.N.D. website and complete a new birthday tribute form. This will ensure that all the necessary information required for each tribute is included upon submission. If you have any questions, please contact newsletter editor Heather Fann at heather@mend.org.

Continued from page 5...

Happy 3rd Birthday, Baby Boy!

We miss you, big boy!
We know you are taking good care of your baby brothers!

Aaron Daniel Cespedes

August 24-25, 2007

ARPKD-Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease

Parents: David and Ophelia Cespedes

Big brother to:

Isaac Daniel Cespedes

Miscarried January 29, 2008

Evan Daniel Cespedes

February 27 – 28, 2009

ARPKD



Happy 5th Birthday, Ryland!

Wishing you a happy fifth birthday in heaven!
You are missed, loved and remembered every day.

Until we see you again...

We love you,

Mommy, Daddy, Sissy and Conor

Ryland Michael Dixon

Stillborn August 12, 2005

Infection

Parents: Bryan and Kelly Dixon

Big Sister: Leighanne

Little Brother: Conor Ryland



Happy 4th Birthday, My Sweet Boy!

We still miss you dearly and feel your absence every day.
We know that you would have been an awesome big brother
to your sister, but now Jesus has you in His arms, and we have
you in our hearts always.

Happy birthday, Theo!

Love, hugs, and kisses from

Mommy, Daddy, Ysabel, Grandpa, Grandpa,
Grand-mère, Grand-père, and the rest of your loving family

Theo Fleurima Shannon

Stillborn August 10, 2006

Stroke

Parents: Ted and Geraldine Shannon

Siblings: Little Sister Ysabel



Happy 4th Birthday, John Robert!

It is hard to believe that it has been four years since we held
you in our arms as the angels took you to heaven. We think
about you every day and wonder what you would have been
like. Caroline and Ross are wonderful, smart, loving and
funny, and we know that you would have been that way, too.

Caroline talks about you all the time and is always trying to
think of ways to go to heaven and bring you back to us. She is
convinced that a hot air balloon would work. She even asked
if there was anyone else we wanted her to bring back with her.

Ross loves playing with his trains, or “toot tains,” as he calls
them. He also loves to ride his Buzz Lightyear bike and dance
to Disney music. We are going to make sure that he knows all
about his big brother in heaven.

We are going to send you balloons on your birthday like we
do every year, so look for them. Please keep watch over us,
especially your big sister and little brother. We miss you, and
remember: you’ll be in our hearts, always.

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, Caroline (Beanie) and Ross (Scootie)

John Robert Konkle

August 11, 2006

PPROM and Extreme Prematurity

Parents: J. and Shannon Konkle

Siblings: Caroline and Ross



Happy 4th Birthday, Alivia!

“Livi”—four years old—Daddy and I can’t believe it has
been that long. Time flies when God heals. It doesn’t seem
like it happened yesterday, because our yesterdays are so dif-
ferent from that time. The hurt is still there but so much easier
to bear, because we know your “little life” is a legacy that
touches so many, and it allows God to receive all the glory.

Every Sunday, just about, we go to your resting place. We
all look to the sky and smile because we know where your
final resting place is: with the one True King Jesus. Who bet-
ter to raise our shining star than a King?

Jaxs is now two years old, and if he is only a taste of what
you are like in heaven we feel extremely blessed. We love you
and miss you bunches. Four kisses of love to you; sorry
Walker’s is so wet!

Happy Birthday, Baby Girl,

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, Jaxson and Walker “The Dog”

Alivia Elizabeth Walker

July 24, 2006

Incompetent cervix

Parents: Robert and Liz Walker

Little brother: Jaxson



Happy 2nd Birthday, Haven Kris!

Happy birthday, Baby Angel! We love you so much. We hope you are having a wonderful time with Jesus. Isn't He so wonderful? He wanted you up in heaven with Him, and we don't understand why, but His will is not ours. Have fun with Grandpa and your two cousins. We think about you all the time. I can still see your tiny little hands and feet when I close my eyes. So perfectly formed, in the image of God. You are so perfect. You are so beautiful. Your twin sister, Liliana, has smiled and even giggled in her sleep since she was just born. I like to think you are playing together in a paradise only you two little ones know. Mommy misses you, Baby Angel. Mommy loves you, and Liliana and I will see you in heaven someday. I cannot wait to see you, oh my beautiful baby. You are in our hearts, forever and always.

Love,
Mommy, Twin Sissy Liliana (Lily),
Grandma, and your aunts, uncles, and cousins

P.S. Mommy loves you SO much; you are SO loved; you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Haven Kris Schmidt
May 9, 2008
Fetal demise
Mommy: Saree Schmidt
Twin Sister: Liliana



Happy 9th Birthday, Addie!

Happy 9th birthday in heaven, Addie Grace. Jesus has used your life to help others, and for that, we are thankful!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Colin and Meg

Addie Grace Metzger
Stillborn August 1, 2001
Undiagnosed Vasa Previa
Parents: Philip and Stephanie Metzger
Siblings: Colin and Meg



Happy 13th Birthday, Erika!

Con Mucho Amor,
Mom, Dad, Nataly and Nik

Erika Brianne
July 9 - Aug 3, 1997
Anoxic Brain Injury due to Ruptured Uterus
Parents: Ray and Yvette Grau
Siblings: Nataly and Nik



No Roots...

The hardest decision I ever had to make wasn't whether or not to keep my son, LJ, on life support; it was where to bury him. As a military family we often don't have roots. We live in a new place every three years. My husband and I live in Hawaii, and we were faced with the choice of burying LJ here or somewhere close to family.

We decided to bury him in North Carolina so that we knew we would always make it back to see him. If we had buried him in Hawaii, once we left we didn't know if we would ever make it back. We had him buried in the veterans cemetery back in our hometown, because we knew that even if we couldn't make it to see him, at least our family could. It broke my heart having to make the flight back to North Carolina, knowing that it would be the last time my family would be complete until who knew when.

My heart broke when we went to the cemetery and were told that most of the children buried there were never visited again because their parents had moved away. That was one of the main reasons why we chose to bring LJ to North Carolina. We always wanted to come back.

Being a military family is an extraordinary life, but it can have its downsides. I was lucky enough to have my husband home when our son was born 16 weeks early, but I have friends who weren't so lucky. I couldn't imagine having to go through that alone, but I realize that it is something I might have to endure one day. Most of us don't have family in our new hometowns, so we are left to cope by ourselves and deal with the gossip that some military units have.

After our son passed away I made it my mission to try to help other military families going through the same thing. I speak twice a year to a group of OB-GYN nurses about the hardships that we go through and things they can do to make the first few days less hectic. It is my hope that no one ever has to choose to let their child go twice—once at birth and once when and where they're buried—but if they do, I hope that it will only be for brief time.

♥ *Christy Lynch,*
mommy to Baby Lynch, miscarried 2005,
and Jeffrey Scott, November 3-6, 2008,
severe prematurity due to pre-eclampsia,
HELLP Syndrom and renal failure
Hawaii

In Loving Memory



Colten Benjamin Ballmer

May 28, 2000
Umbilical cord stenosis
Parents: Jamieson and Reagan Ballmer
Little brother: Logan
Given by grandparents
Kathleen and Gilbert Menough

Ty Colton John Barnhart

Stillborn April 11, 2008
Anencephaly
Given by parents Les and Michelle Barnhart
and siblings Clint, Kyle, Katie, and Megan

Matthew Ryan and Mason Michael Bass

April 10, 2008
Prematurity
Given by parents Chad and Leah Bass
and little brother Miles Patrick

Jordan Alexander Booker

Stillborn January 11, 2007
True knot in cord
Parents: Norma Jordan and Mark Booker
Given by mommy Norma Jordan

Abigail Marie Buddin

April 13 - June 17, 2006
SIDS
Parents: Nathan and Cara Buddin
Siblings: Alexander and Anthony
Given by Assassination City Roller Derby

Riley and Parker Davis

November 14, 2006
Prematurity
Given by parents Robert and Cheryl Davis
and little sister Annalise

Catarina Alyandria DeLeo

January 23, 2001
Given by Madeline Gatlin

Abigail Grace Crump

Stillborn July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Gifts given by parents
Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli
Grandparents
Russ and Rosemary Massey
Great-grandparents
Tom and Tom Spencer
Uncle Ryan and aunt Amy Massey
Great-uncles and aunts
Ricky and Wendy Crump
Robin and David Smith
Dr. Dennis and Nancy Vaughn
Glenda and Marvin Jeane
Dr. and Mrs. Jon Rawson
Marti McConnell Boone
David and Stephanie Carroll
Adam and Jamie Savona
Wamhoff Development, LL
Advantage Baseball/Craig Soudelier
International Proposals/
Mike and Trisha Faherty
Mark and Bonnie Hanley
Chuck and Lori Adam
George and Nancy Reed
Stacy and Laura Hunter
Ben and Elizabeth Pickrel
Brian and Carolyn Benandi

Kyler Paul English

Stillborn January 20, 2006
Cord accident
Parents: Bob English and Laurie McPike
Gift given by Jon and Laurie McPike
and brothers Kinser, Kelson, and Kayden
Gift given Anonymously

Caleb Scott Fann

December 1, 2003
PROM

Baby August

Miscarried August 13, 2004
Given by parents Jonathan and Heather Fann
and little sister Madison Grace

Mackenzie Noelle Frederickson

Stillborn June 17, 2009
Unknown cause
Baby "Skyler" Frederickson
Miscarried January 2, 2010
Ectopic
Given by parents
Mike and Ashley Frederickson

Amanda Morgan Galleger

Stillborn January 7, 1997
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Steve and Diane Galleger
and little siblings Sydney and Jack

Baby Gold 1

Miscarried August 12, 2008

Baby Gold 2

Miscarried July 14, 2009
Parents: Greg and Kathryn Gold
Big sister: Emily Kathryn
Gifts given by grandma Nellie Gold

Baby Goodwin I

Miscarried December 2001

Baby Goodwin II

Miscarried October 2003
Gifts given by parents
Todd and Lisa Goodwin
and siblings Truman and Jackson
Grandparents
Roger and Sharon Dickson /
AMPCO Marketing, LLC

Addison Caroline Halbrook

May 10 - 15, 2007
Complications related to Group A Strep
Given by parents
Shawn and Jennifer Halbrook
and siblings Cade, Ashlyn, and Hannah

James "Jack" Henvey

July 4, 2001
Tetralogy of fallot

Baby Henvey

Miscarried October, 2003
Parents: Renee and Chris Henvey
Siblings: Evan and Luke
Given by grandmother Glenda McLeskey

Baby Henderson I

Miscarried August 2007

Baby Henderson II

Miscarried March 2008
Given by parents Collin and Leah Henderson
and siblings Victoria, Kelly, and Rylie

Henry Ian Ilgenfritz

May 5, 2008
Cord accident
Gifts given by
Parents Jody and Rhonda Ilgenfritz
Brian and Dusti Moran
Joe and Heather Clark

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 page 2 of this newsletter for more information regarding where to send your donations and what information to include.

Thank you so much!

Emma Krymkiewicz

May 5, 2009
Neonatal Hemochromatosis

Baby Girl Krymkiewicz

Miscarried June 13, 2008
Given by parents
Ana Ayon and Hernan Krymkiewicz

Sophia Elise Lewis

March 25, 2009
Trisomy 69
Given by parents Eric and Janie Lewis

Scarlett Lovejoy

November 24, 2006
Unknown cause
Given by parents Jeff and Emily Lovejoy
and little brother Benjamin

Andrew Michael Mallette

March 21, 2008
CMV
Gifts given by parents
Michael and Nicole Mallette
Grandparents
Todd and Kathy Rutherford

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord accident

Baby Mitchell

Miscarried December 2001
Gifts given by parents
Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
and big brother Byron, Jr.
Grandparents Dennis and Sue Brewer

Braelyn Grace Pinto

October 13, 2009
True knot in cord
Parents: Eric Wright and Kelly Pinto
Gifts given by Mommy Kelly Pinto
Grandparents Gerald and Margaret Pinto
Great-grandparents Tim and Ellen Pinto
Great-aunts and uncle Bridget, Molly,
Patty, Shannon, Kitty, and Tim

Elizabeth Mai Nettles Schockmel

Stillborn May 13, 2002
Intrahepatic Cholestasis
Parents: Nate Schockmel and Karen Nettles
Siblings: Alexandra, Benton, and Catherine
Given by grandparents
David and Connie Stone

Jordan Marie Sims

Stillborn November 10, 2006
Unknown cause
Given by parents Troy and D'Anna Sims
and siblings Jacob and Julia

Rylan Elisabeth Slate

October 17 – 20, 2008
Unknown cause
Given by parents Daniel and Kristah Slate
and siblings Camden, Everett, and Anna

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997
Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome and
Polyhydramnios
Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith
and little siblings Travis and Julia

David Atkins Stephens

October 23, 2003
MTHFR mutation

Baby Stephens I

June 30, 2008
Ectopic pregnancy

Baby Stephens II

January 2009
MTHFR mutation

Baby Stephens III

February 15, 2010
Ectopic pregnancy
Given by parents Rob and Melissa Stephens
and brother C.J.

Matthew Stewart

May 13, 2009
Unknown cause
Given by parents Mark and Connie Stewart
and siblings Renee' and Mark

Aidan Vander Cruyssen

October 2—December 3, 2005
Kidney disease
Given by Mommy Shane Meyer
and little sister Cameron

Alivia Elizabeth Grace Walker

Stillborn July 24, 2006
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Robert and Liz Walker
and little brother Jaxson

Johnston Walker

September 10 - 18, 2007
SIDS
Given by parents
LaMonica and Kevin Walker
and big brother Kingsley Carlyle

Baby Wheeler

Miscarried March 2009
Michael Noah Wheeler
Stillborn January 27, 2010
Unknown cause
Given by parents

Larissa and Jim Wheeler, Jr.

Elaine Kelly Wilson

Stillborn February 28, 2000
Unknown cause
Gifts given by parents
Bryan and Brandy Wilson
and siblings Emma, Evelyn, Eli,
Zeke and Everette
Grandparents
Roger and Sharon Dickson /
AMPCO Marketing, LLC
Josh and Jill Betz

Shauna Elisabeth Winebrenner

April 12, 2003
Trisomy 18
Gifts given by parents
Sarah and Tim Winebrenner
and siblings Saul and Ella
Grandparents Wayne and Susan Hanks
Phillip and Tiffany Way
Daniel and Nicole Saunders
Uncle and aunt
James and Jessica Winebrenner

Gift of Support

West Conroe Baptist Church
Conroe, Texas

Gift of Support

Metropolitan Baptist Church, Houston, TX

Gift of Support

Pure Joy International Retreat Ministry

Legacy Giving

Losing a child has changed each of our lives forever. We appreciate all financial support of the services our organization gives to bereaved parents—no matter the size of the contribution. However, some of you may have the capacity and desire to give a lifelong gift to M.E.N.D.

If you're interested in creating a legacy gift or endowment in honor of your baby, M.E.N.D. would be happy to assist you in gathering the necessary information to remember our organization in your will or trust. Please contact Rebekah Mitchell at rebekah@mend.org for more information about legacy giving.



M.E.N.D.

*Chapter Corner*Chapter Meeting Information**M.E.N.D.—Kansas**

Meets the 2nd Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
at Cora Miller Hall/Newman
Division of Nursing, Room 107
1127 Chestnut, Emporia, KS 66801
Director: Stephanie Metzger
stephanie@mend.org., (620) 343-6357

M.E.N.D.—Houston

Meets the 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
HEALTHSOUTH Houston
Rehabilitation Institute
17506 Red Oak Drive, Houston, TX 77090
Director: Jaimie Crump
jaimie@mend.org, (281) 374-8528

Subsequent pregnancy group meets bi-monthly on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m., led by Sarah Winebrenner (swinebrenner2004@yahoo.com).

Daddy's group meets quarterly on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m., led by Tim Winebrenner (swinebrenner2004@yahoo.com).

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana

Meets 3rd Thursday 7:00 p.m.
CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehab Hospital
2400 St. Michael Drive
Texarkana, TX 75503
Director: Monica Davis
monica@mend.org, (903) 490-1210

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Canyon Crossing
1651 E Old North Rd.
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063
Director: Michele Wilson
michele@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
Project H.O.P.E.
1419 S. Enterprise
Springfield, Missouri 65804
Director: Heather Fann
heather@mend.org, (417) 818-0489

M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates**Kansas**

M.E.N.D.—Kansas continues to minister to families grieving the loss of their babies in and around Emporia.

Stephanie Metzger

Houston

Our 5th annual poker tournament was a wonderful success. Many people donated their time and finances and have blessed our chapter beyond measure! I want to thank the following people for volunteering at the event; I am so grateful to you all: Tim and Sarah Winebrenner, Bryan and Brandy Wilson, Gerald Crump, Leah and Chad Bass, Shane Meyer, Nicole Mallette, Emily Lovejoy, Rhonda Ilgenfritz, Kayla Scott and Connie Stewart.

Jaimie Crump

Texarkana

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana continues to minister to hurting families in our area. We are looking forward to reaching more families and are looking forward to our second annual rummage sale in the fall. For more information or if you would like to help with the sale, please contact Monica Davis at monica@mend.org or 903-490-1210.

Monica Davis

Hill Country

Sadly, M.E.N.D.—Hill Country is closing our chapter. I have prayed faithfully for this chapter to grow, and I feel God is not saying “No,” but maybe, “Not now.” I will continue supporting families who are grieving in my community. My hope is for people who are hurting to reach out for support and comfort from others who have experienced the death of a baby. Thank you to all of those who have supported me during the life of my chapter.

Larissa Hallford

Tulsa

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa has been establishing an advisory board of volunteers. Thank you to volunteers wanting to be a part of this ministry. Our new advisory board includes: Angi Jackson, Katie Goodson, Erica Huff, Marcie Nienhuis, and Julie Dulin. There is room for more, so if you are interested in being a part of this, please email me at michele@mend.org. Also, special thanks to LDF Companies for hosting a fundraiser at a local Wendy's on June 18.

Michele Wilson

SW Missouri

M.E.N.D.—Southwest Missouri has had some recent success reaching out to bereaved parents through another hospital system in our city. We've also had a couple of unique ministering opportunities for families who have not yet attended a meeting. We recently completed our first fundraiser through Tupperware. Thank you to all the volunteers who got the word out and raised more than \$200! Congratulations to Heather Bass for raising the most money for our chapter through this fundraiser!

Heather Fann

Bryan/College Station

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station is up and running with the things God has led us to. I was recently featured on KBTX morning news show to talk about M.E.N.D. and our new chapter. I will be on the afternoon show in June. God has really opened doors for us! I want to give a BIG thank you to Mrs. Caren Stephens of Montgomery for doing all of our printing for packets and resource guides for our local hospitals. She has been a major blessing to our chapter!

Jennie Drude

Amarillo

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo held our first meeting in May, and what a great way to start out! We had 13 total for that night! Can't wait to see what is ahead. For more information, contact me at (806)570-4344 or email becky@mend.org.

Becky Anderson

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Hawthorn Suites
1010 University Drive East
College Station, Texas 77840
Director: Jennie Drude
jennie@mend.org, (979) 220-7851

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
First United Bank of the Colonies
(Lonestar Room)
One First United Bank Parkway
45th and Sony
Amarillo, Texas
Director: Becky Anderson
becky@mend.org, (806) 570-4344

M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings
are held the 2nd Thursday of
every month
from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Daddies group
meets the 2nd Thursday of
March, June, Sept. and Dec.,
from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

*A time for dads to meet together and
discuss topics relevant to them as fa-
thers. Our moms and dads meet together
for introductions before dividing into two
groups for discussion.*

Food and Fellowship
*A time to relax and meet with other
M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting*
Contact Brittney Fish:
brittney@mend.org

Subsequent pregnancy group
meets the 4th Tuesday
from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Led by Liz Walker:
liz@mend.org

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

Playgroup
*For families with children born prior to
or subsequent to a loss.
Meeting at various locations.*

Contact Paula Schear or Brandee Dill for
more info: pkschear@yahoo.com
or dillsforchrist@yahoo.com

**Mommies AND daddies are both
welcome at all M.E.N.D. meetings.**

**All main chapter support group
meetings are held at:
NEW LOCATION JANUARY 2010
Wells Fargo Bank
800 W. Airport Freeway
Irving, TX 75062**
(Located in the Crystals Pizza parking
lot, between MacArthur and O'Connor)
Meetings will be in the bank board room,
located on the first floor.
For more information,
call (972) 506-9000.

Infertility group
Meets the upon request only.
Led by Paula Schear:
pkschear@yahoo.com
*For families experiencing
infertility after a loss.*

Soldiering On

Adapted from Ashley Bailey's personal journal:

It all started on Wednesday December 16, 2009. I was watching the movers carry our stuff into our house all day. The day before I had been in Dallas watching them pack up, and I was in my car reading and trying to keep warm. My baby, Isabella, was moving more than she ever had before. I was so excited that I would be feeling her more, since feeling her move put me more at peace; I had been so paranoid this whole pregnancy. Then the next day, the movers left. I started unpacking and got tired so I stopped; my grandparents left, then my husband, Jeremy, and I had dinner. That's when the nagging feeling started, because I hadn't felt Isabella move at all since the morning, but I told myself that it was because I had been so active during the day, that she was relaxed and maybe sleeping. So I told myself that enough to get to sleep, only to wake up at 5:00 a.m. having an anxiety attack since I still hadn't felt her.

I got online to see if it was normal. I knew I was only 21 weeks and maybe there wasn't a pattern yet. Many web sites said it was normal to have quieter days, but I still couldn't shake the bad feeling. I almost woke Jeremy up to take me to see the doctor, but I calmed down and remembered that I had an appointment later in the day. It takes forever to get in, so I decided to just wait for my appointment.

I was still stressed because it was my first scheduled appointment on base and they had to do paperwork. I went in early because I had to get my records, and Jeremy ended up getting off early from work and met me there. By then I was already in a room asking questions. I expressed my concerns, then the nurse said I needed labs, but she was going to check the heartbeat first.

We went in the room and she tried with one machine, then another, got another nurse, then a doctor, and then got another doctor who tried the heartbeat thing again. By then I was shaking. Then she did a sonogram, shaking her head the whole time and brought yet another doctor in. Finally, they both told me. Everything became a blur. They asked if we wanted a chaplain, and asked my daughter's name, then asked what we wanted to do. Did we want to go home or have them admit me? I said admit me and started asking what they were going to do. The chaplain came and prayed, and I said we wanted a funeral.

The doctor came in again and told me they were all full in labor and delivery, and that they would call me in the morning. Then it began—we had to call everyone. I told Jeremy I didn't want to answer the phone anymore. We went to get food, and I cried sporadically throughout the night, but I was also numb. We watched a movie in an attempt to distract, but that didn't help either.

The next day we had to go to Jeremy's work and talk to his command. We met with one sergeant, then his new squad leader, Sergeant Burdon, then the commander of the whole brigade and the first sergeant. We had to tell complete strangers what happened, what would happen and ask for help. We also saw a counselor that day.

We ate out, then we went home and the pain started. I called labor and delivery, and they took me into triage. They ran tests while I had to lie and listen to another woman's monitor with a heartbeat. Then a doctor came and gave me an ultrasound to tell me again that Isabella had died. They decided to take me that day and explained that they were inducing labor, how they would accomplish that, and pain management. They explained that it might take two days. It took three, and I was in for four days. The first day they started medication to induce and pain meds, and not much happened physically. The next they upped the meds and still not much happened, but I consented to the epidural early so I could get it when I needed it.

Continued on page 17...

Houston Sponsors

M.E.N.D.—Houston would like to thank the following sponsors of our 4th Annual Texas Hold'em Tournament:

- Oncken Insurance Agency, P.C./ Robert Oncken
- Francesca's Collections
- Longwood Golf Club
- Pappadeaux
- Locatelli's
- Perry's
- The Woodlands Country Club
- Canongate at The Woodlands
- Lady Luck Hair Salon
- Cypress Sweet Spot/
Lori Adam and Patty Davis
- Gumbeaux Designs / Donna Acosta
- The Houston Aeros
- The Egg and I
- Valley Ranch
- The Bake Shoppe & Café
- A Touch of Calm / Nicole Snyder
- Santa Fe Flats
- Plants For All Seasons
- The Salon / Chrissy Kaufman
- Valley Ranch
- El Palenque
- Los Cucos Mexican Café
- Microsoft / Kendall Acosta
- Hawaiian Retreat
- Chick Fil A, Jones Rd @ Hwy 249
- Perfect Pet Cuts
- DeParis Nails
- Arts of Glaze
- Wamhoff Developments, LLC / Greg and Adrienne Wamhoff
- Jamie Savona / CABI
- AMPCO / Roger Dickson



Subsequent Births

Chad Bass and Leah Robilotto-Bass,
of The Woodlands, Texas,
joyfully announce the adoption of
Miles Patrick Bass,
on April 19, 2010.

Miles Patrick was born
October 29, 2009.

The Bass family lovingly remembers
Mason Michael and Matthew Ryan,
April 10, 2008,
due to prematurity at 22 weeks.

Mitch and Christina Milbrandt,
of Kingwood, Texas,
along with big brother Travis,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Elizabeth Hope,
born April 20, 2010,
measuring 8 lb.

and 19 ½ inches long.
The Milbrandt family
lovingly remembers
Cana Lynn,
October 8-9, 2009,
Trisomy 18.

Robbie and Celise Ketch,
of Carrollton, Texas,
joyfully welcome through adoption
Brody Scott,
born April 1, 2010,
measuring 7 lb., 14 oz.,
and 19 inches long.

The Ketch family lovingly remembers
Ella Grace,
December 15-16, 2008,
severe preeclampsia /prematurity.

Paul and Missy Schuchman,
of Arlington, Texas,
along with big sister Kylee Faith,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Vivian Hope,
born April 20, 2010,
measuring 4 lb., 15 oz.,
and 18 inches long.
The Schuchman family
lovingly remembers
Landon Blaine,
stillborn February 12, 2009
cord accident.

Thomas and Andi Bonura,
of Cypress, Texas,
along with big brother Joey,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Sadie Lee Bonura,
born April 12, 2010, at 33 weeks,
measuring 5 lb., 12 oz.

The Bonura family lovingly remembers
Baby Bonura,
miscarried May 2008,
and Eli (Joey's twin),
February 4—June 22, 2009,
severe infection and kidney failure.

Joel and Calli Stanley,
of Colleyville, Texas,
along with siblings Colton and Danika,
joyfully announce the adoption of
Sara Jene
on May 28, 2010.
Sara Jene was born
April 23, 2003.

The Stanley family lovingly remembers
Savannah Kate,
January 3, 2004,
incompetent cervix,
and Baby Stanley,
November 10, 2004,
partial molar pregnancy.

Joshua and Mary-Susan Danker-Dake,
of Tulsa, Oklahoma,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Sophia Esther,
born April 26, 2010,
measuring 8 lb., 12 oz.,
and 20 ¼ inches long.
The Danker-Dake family
lovingly remembers
Baby Danker-Dake I,
miscarried November 1, 2007,
and Baby Danker-Dake II,
miscarried December 8, 2008.

Nick and Erika Huff,
of Sand Springs, Oklahoma,
along with big brother Rafeal,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Blythe Huff,
born March 15, 2010,
measuring 3 lb., 6 oz.,
and 16 inches long.

The Huff family lovingly remembers
Isaac Huff,
August 27, 2005, pre-term labor,
Baby Huff I,
miscarried April 2006
Baby Huff II,
miscarried January 2007,
Baby Huff III,
miscarried November 2007,
Baby Huff IV,
miscarried September 2008,
and Baby Huff V,
miscarried December 2008.

Looking Ahead

October 2

- Walk To Remember
in Irving, TX

October 2

- M.E.N.D.—Houston
Walk To Remember

October 16

- M.E.N.D.—Tulsa
Walk To Remember

December 4

- M.E.N.D.—Houston
Christmas Ceremony

December 7

- Christmas Ceremony
in Irving, TX

December 9

- M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri
Christmas Ceremony

A Letter of Peace

Dear Husband,

Today's the day
I plan to pray,
And remove my thoughts
Of day to day,
To single out that moment when
We give reflection
Of the hours spent
With the purest gift
Two souls were sent.
The beginning journey
Of parenthood,
A perfect bond He only knew.
Our first born son who grew
To be the boy we both knew,
A boy of grace and fortitude.

God dispersed the gifts to be
For in this life grew the family tree,
And with it life for all to see.
Have peace in knowing then
That He has plans that we can trust
And receive.

Love,
Naomi

Griffin Caleb

Stillborn June 6, 2001

Parents:

Matthew and Naomi McIntosh

Siblings: Mya and Aidan

Commands Undone

When you are in the military you learn many commands that help you get through your day-to-day activities. Robert and I both were in the United States Army. It's where we met. We both had some of the same mentalities when it came to certain things. Two things stuck: "Suck it up and drive on" and "Attention!" These two commands were given to make you tough and give you guts to make it through anything that came your way.

When Alivia came, I was completely out of the military, and Robert was a reservist with the 3rd Battalion, 381st Regiment, 120th Infantry. The standard response was given to our family: "We are so sorry for your loss, and if you need anything please let us know." It was not that they did not care, but there are standards you must uphold and never waiver. While there were a few soldiers who are close friends of ours who did more, the unit as a whole could do nothing else. That type of thing would normally hurt from a normal friend, but it did not from them because we understood.

People who have not suffered a loss think when a tragedy happens life tells you "Attention! Suck it up and drive on. You can do this. You put on your big boots and walk on." Although this was part of our mentality, we could not do it. The pain was real, and it hurt. Life certainly had our attention, because it was not turning out the way we had planned. We had tried to be strong, but we couldn't...we needed each other and God.

The "standard response" is all you will receive when you try to walk through this type of tragedy without each other and God. He is the only one who can put you back together again. His Word is so true in Jeremiah 29:11. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (New International Version).

We are thankful for Robert's unit and know if there was more they could have done, it would have been done. The freedom we have today to express or not express our emotions is because of the United States military. We salute and shout out a big "Hooah!!!!"

♥ *Liz Walker*

mommy to Alivia Elizabeth Grace, July 24, 2006

M.E.N.D.—Dallas

Bryan/College Station Sponsors

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station would like to thank the following sponsors who contributed to the starting of this chapter:

- Barbara Branson
- Envirolink—David and Donna Heath
- Logosagogo—Kim Naumann
- Jeanette Huelsebusch
- Lisa Alexander
- David and Arlene Schneider
- Lari Jo and Randy Bernstein
- Dennis and Karen Stephens
- Daphne and Craig Muirhead
- Roy and Dana Hartstein
- Keith and Christy Kuhn
- Drs. David and Anna Damian
- Shelton and Terri Miles
- Larry and Betty Walling
- Dr Johnny Peet
- Jlynn and Terry Burks
- Gary and Pattie Sims
- Martha Tackett

Amarillo Sponsors

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo would like to thank the following sponsors who contributed to the starting of this chapter:

- Jim and Lana Willimon
- Jeff and Deb White
- Doug and Kristin Nelson
- Mike and Donna White



Familias Militares y la Pérdida

Mi principal inspiración de crear M.E.N.D. en 1996 fue la realización de que existían muchas mujeres desesperadas y solitarias lamentándose por la pérdida de su bebe. Muchos meses atrás después de perder a Jonathan, me registre en una lista por internet sobre pérdidas infantiles y fue bastante preocupante y sorpresivo a la vez por la falta de apoyo y compasión que varias mujeres reciben, por parte de las personas que las rodean.

Con gratitud mi familia y mis amigos cercanos nos dieron a Byron y a mi abundante amor y compasión, pero sin embargo me sentía todavía completamente aislada y rogaba silenciosamente poder hablar con alguien con quien podía tener algún vínculo. Decidí que si yo tenía este sentimiento profundo de soledad, a pesar de la atención que estaba recibiendo, existían innumerables mujeres en todo el país que también morían emocionalmente en su propia tristeza.

No fue hasta mucho después de que inicie M.E.N.D. que descubrí que no eran sólo mujeres aquí en los Estados Unidos que yacían en sofás en una habitación oscura, lamentándose en sí mismas. Nunca se me ocurrió que tenemos mujeres y / o sus esposos que sirven en nuestra milicia y probablemente están ubicados en el exterior sin un alma que los pueda confortar. Afortunadamente las búsquedas a media noche vía Internet (cuando la mayoría de gente nos “encuentra”) llegan a M.E.N.D. con frecuencia y les enviamos nuestros boletines gratuitos bimensualmente, dándoles así una pequeña onza de ayuda y esperanza.

Poco después, conocí a Sharlene Libby, ex editor de nuestro boletín (véa su artículo en la página 16), y a su esposo Wim quien fue ubicado en una base aérea a tres horas de donde nuestro grupo de apoyo se juntaba, cuando perdieron a su bebé, Joseph. Desesperada por asistir a un grupo de apoyo, Sharlene hizo el viaje dos veces de seis horas, ida y vuelta, a la metrópolis de Dallas/Fort Worth sola para poder compartir por una hora y media con otras familias angustiadas. Sin embargo, no mucho después de conocer los Libbys, fueron transferidos a California, y después de dos años fueron transferidos a Kansas, luego a Virginia, luego a Nuevo México y pronto irán hacia la costa del este. Este desplazamiento y movimiento constante de familias militares abrió mis ojos al desacuerdo por lo que muchos de ellos deben soportar, especialmente durante el tiempo que atraviesan de profundo dolor. Sin embargo, este ritual desarraigador también les ofrece a las familias militares la oportunidad de conocer a otras familias que con toda probabilidad nunca los hubieran conocido, dándoles un ministerio de oportunidad. Creo que cuando nosotros como padres vivimos algo tan doloroso y trágico como perder a un bebé, luego de que pasamos por el proceso de tristeza y sufrimiento, empezamos a notar el dolor de otros y tenemos un de-

seo intenso de ayudar, apoyar y poder sacarlos de ese dolor. Tal ha sido el caso de los Libbys. Yo se que el señor a utilizado a Sharlene inmensamente en estar allí para compañeros y familias jóvenes que sufren, y que ella ha tenido el privilegio de conocer en sus viajes.

Denise Gradel-Wozniak, sirvió en la Administración del Consejo de M.E.N.D., durante muchos años. Cuando conocí a Denise, habían pasado seis años desde la muerte de su bebé, Aaron, y tenía una hija viva, Ashley, quien en ese tiempo tenía 9 años. Aunque era una niña pequeña, Ashley siempre fue una gran ayuda todos los años durante las ceremonias de recuerdo y ceremonias de Navidad. Todos nosotros los ‘antiguos’ de M.E.N.D. tenemos dulces recuerdos de esta niña de pelo rojizo rizado y a quien le tenemos mucho amor hasta el día de hoy. Ahora Ashley ha crecido y se casó con un hombre joven, Jeremy, quien no hace mucho tiempo ingreso al ejército. A los cinco meses de su segundo embarazo (sufrieron un aborto involuntario hace poco más de un año) se les ordenó moverse a una base militar donde no conocían a nadie. Con cajas todavía empacadas cubriendo el piso de su apartamento, Ashley comenzó a notar que no había sentido el movimiento de Isabella en un tiempo. Ella fue a la clínica en la base y fue informada que su dulce niña había muerto. Se le indujo el parto y Ashley pasó tres días agonizantes en el hospital militar esperando dar a luz a su hija pequeña. Denise llegó lo más pronto posible e inmediatamente comenzó a “dar sugerencias firmes” al personal del departamento que no parecía propiamente entrenado sobre cómo tratar a una familia cuando le ha ocurrido una pérdida. En un punto Denise conoció al estoico obstetra del ejército en el pasillo y le recordó que su pequeña, pero totalmente-desarrollada nieta no era “tejido,” como él se refería a ella, y que la bebé tenía un nombre: Isabella. Este médico militar compuso su postura y dijo, “Tiene toda la razón. Gracias por recordármelo.” Desde ese punto, la actitud de ese médico, así como de las enfermeras de Ashley, cambiaron y empezaron a demostrar más compasión y apoyo a esta joven pareja. Ojalá que este personal militar en particular siempre recuerden a Ashley y a Isabella y tratarán a los futuros padres que sufren una pérdida con más amor y gentileza. (Vea Historia de Ashley en la página 12).

Continued on page 17...

Grief Mobilized

It seems fitting to me that a newsletter about military couples and their grief is going to print now, as my husband Wim prepares to leave the military after 20 years of service. I spent 18 of those years by my husband's side as the wife of an Air Force pilot. About halfway through that time, we both gained the honor of having a child born to heaven.

Grieving the loss of a baby is never easy, and I don't think it's necessarily more difficult for military families than it is for the civilian population. We live in a mobile society, and lots of grieving parents have to deal with the extremely difficult decisions that come when trying to balance the pain of loss with moving, being away from extended family, burial decisions, and helping living children deal with change and grief at the same time. These situations are not unique to military families. However, there are certain challenges that bereaved military parents face that many other grieving parents don't have to consider, including lengthy separations due to deployment.

Much of my time as an Air Force wife has been spent with the threat of deployment lingering in the back of my mind. Thankfully, Wim has not had to go to combat, though there were a few close calls, plus a year-long remote to Korea before Joseph was stillborn. A remote assignment like that is routine, even expected, for a lot of pilots. Even without deployments that last a year, some military jobs require service members to be away from home for three to six months at a time. In the military, a business trip can last a very long time.

When couples don't have the opportunity to grieve together, grief sometimes takes longer than it would otherwise. Military members who are deployed or TDY often push their grief aside to deal with the stresses that come with the demands of being in a war zone. Meanwhile, the parent left at home must deal with life's daily demands while constantly worrying about his or her spouse's safety. Both parents are usually separated from extended family and are often not near their baby's burial place. All of these factors add up to extremely difficult times for military families.

However, it's when we experience God's "grace under pressure" that marriages and personal relationships with the Lord are strengthened. Military or not, God's love can see us through the darkest of times.

My friends Mary and Scotty lived out this truth when their son Christian was stillborn. At the time, we were all neighbors living at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, for a one-year assignment. Mary had confided in me that her pregnancy was in trouble; an exam had revealed that Christian had no kidneys. Mary found M.E.N.D. online and was amazed that the woman who edited the newsletter was her neighbor! When Mary's cord prolapsed one morning in June, I was able to be with her and later held Christian at the hospital. It was a tremendous gift to be the one who took a family photo, with Mary and Scotty surrounded by their living children as they held their sweet, still son in their arms.

About two weeks later, Scotty was on his way to a deployment, and Mary was working on getting settled with her three living children in a new home. She spent a couple of months with extended family, then she settled into a house on the Army post in Kentucky where Scotty would be stationed after his deployment. She moved into a new place where she knew no one, and no one there knew about Christian. Meanwhile, Scotty spent that time in a war zone. Mary and Scotty spent their entire first year after Christian's birth thousands of miles apart. When it was over and they were reunited, they had to begin the process of grieving together, since they had spent so much time grieving apart. However, they both relied on God's strength to see them through, and they survived with a strong marriage and a deeper relationship with the Lord. Both are living testimonies of God's strength, His peace, and His comfort beyond our comprehension.

The military has offered my family a lot of opportunities and experiences I hadn't counted on. One of those has been the blessing of meeting other grieving military families and hearing about their babies who wait for us all in Heaven. Through these meetings I have seen God's love lived out and shared in such beautiful ways among His people. I used to be disheartened that I couldn't start a M.E.N.D. chapter due to our transient lifestyle, but God saw fit to show me ministry opportunities all over the country instead. That's what He always does if we just trust Him: He puts us exactly where we need to be, doing what He wants us to do. The result is healed hearts, the blessing of being a blessing, and glory to His name.

I admit that as we approach Wim's retirement, I look forward to staying in one house for more than three years. I look forward to putting down roots and taking part in a church fellowship without the anticipation of leaving it. However, I will always value the wealth of experiences and relationships brought to me through our time in the Air Force, and I thank God for the parents I've met along the way who affirmed His promise that we can indeed grieve with hope, no matter the circumstances.

♥ *Sharlene Libby,*
mommy to Joseph Charles, May 26, 1999
New Mexico

Continued from page 12...

It got intense at times. Once, my mom handed me the phone, and my aunt told me I had to get them to hurry or I would get infected and die. There were little dramas the whole time. I had some really understanding nurses, and some who I wanted to punch.

Labor was difficult. Each contraction made me scream. Jeremy's face broke my heart. The day is blurry in my mind, but that was clear. The contractions kept coming, and I kept asking to be checked, because I felt more stuff running out. Then I was really screaming, and they broke my water and I got some relief, but then it got more intense again.

Finally it was time, and surprisingly that was what hurt the least. I pushed and pushed, and I couldn't look right when she came out. Jeremy and I just cried on each other. They weighed her and dressed her and brought her to us. Holding her broke my heart in ways I can't explain. We took pictures—all we'll ever have of her. My mom went to get Gamma, and I asked, "Are you sure you can handle this? She doesn't look like we thought she would." We had the chaplain come again and pray with us and her. We all cried together, and then I let them take my baby away.

I was released the morning after she was born. We went home and my mom cooked for me and they worked on the house. The next day—the day before Christmas Eve—we looked at funeral homes, but we couldn't decide. I had some medical complications and ended up in the emergency room late that night. The nurse had lost a baby too and took pity on me, since I had been through hell. She used Lidocane with the IV and tried to give me comfort.

The medical staff said everything was okay. We all went home and slept all day, then Jeremy and I bought each other Christmas presents, and my mom drove us to San Antonio. We had Christmas. I looked and felt beaten up.

The next day we were back at home...alone. We tried to figure out what to do now. It was a weekend, so we had to wait until Monday to finalize the details anyway. We saw the counselor again and decided to plan the funeral for New Years Eve. We got it all together and called everyone. The service was beautiful. I haven't seen her grave yet. We told them to engrave "Mommy and Daddy's Little Angel" on the tombstone. Now we have to live.

♥ Ashley Bailey,
mommy to Isabella
Ft. Hood, Killeen, Texas

Continued from page 15...

Si usted es una familia militar, en primer lugar quiero decirles gracias por su servicio a nuestro país. Y en segundo lugar quiero que sepan que no están solos. Si usted en este momento está destacado lejos de quienes los aman más y se sienten completamente aislados mientras lamentan la pérdida de su bebé, lo más probable es que hay un puñado o más, de familias como usted que piensan que están solos también. Tal vez podría hablar con un capellán de la base y ver si él o ella conoce a otra familia que ha sufrido una pérdida. O comuníquese con el capellán de los hospitales locales; pueden tener información sobre las familias y tal vez puedan compartir esta información con usted. Si no están cómodos de dar este paso, nosotros en M.E.N.D. haremos todo lo que podamos para ustedes, incluso si viven en el extranjero. Podemos darle las direcciones de correo electrónico de otras familias de militares, y / o familias civiles que pueden vivir cerca de usted o han perdido a un bebé durante el mismo tiempo o forma como usted. No tengan miedo de buscar el apoyo que otros tal vez les pueden dar. Es muy probable que hay muchísimas familias, como la familia Libby quien les puede dar amor y entendimiento o a una pareja recién desconsolada como Ashley y Jeremy que necesitan todo el apoyo que se les pueda ofrecer.

♥ Rebekah Mitchell
mama de Jonathan Daniel y Bebé Mitchell

A Brother's Love

My baby brother,
A precious gift,
A loss so big,
His name is Samuel.
His soft hair,
His silky skin,
His red luscious lips,
He's beautiful.
When holding him,
I cried a lot.
Emotion
Sadness
And with such grief.
My lovely brother,
Can't wait to see,
Again someday,
For eternity.

I love you, Samuel!

Love,
Your big brother Louis

♥ Louis Hintz,
big brother to Samuel Hintz

You Were Meant to Live

Life is not as it should be
 Blessings still abound
 God is still God
 Endless mounds of sorrow
 Life's constant companion
 Reality has been altered
 Something sacred slipped away
 Two lifetimes suddenly gone
 Out of reach, just beyond grasp
 A grand canyon between our worlds
 Faces of a family forever altered
 In need of mending yet unable to see completion
 Landscape of life suddenly shifted

You were meant to live alongside us all
 To breathe in of earth and all that life was created to be
 It is not better that you died, you were meant to live
 It was not a matter of timing or for the best
 Heaven was not your intended destination yet
 Death is not God's heart cry for His creation
 Life is not as it should be
 You were meant to live

God cries with me
 He feels the grief as well
 He allows death yet desires life
 Such tearing in the fabric of life and family
 Such cutting grief - down to the marrow
 Such parting was never meant to be
 Such grieving not part of His Plan
 Life cut short not from need for you there
 Gone not to punish
 The piercing of life in a fallen world
 Life is not as it should be
 You were meant to live

I hear the echoes of your voices calling my name
 I imagine the weight of you in my arms
 I almost know the softness of your hair beneath my touch
 I dream of kissing your plump cheeks and the feel of your skin
 I can envision the twinkle in your eyes
 Almost hear the sound of your giggles
 I imagine the delight as you discover new things
 I almost taste the salt of your tears
 I dream of rocking you
 Every song I sing is for you too
 Every book I read for you as well
 Every prayer carrying kisses and hugs
 Every tender word uttered, all the love expressed
 For all my children, in my arms or only in my heart
 I stand in awe that I was chosen to carry you
 Grateful for every moment
 Every sensation, every movement
 Every heartbeat heard
 I know you know my voice still
 Life is not as it should be
 You were meant to live

Two unique ones, fully human, eternal souls
 Cute fingers, pudgy toes
 There will be no replacement with the next one
 No coming back in another rounded belly
 You graced my womb
 You now grace the beauty of Heaven
 You are real, waiting for us
 You are being held and loved
 These are my best comforts
 Life is not as it should be
 You were meant to live

Who were you meant to be?
 How would you have taken up space in this life?
 What would have brought you love, laughter, and tears?
 Your first step, your first word
 You vanished, we grasp at shadows
 How our lives have altered beyond perceiving
 Our hearts broken with no lasting present repair
 Forever changed
 Nothing is the same as it was
 Colors look different now
 Fragility and significance of life painfully known
 Wounds too deep for words
 Aches a mommy and daddy were never meant to feel
 A child is a child no matter how long they are with us
 Grief is still grief, the shape of it changing with time
 The healing of all wounds doesn't happen with time
 Time is not the healer or enemy
 Time is simply time
 Life is not what it should be
 You were meant to live

Being your mommy has brought a new me
 A better person for the affliction
 New world of awareness
 New level of expansion
 Eyes wide open
 Nothing taken for granted
 Better only by God's power thru loss
 His comforting Hand, saving grace
 What buried me, what almost took my life as well
 God used to create a different me, a different family
 Even so, Life is not what it should ultimately be
 You were meant to live

I imagine our reunion
 Envision our eternal lives unfolding together
 I trust in a God good enough to fill all empty places with wholeness
 Heaven holds new meanings now
 The promise of knowing you fully, no stage missed
 What was stolen now will be restored
 The promise of a God who redeems
 Who will bring new birth to all that was taken away
 Reunion of siblings lost to one another oh so long
 A mother's heart forever unbroken at last
 A father's arms overflowing with no child of his missing
 You were all meant to live
 Life will one day be what it should be

♥ *Hope Wood,*
mommy to Zoe and Addie
Tennessee

Walk to Remember T-Shirt Order Form

Deadline is August 31 (no exceptions).

Name:

Address:

City : State: Zip:

Phone: E-mail address:

Monogram: (ex. Celia Jones Remembering Jason Alexander)

Select Quantity Per Size: Adults: S M L XL XXL Kids: XS (2-4) S (6-8) M (10-12) L (14-16)

Check here if you will be picking up your t-shirt:

Check if you would like your t-shirt shipped to you:

Payment Info:

Make checks payable to M.E.N.D. Credit Card orders are now accepted:

Type of Card: _____ Name on Card:

Credit Card Number: Expiration:

Signature: _____

Prices below **INCLUDE** tax.

Monogrammed: # of shirts _____ x \$20.00 = _____

Non-Monogrammed: # of shirts _____ x \$15.00 = _____

Postage & Handling (\$5.00 per order **ONLY** for those orders being shipped) = _____

Total \$ _____

Orders for the Irving, Texas Walk: return to M.E.N.D. P.O. Box 1007, Coppell, TX 75019

Orders for the Houston, Texas Walk: return to M.E.N.D. 13121 Louetta Rd., #505, Cypress, TX 77429

Orders for the Tulsa, Oklahoma Walk: return to M.E.N.D. 10306 E 92nd PL N, Owasso, OK 74055

Walk To Remember Sponsorship Opportunities

Each October M.E.N.D. hosts a Walk To Remember, which is a ceremony that honors and commemorates our babies. This year M.E.N.D. will host three ceremonies: Irving, Texas (DFW Metroplex); Houston, Texas; and Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Irving Walk will be held Saturday, October 2, at 2 p.m., at Calvary Church. The Houston Walk will be held the same day, but begin at 3 p.m. at Metropolitan Baptist Church in Houston. The Tulsa Walk will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 16 at Evergreen Baptist Church in Bixby. Reservations are requested for each.

These events require months of planning, thousands of dollars, and are only made possible by generous donations/sponsors. If you would like to help M.E.N.D. in this way, here's how you can help:

1. A monetary donation. For gifts of \$25 or more, your name will be listed on the back of the program and in the November/December newsletter. Donations can be given by you individually, or if you own or work for a business, please consider donating as a corporation. Be sure to put "Walk Sponsorship" in the memo of the check, and to specify which of the three events you wish to support.
2. FOR DALLAS WALK ONLY. Raffle item(s). We have a raffle to offset our expenses. If you work for a company that would be willing to donate something, please consider asking. We request that ALL raffle items be valued at no less than \$25. Items usually include movie tickets, tickets to sports events, airline tickets, hotel gift certificates, restaurant gift certificates, electronics, etc.

To be included in the program, all monies and items must be received **no later than August 31**. For questions or to register for the Dallas Walk, contact Rebekah Mitchell at rebekah@mend.org. To register for the Houston Walk, contact Jaimie Crump at jaimie@mend.org. To register for the Tulsa Walk, contact Michele Wilson at michele@mend.org.

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
 P.O. Box 1007, Coppell, TX 75019
 USA
 (972) 506-9000
Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization
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 Coppell, TX 75019
 Permit No. 139

“... that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

M.E.N.D. Fundraisers *As a non-profit organization, M.E.N.D. is funded solely by private donations and fundraisers. Any assistance you can give us by participating in any or all of these fundraisers is greatly appreciated.*

- **Kroger grocery stores** donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers in Texas and Louisiana who have their Kroger Plus Card linked to M.E.N.D. To link your card, contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Kroger Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D.
- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.
- **Glenn Martin** is looking for M.E.N.D. families willing to grant space for small gumball machines in order to raise funds for M.E.N.D. If you have a retail business or connections to a high traffic location in the Grapevine, Southlake, or metroplex area, Glenn will place, stock, and service the equipment and give M.E.N.D. 35 percent of the proceeds. Glenn can be contacted at (817) 874-5366 or glmartin@attg.net.
- M.E.N.D. can now earn funds through **i.think inc.**, an online marketing research firm. You can help by signing up as a survey panel member and designating us as the recipient of your fee. Just go to the Web site at <http://www.ithink.inc.com> and choose “Sign up to become an i.think inc. panel member.” Fill out the sign-up survey. Under the “Funds for Charity“ section, select M.E.N.D. from the list of names.
- **Little Beads and Macaroni and Cheese**, owned by M.E.N.D. member Marilyn Brown, offers custom jewelry. Her keepsake angel bracelets are \$20 each, and ten percent of each angel bracelet sale will be donated to M.E.N.D. Marilyn can be reached at (817) 996-1920 or msbrown16@hotmail.com.
- **IBM** employees may now make charitable donations to M.E.N.D. through automatic payroll deductions. Choose Charity Code 0M562 from the *IBM Employee/Retiree Approved Charity List*.
- **GoodSearch.com** is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Powered by Yahoo!, it is used like any other search engine. To earn money for M.E.N.D. using Goodsearch.com, go to www.goodsearch.com and designate M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice.
- **Ebay** has a charitable giving program that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you sell items on Ebay and would like to designate a percentage of your revenue to M.E.N.D., visit www.missionfish.org to find out how.
- **Igive.com** will donate a penny a search and a portion of each purchase made through their website to M.E.N.D. Sign up today! M.E.N.D.’s cause number is 52025.