
LAMENTATIONS

Issue 90

M.I.D.D.L.E.

April, 2005

The schedule is completed for **J.I.M.**'s Conference, June 3-4, 2005, and is included in your letter!!

The Conference is free and open to any person who has lost a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, and/or sibling.

Fellow travelers, please tell your children that are older than 13 that we really want them to come to the conference for their own sibling workshops. They will also be included in the lighting of the candles.

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/2005Schedule.html>

If you miss this conference, you will miss the blessing of a lifetime and a great loss of not being able to celebrate your child's life with us. Since this is the last conference, I want to meet everyone I can.

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/joininginmemory.html>

We will start Friday (June 3) with a panel discussion: "How We Started, Where We Have Been and Where We are Going." The parents on the panel will represent loss from suicide, terminal illness, and sudden death. There will be a list of these parents on the website as soon as all are contacted. Keep checking "Additions Since Last Update" on the website for updated information.

We will then have our Candlelight Ceremony which will include the ceremonial lighting of the "Five Candles," Judy Rose singing "Day by Day" that she wrote for **J.I.M.**'s Conference last year, and Kathy Jo Gutsell will be playing the harp. Each parent, grandparent, sibling, etc. will be lighting a candle in our loved one's memory and saying their names for all to hear. It will be a night where our children will be honored. We would like to have our angels with us at the

Candlelight Service on Friday night. Please bring a picture that has your child's face about the size of a silver dollar. Do not bring an original picture, because I want to be able to cut it the size we need. You can have it copied at Wal-Mart, etc. I think you will really be pleased with this angel that you can take home.

We will start Saturday, June 4, with registration, breakfast, memory table, etc. We will have a group picture taken at 9:00 AM and Saturday's conference will start at 9:15 AM. The keynote speaker is Ann Kechter, whose son Matt, was killed at Columbine High School.

Workshops will begin at 10:30 AM and the workshops available will be posted on the website when they are finalized. There will be two sets of workshops.

At 11:45 AM we will have the dedication of Bill Rogers' magnificent **Window of Hope!** It is breath-taking!! For a sneak-peak, the website has a picture of the large angel in the center

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/windowofhope.html>

And Young Jim's window

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/windowofhopejimpicture.html>

Kathy Jo Gutsell will be playing the harp. Following that will be the dedication of our **Tree of Life** in memory of all of our children. If you are interested in purchasing a leaf for the tree, there is a form on the website (this is included in your letter or):

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/Treeoflifeorderform.html>

There are also a few places for bricks in our **J.I.M.**'s Common's Park. A picture of the Commons is on the website under "Dedications to our Children." The order form is included in your letter or:

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/2005brickorderform.html>

Pictures of our Patriot's Park that was dedicated September 11, 2004, has been added to the website (and included in your letter):

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/September112001WTC.html>

These bricks are available for parents, siblings, husbands and/or wives who lost a loved one September 11, 2001.

After lunch we will go to the Carloftis Garden behind our home where the Christmas Box Angel is waiting to welcome you into her arms. There we will have our Earth Ceremony and Balloon Lift-off. Don't forget your earth from that

special place. After it is all mixed together, you will receive a bag to take home with you.

Additional Workshops will be from 1:30-2:30 PM. Cindy Bullens will give a Workshop/Concert and talk about the loss of her daughter, Jessie, and perform some of her songs from “SBH&E.”

At 4:00 PM Rosemary’s documentary, “Space Between Breaths” will be shown. Those of you who came to the conference last year will be seeing yours and your child’s picture on the documentary. It is an amazing documentary of parents who have found a way to not only survive their child’s death, but have learned to enjoy life once again. It is of survivors who have found meaning after their great loss and are trying to change their small part of the world in their child’s memory. But most of all, it gives a message of hope, and that’s what we are all looking for. This documentary will change how people who have not lost a child will perceive those of us who have, and will be an aid in helping them to help the bereaved. There is no limit to where this documentary will go and who it will touch.

After the documentary, we will have a book signing with many authors. There will be a list of them later on the website. If you have written a book or recorded a CD, we would like to include it in our book store and book signing, please notify Rosemary Smith: Childrenofdome@cs.com

The registration form is also on the website:
<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/2005registrationform.html>

We want to again have a book table and encourage you to bring grief books, etc. that you have read and would like to pass on to others. This was a great hit several years ago, and I know it will be this year also.

Great news! If you want to read past newsletters, and I hope you will so you will know more of our children, they are now online:
<http://www.cumberlandcolleg.edu/lamentations/NEWSLETTERS.html>

Beverly Donan has written this letter to each of you:

Dear Fellow Travelers:

I need your help. I need your Heart's Notes.

I would like to compile a calendar/daily readings for bereaved parents to be used during those first few years, when we are looking for something to give us some hope that we are going to make it through life without our child or children.

I got the idea of "Joining Our Heart Notes" from a saying that was sent to me by a mother who had lost her son a few years before I lost John. On the days that the pain was so great I sometimes only seemed to have energy enough to refer to the short saying she had sent me and it seemed to get me through the day. I thought it would be good to have a whole year's worth of thoughts from other parents that share my loss (one for each day). So I came up with "Join Our Heart Notes" from the letters of my son's name.

The Heart Note can be something you have written, something someone sent you, something someone said to you, something you heard, a dream, something your child said to you, a prayer you repeated, whatever you feel like sharing that helped you get through the day.

Please send your child's name, birthday, and anniversary date. This will be a way to remember our children with our Heart Note.

I only ask that your Heart Note be brief since the spiral flip book will only be approximately 5" x 6".

Please share this letter with other Fellow Travelers so I can have enough for a full year.

Send your Heart Note to: Beverly Donan bbdonan@spis.net or mail them to her:

*Beverly Donan
6220 Island Ford Rd
Hanson, KY 42413*

*Mother of John David Donan
12-14-77 10-2-93
Symbol Hawk*

I welcome any suggestions or direction in compiling this book. I just have really felt a need for something like this for bereaved parents. So I will look forward to you sharing your Heart Notes. Please, fathers, send yours too.

Beverly needs these immediately so she will have time to include yours in the printing. It will take some time to put it all together and get it printed. I do

hope you will participate. My husband and I have already sent ours in. This is another way our children are being remembered.

Charlotte Martin will again bring her “Live Forever” plant that she so graciously gave the parents last year.

Eleanor Foss will be organizing a Mentoring Program so that we “old timers” can “adopt parents and siblings” who are coming to the conference for the first time. If you would like to be a part of this program, either as a “first” timer or an “old” timer, you can email Eleanor at MamaFoss@aol.com

These are the items you need to bring to the conference:

- A picture of your child for the Memory Table.
- A picture (that will not be returned) of your child’s face that is no larger than a silver dollar – this is for Friday Night’s Candlelight Service
- Earth from your special place
- Grief books or devotional books you would like to recycle

Dress casually. All food will be provided for the entire conference. There is no charge for the conference, but if you can give a love offering to help defray the cost of the conference, that would be greatly appreciated. Again, I ask that no children under the age of 13 attend. This is a time for all of us to be able to show our emotions and share time together. I can’t wait to see everyone! Be sure to wear your child’s symbol!

Was ever grief like mine? ~George Herbert

Perhaps initially this is what we all think - that we are alone in experiencing so intense and painful a grief. We may even be jealous of that grief - offended at the notion that anyone else could grieve as much as we do. And in a way we are right; our experience is like no one else's. Perhaps this holding on to our grief as though it were unique is a way of learning it, of turning it around and around until we somehow get used to the unthinkable.

Then, after a while, we may welcome the company of others. Most communities have grief support groups of one sort or another people with whom one can speak freely of how bad it is without fear of being thought excessive or indulgent. When you begin to describe a particularly sharp moment of unexpected pain, these friends will nod their heads - Yes, I know what you mean. They know the stumbling

blocks and pitfalls of the journey we are making, and they help by assuring us that things really do get better. In time we become such helpers ourselves.

My grief is mine, and I am a part of the human family.

Grief Grafts

Congratulations to Mike and Lynette Lawson and Grandparents, Bill and Brenda Rogers on their new addition to the family, Braden Alexander Lawson. He was born 3-30-05 and weights 7 lbs. 5 ozs. and is 21". He joins Bryanna and his angel sister Jessica.

Chad and Christy Fitzpatrick's daughter, Jordyn (3-30-98), died from Acute Myeloid Leukemia, 5-8-00.

We are doing this in memory of Jordyn and our team is called "Angel Jordyn's Baldrick's"! We hope that with each research dollar one day other parents will never have to hear those words, "Your child has cancer" or "there is nothing left to do medically." We know at the time we did everything we could for Jordyn. We are eternally grateful for the wonderful care Jordyn got, but until the day that children stop dying from cancer we can NOT stop working, educating, advocating for a cure and prevention. On April 9 I am organizing a St.Baldrick's Event in Junction City. What is a St.Baldrick's event? It's people who volunteer to shave their heads, they get people to sponsor them with a monetary gift. The money raised will go to Cure Search specifically for Childhood Cancer Research. Chad and Jacob are both shaving their heads. So far we have 4 other soldiers who are going to shave and Chad is going to be working hard on talking to other soldiers to shave their heads also. We have a dear friend from church who is also. We need more shavee's and we also need sponsorship! If you personally want to sponsor Chad, Jacob, or Debbie that would be wonderful. If you would pass on the website and information we would truly appreciate it! If you or someone you know would be willing to shave their head please, please have them contact me.

*_Click here to contact Christy My3gifts@aol.com
or call me: 785-784-2563*

This is the website for St. Baldricks:

http://www.stbaldricks.org/location_detail.asp?citycode=USKSJC

The symbol for Jordyn is the goose. When Jordyn relapsed we had hundreds of Canadian geese show up where we lived, in Ft. Belvoir, VA. The day she died they left. Jordyn loved the geese. They would come up to you to get fed dry/old bread. They are our "sign" from Jordyn. It seems like when she's on our hearts more than normal, or it's one of those special days, we hear or see geese.

*Thank you so much!!! God Bless
Christy
Mom to Angel Jordyn
3/30/98-5/8/00
dx aml leukemia 3/24/99
bmt 11/19/99
relapsed 2/1/00
Our Angel Jordyn*

Jordyn's symbol is a goose.

Bill and Gwen Kallies's son, Jim (5-8-74), was murdered, 4-6-99.

When I sent Christy's email to Gwen, I received this email:

I enjoy sewing. When I have time I am sewing hats for the children at St. Children's Hospital, in Denver, Colorado. I make them for the Oncology Hat Tree. I won't be helping make heads bald, but will be making the coverings for the bald heads of the poor children that have cancer, and no hair due to their treatments. Our lady's group is new this year, and called the AAA Lady's volunteer group. The kids are overjoyed to see us bring new hats for the tree.

What a wonderful thing to do in memory of Jim (AKA Diamond Jim).

Jim's symbol is a round cut diamond.

**Mary Kate Gach's daughter, Stephanie (9-25-71), was murdered,
10-9-92.**

COPING AS A SINGLE PARENT
By Mary Kate Gach, Birmingham, Alabama

Stephanie Alexis Gach was 21 years old when she was abducted and murdered by a serial killer in 1992.

*I live in the same city as the Reverend John Claypool, who lost his daughter and wrote about it in a classic entitled, *Tracks of a Fellow Struggler*. He told me once that I am the "most alone" person he has ever met. He was referring to the fact that I was divorced when Stephanie died, as I still am, and completely out of communication with her father, as I still am, plus the fact that I have no siblings or other children. Up until last year, when I lost both of them, I had my parents-my father in his nineties and my mother in her eighties-who were frail and not able to do much more than be there. Now that I have lost both of them, I realize that "being there", along with prayer, is about all anyone, spouse, friend, stranger or relative, can really do. It is a simple and basic thing, and yet having a loving person truly "be there" is the most and the best and a very necessary lifeline for the bereaved one. Shortly after losing my parents I retired from my teaching job. I am only now sitting back and looking at all my losses since Stephanie. It seems now that I have nothing left to lose, only freedom--as the song goes. This is not exactly true, however, as we know. In the face of unbelievable tragedies and losses, we still want to hear the bird's song and to smell the fresh breeze. One of God's gifts to us is our will to survive.*

How have I survived alone? I am not able to answer with certainty, but I suspect that I have done it in the same ways that other bereaved parents have managed it. We do what we have to do, and we all know that is neither simple nor easy. As far as being a single bereaved parent, the down side is obvious. There is no one in the middle of the night to offer soothing words or comforting touches, to silently hold me during those dreadful shuttering moments when I feel I will suffocate from hopelessness and pain of remembering. No one is around for joint decision-making. You don't call on friends for any of this. That would be pushing the boundaries of friendship and we, or I, need to hang onto the friends I have left. There is an up side-an odd phrase, given that we know losing a child is the worst imaginable event to occur in life, one which leaves inside a never-ending ache. I grieve alone and with absolute abandon, without concern that my moaning, screaming, or withdrawal will upset my spouse. I do not have to force myself to be on guard with words or actions. I am not on a different grieving track from my spouse, therefore I am not dealing with resentment or misunderstanding from another or having to feel guilty for my own grieving state or for not comforting him. When decisions are necessary there are no differences or friction. The only tension, anger or moodiness is with myself.

For four and a half years after Stephanie's death I was in continuous grief counseling. I was tremendously lucky to be with Linda, whose work was concentrated in the area of homicide victim assistance. She went with me to every hearing, or else went in my place, and sat with my hand in hers throughout the trial. I needed one-on-one counseling on a twice-weekly basis for about a year, then weekly basis, and at the end of counseling I was seeing her once a month. I honestly believe I could not have made it without her help. The sense of knowing that I would only have to make it for a few days alone before I could once again talk it out and cry it out with this trained person spelled survival during those early days, weeks, months, and years. I can never give back what she gave, but I can try to pass on some of what I learned from her, at the same time remembering that what is necessary for survival is different for each one of us. Following a session I would often stick on my refrigerator meaningful lines or phrases generated in the sessions. The longest-lasting piece, written in longhand by me on a yellow legal paper in 1993, is still there in the left-hand corner, magnetized to my new refrigerator as it was on the old one I owned when she was killed. It happened. You cannot change it. It's over. It is vital that I be reminded of these thoughts each day because my mind goes back there to her last moments, her last thoughts, her last feelings and I cannot bear it until I remember that it is over and she is not still experiencing terror and torment.

As Linda reminded me so often, we have to go back and do whatever has helped us in the past, when we find ourselves slipping back into the darkness. Recently I paid a visit to the same monastery where I spent the first two Christmases following my loss. I thought I had moved on to a different place in my grief journey, but I found myself in need of something this year and after searching within I realized that the need was a trip back there. It turned out to be the right thing. I might not go again or on the other hand I might find the need reappearing. This situation about the monastery ties in with another truth Linda stated a lot-that is, listen to yourself, pay attention to how something feels and trust yourself and your instincts. I have found that this works for me about all of the time. If it doesn't feel right I avoid it, if possible.

A laundry list of what helps me looks something like this:

- * Music-soothing balm from God.*
- * Exercise-I was running when she died (she was very proud that I had taken it up in my fifties) and something inside me said that I must keep on, that I would not survive if I quit running. I found that when I ran I felt "lighter" just a bit, the only time I had any reprieve from the massive weight of grief I carried.*

Now I walk more than run and use weights for strengthening, but the psychology of it has not changed.

** Friends-four or five have hung in with me, and we all know about the others who fell by the wayside because they could not handle our grief.*

** Helping others-I do this from the sidelines instead of one-to-one.*

** Taking care of myself emotionally-these kinds of strokes remind me that I care about me-it is essential, because my child, my parents and others wish that I have some surcease from sorrow-even, if possible, some joy. I gave myself a sapphire ring, Stephanie's birthstone, on Mother's Day. I say "no" whenever events and situations are not good for me or exactly what I want.*

** God-He is last because He is above all and everything, even in those times when I have felt that I was hanging on by a fragile thread. He was there, is there, and will not leave. And I believe that He grieves with me, and I believe that my child is with Him.*

Stephanie's symbol is a brown bunny.

Paul and Mary Miller's son, Ethan Paul (4/15/04 - 5/27/04) has a beautiful website:

<http://angelethanpaulmiller.bravehost.com>

Ethan's symbol is a rubber duckie.

Dolores Tucker's son, Dennis (6-11-60) died, 9-16-86.

He was an excellent trumpeter and loved music as well as his God and compassion for people. He was a year away from becoming a doctor and wanted to be a missionary, to be able to help people medically. He truly is an angel and I feel he is with our Lord and the Holy Family.

Dennis' website is:

http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Meadows/1235/Dennis_Tucker/Dennis.html

Dennis' symbol is a trumpet with the music symbol of a G clef.

Gregg & Linda Miller's daughter, Janna (6-1-82) died, from a 4-wheeler accident, 2-27-92.

Linda told how Janna's symbol was selected by God:

Thirteen years Janna has been gone from us, and not an anniversary or birthday has passed without you remembering her and us with a card. How dear of you to do that for Gregg and for me. We appreciate your kindness, your thoughtfulness, and your devotion. Every year you've asked us if we've chosen a symbol, and we have. It was really chosen for us by God Himself - a daisy. I may have told you the story before Janna's accident happened in the field behind Gregg's sister's house. Out in the country, fields like that bloom with patches of daisies in the spring - a little cluster here and there. The spring following her accident in February 1992, the entire hillside was covered with daisies. Never before or since has that field become a sea of daisies. We received the Resurrection message that came to us, we acknowledged the Creator of the daisies, the Creator of Janna and Jim, of you and of all of us, and we celebrate Life in Christ, the Lord of the Living not of the dead. We live in His Hope and rest in His Love.

Janna was very happy and her smile and laughter brought great joy to all.

Thank you, Dinah, for what you do for us. May you continue to find Joy in the good works that God has prepared for you to do.

*With love,
Linda Miller*

Janna's symbol is a daisy.

Michelle Callahan's daughter, Katie (2-15-91) died from a cancer, 7-23-99.

Michelle would like for you to get to know Katie by visiting her website:

<http://www.amandabowden.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/Katie.htm>

Katie's symbol is a horse.

David and CindyJo Greever's daughter, Michelle (8-24-84), died after being struck by a car, 11-5-93.

CindyJo has a wonderful ministry called **Healinghearts**.. Below are two of CindyJo's **Healinghearts** Ministry articles. I hope you will visit these pages and sign her guest book.

<http://www.geocities.com/michellesmama/NewsArticles.html>
<http://www.geocities.com/michellesmama/NewsArticles2.html>

These are the websites CindyJo has created in memory of Michelle:

www.geocities.com/michellemaries

www.geocities.com/cindyjos My First Memorial Site (MEMORIAL GARDENS)

www.geocities.com/michellesmama

www.geocities.com/angelsofhearttoheart 2nd Memorial Site I created

If you would like to contact Cindy Jo, her email address is:

michellesmama@hotmail.com

Michelle's symbols are a star with a heart and flower in the center.

Ron and Maria Faller's son, Christopher (5-7-90), died from complications after receiving piggyback heart transplants, 3-24-98.

Maria has a much-wanted ministry of helping parents make websites in memory of their children. She has received many awards. CindyJo Greever has talked about her in the above articles. This website:

<http://www.geocities.com/legobeaverchris4/memorial.html>

Pretty much says it all about what she is doing to help other bereaved parents with their web pages. When you look at this page, it will help any of you, who are interested, to actually see one of her pages and be able to read about what she is doing as well. Let me know if you think you need me to write anything else.

She would like for you to visit the websites she has created in memory of Christopher:

Here are the links to Christopher's heaven-day pages --

<http://www.geocities.com/legobeaverchris/chrisannivnew.html>

<http://www.geocities.com/legobeaverchris/chrisanniv2.html>

I also added some new gifts from so many thoughtful people on this page --

<http://www.geocities.com/legobeaverchris3/chrisgifts.html>

And the Smile Quilts page has been taken down, but thanks to Chrissie's mom for telling me about it and thanks to Dixie for sending me the files, I have put

Christopher's quilt page on here --

<http://www.geocities.com/legobeaverchris4/memorial.html>

Christopher's main page has also been updated in the last week or so, you can visit it here -- <http://www.geocities.com/legobeaver/index.html>

if the links do not work, please copy and paste the web page addresses in to your browser. I am sorry for the inconvenience. Thank you so much for taking the time to honor my little LegoKid.

Love and hugs,

Maria

Christopher's mommy forever

Christopher's symbols are Legos, beavers and 2 hearts intertwined.

Karen Jenkins' son, Geoff Edwards (5-6-84), died from an overdose of heroin, 5-22-02.

Karen would like for you to view Geoff's new website:

<http://geoffreypedwards.com/>

Geoff's symbol is an angel with pink wings.

Sherron Westerfield Twitchell' son, Rick Stepp (6-2-62), was killed by a drunk driver, 6-7-92.

Sherron shares her feelings:

I want to thank you. You are now the only one who acknowledges my son's angel date and his birthday. It's nice to know I am not alone. Bless you, dear lady.

Since my son's death in 1992, my mother, oldest brother, two aunts, and several friends have died. My closest friend and my now ex-husband ran off together. I've moved back home to KY so I no longer have the church friends who were so supportive during Rick's long struggle. My 3 remaining brothers mourn for their nephew - who was more like their youngest brother - in their own ways. We may mention the dates in emails but that it as far as it goes.

I have a third date to remember - February 17 when that tractor-trailer overran his car from behind. And I cry into my pillow in the early morning hours as I remember the time of that horrible wreck that changed my life forever and destroyed his. I continue to celebrate Rick's birth on June 2, also my youngest brother's birthday. They were 4 years apart. I bake a cake or brownies, make spaghetti or something else he loved, and put fresh flowers on the table. I talk about wonderful memories of him and remind myself that I would not have missed him for all the world.

On his angel date June 7, I usually keep to myself. I stay busy with some cleaning or organizing, and then I go see a movie that will make me laugh, if one is playing. I am lonely for my son. I long to hear his voice, to feel him hug me. I look for a card or letter in the mail. I hope for a phone call. I see beautiful little children at Wal-Mart who take my breath away and I cry on the way home for the grandbabies I'll never have.

People ask how long ago did he die and when I say "13 years this summer," they think it is somehow comforting to tell me that I must "be over" that by now. They don't know. They don't understand that mourning for a child, and Rick was my only child, is not something one ever "gets over." I've grown accustomed to his absence from my life but not a day goes by that I don't think of him, that I don't say his name out loud, that I don't talk to him or thank him for watching over me in some way.

I love, appreciate, and bless you, Dinah Taylor. I know your sorrow and your pain. And yet you find the strength to reach out to others who walk this same path. As my grandmother would say, "there's another star in your crown."

Attach is one of my Danville newspaper columns that I wrote describing how a dog opened my heart and made me laugh again after Rick's death. I had seen his beautiful body with burns over 95% of it and watched him struggle to live for 112 days. I was with him in the burn unit 15 minutes every hour from noon to 7pm every day from the second one to his last. He endured heroic efforts to help him live, including successive amputations and frequent debriding, or scraping, of his burns. After he was gone and after all I had seen, I could not imagine how there would ever be anything in life for me to laugh about. How could I ever know joy again? After 5 numb years, God and Rick sent me a dumb ol' dog and I laughed until tears rolled down my face.

Points to Ponder

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/Sherron.html>

This article is the follow-up to the previous story ***Points to Ponder***

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/Sherron2.html>

Yes, it seems like we reach a point in life where grieving events pile up. I got so tired of my one little black dress that I sent it to a thrift shop.

Jim and Rick would want us to be healthy and happy. We honor them by finding beauty and happiness in every day life. They may have died, but our love for our sons has not.

Rick's symbols are a rainbow and Pink Panther.

Debbie Baker's daughter, Tammy (3-29-81), was murdered 1-30-03.

Debbie wrote Tammy's story and it will be used in a book that is being sent to print in June 2005, it is a book called Roadside Crosses Across Our Nation, the people that are writing the book (actually compiling the stories - up to 200 crosses and stories):

Tammy was born in Sunrise Beach, TX. She was 6 years old when we moved back to NY State and raised in Belmont, NY. She has 1 younger brother (22 as of 9-16-04), 3 older brothers in the Navy, 2 nieces, and 2 nephews. Tammy will be very missed by her family, boyfriend (of 6 years), many friends, and kids who love her.

As a child, she was very loving, friendly, loved her friends and pets. She liked going to Sunday School and riding the yellow bus to school.

During her years in school, she was involved in Campfire Girls, Girl Scouts, a newspaper carrier (won carrier of the month), in Jr. High School band/choir, played soccer & softball, and won many awards & certificates. In Jr. High, her goal was to become a lawyer, by high school and later; she wanted to become a veterinarian assistant and gradually a veterinarian.

She was very kind to people, would help out when she could, bonded well with children - would take them to amusement parks - for ice cream - play with them - her death affected many kids who loved her. She had several pets, her cat - Smokey, prairie dog - Daisy, fish, and a turtle.

Tammy really enjoyed warm tropical places; she loved the beach and ocean. She had been to Florida several times and hoped to someday move there. Her headstone has a girl walking on the beach, dolphins jumping in the ocean, her prairie dog popping out of the sand, her turtle walking towards the water and her cat and two kittens playing behind two beach chairs.

She had been missing for 2 months/1 day (Jan. 30, 2003 ~ March 28, 2003), found one day before what was to be her 22nd birthday. She was shot at twice with #2 bird shot, kicked/beaten, and her murderer strangled her with his bare hands. She was dragged into a small circle of pines, her jeans/coat removed; he then covered her with now and left.

The murderer was a volunteer fireman, with a pregnant wife (baby girl born 9/2003), and 2 other kids. Tammy barely knew the man that murdered her. He was sentenced on November 5, 2004, to 20 years to life with no appeals.

The following words were written on Tammy's headstone:

"Welcome to My Special Garden"

I leave this world forever young, murdered in my youth, a senseless crime done by a man I barely knew. So I would like some special girls to accomplish the dreams that I had planned. Whichever you select, I would like to let you know what a special gift it will be in memory of me.

A Special Girl to become a veterinarian or an assistant and to travel to warm tropical places with beautiful beaches. A Special Girl to live, laugh, dream, be a sweetheart and to marry the one you love. A Special Girl to walk down the aisle in my Mom's wedding dress, the one I had her save for me.

To my family, my sweetheart, and my friends-remember all of our good times and our bad times too, they meant the world to me. I will always be with you and you with me - for we have such awesome memories!

Love Tammy

21 years 10 months 1 day

We love and miss you so much!

Like the candles flame, you gave my life true light – Mom

Not enough time little sister, your brothers - Robert, Mike and Steve

I will always remember you, see you soon in the sky, your little brother – Kevin

I love you with all my heart and you will always be my sweetheart

and I will always be your baby – Darin

Update on how the family celebrated Tammy's 24th birthday:

Darin, Devin (Darin's 8 yr. old daughter), his Mom - Cheryl & Alf, his sister - Miriah, Kevin & Erica, Nancy and her little boy - Adam (2 yrs. old), and Ron and I meet at the cemetery around 5:30 on Tues., March 29th. We wrote our messages on the green balloons...walked away from the trees by Tammy's... had to walk the roadway towards where Jessica is buried.... still snow where Tammy is.... especially on the side of the field where we did the Balloon Release this past September...(kind of weird -- there is just snow around that area, both sides of the road... no where else), we then released the green balloons and watched them for a while.... then headed towards Belmont and just lolly-logged along in a group the whole time.... with just one a little bit ahead.... everyone figured that was my balloon leading the rest of the balloons to Tammy.... Cheryl said, I bet that one leading is Deb's... and about the same time... Kevin said - you know who that one leading is...we watched till we could no longer see them.... then went back and lit all the candles...

We then went to JC's and that was really great.... we will probably make it a tradition for Tammy's birthday from now on.... the pool table is in a separate open room, but away from the bar area.... so Jackie had set up a couple of tables back there... she put out paper plates, napkins, forks, donated 2 pitchers of pop... we had 2 large pizza's, 4 dozen wings, and two large taco salads.... we ate and ate.... Alf and Ron played pool with the kids.... Devin's little brother Brock came when we were at JC's... Cheryl & Alf and kids left around 7:20 - had to go to something going on at the school.

The rest of us stayed for awhile and played darts.... till about 10:00 - 10:30...

Here is the newspaper one, which is on the 2nd page of the Wellsville Daily Reporter - left hand column a little over half-way down and the color one I laminated and took to the cemetery for Tammy.... poems are the same, pictures are different....

To view these you may contact Deb

[Click here to view Tammy's Birthday](#)

[Click here to view Tammy's collage](#)

Tammy's symbols are a dolphin and a rose.

**Roger and Judy McKenney and Bill and Kathy Denny's daughter,
Beth Ann Denney (6-5-78), died 9-10-04.**

Judy tells us about Beth:

My name is Judy McKenney. I lost my daughter, Beth Ann Denney, on Sept. 10, 2004. Her birthday is June 5th 1978, she is 26 years old, I'm not sure really what to say, Beth stilled lived at home with Roger and me, she is our cowgirl, she always said as long as her horses were here she would be here. She has 11 of her own and we board 5 others for people. Needless to say, she was a horse lover and I guess she got that from me. When she was about 7 years old, I got her a pony. She was so excited! As she got older, we would trade for something bigger. When she was about 14, we got her a mare that had a colt that was a month old. This colt grew up to be Beth's pride and joy. She trained him, broke him all by her self and she did a great job. He is like a big puppy. She went on to train and break many more. She also was in 4-H, showing her horses and other people's horses. Beth was very gifted when it came to horses. She also would teach kids to ride. So that was my Beth. She usually had 2 or 3 jobs at one time so she could take care of her horses, but somehow, still made time for her horses and a boyfriend she has had for the last 9 years.

People thought after we lost Beth she had been hurt by one of the horses, but that's not what happened at all, and I was sure to let them know that. Beth had hurt her knee 2 weeks prior to Sept. 10th and some how developed a blood clot that none of the doctors caught. On Sept. 9th, I took her to a family doctor (it was a

group of doctors she had to go to because of insurance). She was having a really hard time breathing and had a slight cough. He told us she had asthma, gave her meds, and sent her home. The appointment with him was at 3:10 pm on Sept.9th, and by 3:20 pm Sept.10th she was gone. I feel so much guilt for taking her to that doctor and I should of taken her to ER instead of that doctor, or at least after the doctor's visit because Beth never had asthma in her life. I feel, as her mom, I let her down for not doing more or for not doing the right thing. The blood clot in her knee had traveled to her lungs (she was also supposed to have had surgery on her knee on Friday Sept.10th but of course we canceled the day before) so I blame myself for not doing the right thing for my only child. It's been about 6 months now and to be honest I'm still waiting for Beth to come home.

The family would like for you to see a picture of Beth's headstone. I love a boot for the flowers. Please click on the address below:

http://www.kodakgallery.com/ShareLandingSignin.jsp?Uc=x0hah4b.17nyvxl7&Uy=-dsrhh2&Upost_signin=BrowsePhotos.jsp%3FshowSlide%3Dtrue&Ux=0&UV=652953183985_32163820407

Beth's symbol is a Pegasus.

Janice Goodman's daughter, Krissy (11-1-82), died as a result of a boat accident, 6-20-04.

Janice has created a website in Memory of Kristen Elizabeth Goodman and would like to invite everyone to visit. The address is:

<http://www.imanangelinheaven.com/ImanAngelinHeaven.html>

Krissy's symbol is a peacock.

Tim and Connie Dehner's son, Rob (9-15-79), was killed in an auto accident, 5-19-99.

Tim share his latest poem:

My writings are fewer these days, as I have found my downs are fewer and farther apart. Yet the writings are drawn from the depths of the soul and poured upon the tablet of the heart and transcribed into words for all.

I will tell you this one thing, I have no regret in looking back...for these are my fondest memories...

Christmas Morn'

*Another Christmas day has arrived.
The sting remains, for my heart yearns.*

*It is hard for me to believe this will be
The sixth Christmas, you'll not be home.*

*I miss you ever so much 'n lone for you
Now as much as, we did the very first.*

*In the depths of my heart, I shall never stop
Wanting you to come home to me.*

*For, it was just the other day I paused and gazed
If only for a moment ...*

*As I looked upon someone whom,
With one fleeting wish, I hoped.*

*Knowing within my soul this Fading thought,
Which is not, though within my being did hope.*

*Oh how I miss your lovely face, the sound of your voice,
And the touch of my child, who makes me whole.*

*Though seasons come and seasons go,
Without you I shall never be whole.*

*Your memory burns as bright as the brightest star,
Ablaze in the heavens in the still of this silent night.*

*My heart melts within and the ole familiar loneliness sets in.
Tears Swell and I am missing you as another Christmas comes.*

*Oh how bright your candle burns as I remember the past years.
How I do wish there were more Christmases ahead to include you.*

*Alas, I can do no more than this; wish.
For there will never be more than the
Time I had you in my life.*

*I thank God for allowing me the few years I had
It is with love in my heart and the sting
Of knowing we shall have no more together.*

*It is this that pains my heart so.
Now, here I sit early this Christmas Morn'
Writing these words to you.*

*And hoping you know we love you, miss you
And lone to be with you.*

*Merry Christmas to you our Son
Our baby, our child...*

*We love you,
Mom and Dad*

*This poem is in memory of all our children who left us way to soon...
And for our Robert "Robby" we hold you close to our heart!*

Robby's symbol is a rose.

**Pat and Linda Smith's son, Tommy (12-9-73), died from meningitis,
3-18-00**

The family explained Tommy's symbol:

He started smiling from day one, for he was a happy baby. One of those people you can't stay depressed when you are near him for he always managed to cheer everyone up just by his demeanor. It is rather ironic that you e-mailed me this morning, for it was 3/24 that we buried him. Your kind words certainly help ease the pain.

You're correct about the loss to the world. That is one of biggest questions to God when I see Him. Not to boast, but Tommy's visitation was the largest in the history of Memorial Park, which has been business for 75 years. Tommy touched a lot of lives during his short stay on earth and my question to God is, if he had touched so many lives in just a short span, how many more would he have touched if he lived longer.

Tommy's symbols are a soccer ball and a smile.

Pat Bird's son, Michael Spooner (9-23-80), died from cancer, 9-17-01.

My son's name is Michael Anthony Spooner. He was born Sept. 23 1980 and died of a rare, aggressive, and deadly cancer (Neurofibrosarcomas) Sept 17 2001.

*I want to invite all of you to be added to the **Wounded Hearts** map. It is a place where we can go to find others who relate to your situation. It is a place where we can find others to help and to gain help from, in this horrible journey through the unique grief of losing a child.*

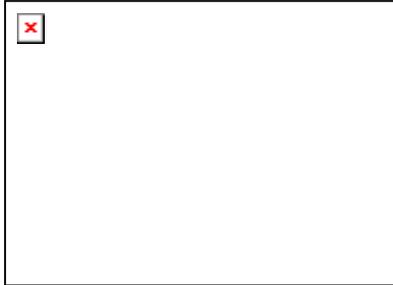
<http://www.woundedhearts.net>

If you wish to meet my son and myself, just take a fast breeze through his site:

<http://www.birdco.net/mic>

If Michael would have a symbol it would be a Christian Fish in a red Nike hat. I think I will design one. A friend at camp wrote a song about him...(while he was still alive, he was famous at Youth for Christ camp) in the song it talks about Michael's red Nike hat. Michael always had his Christian fish on his cars and stuff so it is fitting for the fish to wear a Nike hat.

Patricia is an artist and can make symbols for fellow travelers, but you need to continue to remind her and not to be too anxious for them. She will have to do them in her spare time.



Michael's symbol is a Christian Fish in a red Nike hat with a cross.

Skip and Chris Over's son, Nick (5-21-80), died from ARVD, a rare degenerative heart disease, 4-8-01.

We have someone working on another one but it will be information on his foundation. We have been busy working on the fund-raiser for his Foundation. Nick's birthday is May 21st so the dinner and silent auction will be held that evening. It will truly be a celebration of his life. April 8th will be four years and sometimes it seems like yesterday and other times it seems like a lifetime since I have seen his beautiful smile.....

Our symbol for Nick is the mountains because he loved going there. Every free moment he had which wasn't much between working and going to computer school, he spent in the mountains with his girlfriend. She has such great art talent and they would go there and just sit and Charlotte would draw. I have two of her pictures framed in Nick's room...the one is huge and she had given it to Nick for Valentine's Day and we had it at Nick's service.

There is also a spot that we call "Nick's spot" where there is a little stream and he would just go there and sit and think. We visit that spot every April 8th, Nick's angel date. It is so peaceful there.

The family would like for you to view Nick's website and read about the foundation they have in his memory:

www.ourbelovednick.com

Nick's symbol is the mountains.

Terry Dixon's son, John (8-9-83), died from cancer, 3-14-02.

John was born August 9, 1983 and crossed over March 14, 2002. If I can choose his symbol, it is the dragonfly. I will share the "dragonfly story" with you one day soon. John was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer "primitive neuro ectodermal tumor" just after his 17th birthday. He was relieved when he was finally diagnosed as he had been in a lot of pain for several months and the doctors couldn't find out why. He was optimistic he could beat the cancer and fought a courageous battle. After months of chemo, high dose chemo with stem cell recovery, and two bouts of radiation therapy, the cancer spread to his lungs and was no longer treatable. It was John's wish to spend his last days at home and be cremated and have his ashes spread at a campground in the mountains where he spent lots of time with his friends. We are in the process of having the campground named for him--a long process through the Forest Service. John was an avid football and basketball fan and played on his high school varsity basketball team. His classmates and friends retired his jersey in the school field house.

John's symbol is a dragonfly.

Alex and Dan Hutchins's son, Troy (2-7-76), was killed by a drunk driver, 4-7-00.

I received your e-mail on my son's birthday, what a hard day for all the grieving families. I have received your newsletters for quiet awhile. I have really enjoyed them and you're your cards. I would read about all the other families that had lost their child. I have not been able to attend one of Jim's picnics.

My son was in the Air Force in Tampa. He was 24 yrs old and was killed by a drunk driver traveling 80 mph, who not even hit his breaks. Troy was my pride and joy; I loved that child so much. He was born Feb. 7th and died April 7th, 2000. It will be five years for me this April. So many people would say "time will heal" but I finally told them "time does not heal, it only lets you deal a little more with the loss."

I really enjoyed the Cumberland Inn. We traveled there just to see the angels. They are so beautiful and what a wonderful thing to represent our children. We have one other son. Troy was my baby, his full name Troy Dewayne Call, Feb 7th, 1976.

Troy's symbol is an angel.

Pat and Colette Coyne's daughter, Colette (10-10-68), died from melanoma, 10-27-98.

Colette wrote the following poem:

I wrote this after attending a Poetry Reading of a Poet who is well known in these circles (I did not realize this) He was involved with the Public Television Project which Colette coordinated and won awards - "The United States of Poetry"

It is in libraries in N.Y. Quite honestly, some of the poems from artists across the country are not my speed however - art is art. She traveled across the country and at her funeral Mass, her Mentor spoke of how the poets, instead of wanting to meet "award winning" individuals who were part of the project -- all asked -- who is Colette. Josh said "Had Colette not been involved many said they would not have responded." (Who wants to collaborate with New Yorkers).

Poem I wrote for Colette Coyne 10/10/68 - 10/29/98 who died from Melanoma Skin Cancer, less than six months after diagnosis. She wrote many poems herself.

*An afternoon sojourn in a world I do not know
Too late to capture wisdom from the soul who chose to go.*

*We grasp whatever, eager still to fully comprehend,
Realizing little fills the void, the emptiness with.
A time in life so difficult, few would understand;
Nor even wish to hover near, less life be changed for them.*

*Empty mornings, laughter silent, disciplined days with schedules and tasks.
Angel Cards bring true meaning, might there be an answer, surly I do ask?*

*Religion a comfort, but not really at first - Searching, searching -
pain comes from our yearning*

*We thirst and long for the magic time that's finished;
Unknowing yet, it never will, no never be diminished!*

*Dimensions revealed that help us to be healed. She is teaching anew,
through the Majesty Above.*

*Beyond the mortal mind, no one truly comprehends,
Why then, are we still trying to understand her end?*

*Perhaps the world was gifted even for so short a time.
If we chose to have faith in circumstance, through difficult to understand;
Our openness will show us, there is another land.*

*Her spirit remains around us, she really didn't go
Knowing through our loving God, there is nothing can't be so.
The lilt of her joy filled being, lifts her loved ones dear,
Never for a moment do they doubt that she is near*

*Can we trust, can we hope, for the peace within our will?
Remembering her impatience with injustice, we see still.
If we make some small effort to comfort in some way,
To change the world around us, it will bring us to the day -*

*When we are all together in a place we've yet to know,
Contentment will abound with - she has shown us so!*

To my angel who continues to teach me still!!

Colette's symbol is a sunflower.

A good piece of chocolate has about 200 calories. As I enjoy 2 servings per night, and a few more on weekends, I consume about 3,500 calories of chocolate in a week, which equals one pound of weight per week.

Therefore, in the last 3-1/2 years, I have had chocolate caloric intake of about 180 pounds, and I only weigh 1-- pounds.

So... without chocolate, Guess how many months ago I would have wasted away if

I hadn't been eating chocolate? I owe my life to chocolate!! (You'll never get the answer from me!)

Please visit the website and let me know if you see any omissions or errors:

<http://www.cumberlandcollege.edu/lamentations/joininginmemory.html>