
LAMENTATIONS

Issue 109

middle

February, 2007

February is the month of love and I want to share great news with you!!! Rosemary's documentary, "Space Between Breaths" is finished and will be premiered in Lexington, KY, Thursday, May 31, 2007, at the Lexington Theatre!!! This is the best news we have had in a very long time. Not only will her documentary premier, but we will also have a mini J.I.M.'s Conference the following day. That will be in Lexington also. Now, those of you who have been after us to have another, this is your chance to meet fellow travelers that you have read about. In the near future, Rosemary will be sending out invitations for the premier.

We will send more information about where and other particulars in the very near future. I would be interested in hearing from you as to what you would like to include this year. We may not be able to accommodate all suggestions, but we will consider them. We will have a candle light service after the documentary.

I hope all of you will be able to attend this very special event. Rosemary has put her heart into this project and has been working on it for 3 years. She and others have worked so hard, and we certainly want to support her in all that she has done for all of us. Rosemary has been a guiding light to all of us. No one knows how far-reaching this documentary will be, but I certainly think it needs to be on Oprah and on the cable channels. Don't forget that those of you who were at the 2004 J.I.M.'s conference and had your picture taken with your child's picture, will be in the documentary. This is yet another way we know our children will not be forgotten.

And I am full of more good news. Beverly Donan is proofing the last of the "Heart Notes" and will contact me as soon as the Notes are published. I will email you with the particulars about how you can get them. Beverly will also have them available at J.I.M.'s Conference.

Grief Grafts

Herschel & Shirley Mincks' son, Loyde (12-26-59) was murdered, 4-5-02.

I received this email from the Mincks and I, like them felt that the 5th year was a turning point for me and my grief. That is not to say that that is true for everyone so don't be discouraged if it didn't happen to you. Just hang in there, you will find that time.

(If you have an email address, and if I have your child's birthday, I try to send an email to you)

What a blessing you have been to us. Thank you for remembering Loyde's birthday. He would be 47 today. God is really helping us; it has not been as hard as the other years. Some are saying at about the 5th year you see a change from grief to memories and I truly feel it is happening in our home. Thank you again for the news letters. God bless you.

I emailed Shirley to see if I could print her email to me. Her response:

Please do so, I want so much to be able to help other mothers. We have seen a change in my attitude and how I am handling Loyde being gone. I am more aware of the memories and what Loyde was like and what he did for others and that is helping me to see I need to be that way. I have really had some heavy pity-parties. They are decreasing and I am glad of that. I truly want to be happy and see a happy future. Things are looking up because I am.

Shirley & Herchel, Loyde's Mom and Dad

Loyde's symbol is an eagle.

Dave & Kathie Carrigan's daughter, Chrissie (11-14-86) completed suicide by hanging, 12-6-01.

For those of you who are parents corresponding with other parents, here is another parent who wants to be involved:

Dinah,

I know it has been a while since I joined your group and I feel now that I would like to be on the list to correspond with other parents that have experienced what I have, a child lost to suicide. I would be honored if you add me to the list.

Thanks,

God Bless. May the New Year Bring you Much Blessings.

Hugs,

Kathie

I hope you will visit and sign Chrissie's 2 new websites:

www.angelfire.com/amiga2/ourangelboy2/chrissie.html

<http://www.christianmemorials.com/memorials/show.asp?id=684>

Born too Soon and Gone too Soon

Forever Loved and Missed

Chrissie's symbols are a butterfly, an angel, a buffalo, a Dalmation & Tigger.

Darraugh Butler's son, Brandon (10-21-84) was murdered, 4-11-03.

Darraugh has given me a wonderful idea for my next birthday party:

Last year, December 26th, 2005, I did not celebrate my 50th birthday because I was too depressed. It didn't seem right to celebrate any major event without Brandon. I could not bear the thought of him not being included. I pushed it to the back of my mind, but the fact that I did not celebrate it continued to nag at me. Then I thought, I will celebrate it in 2006 during the summer because summer will be a more convenient time for everyone rather than right after Christmas. Well, in April I had a bad car accident one week after Brandon's death anniversary date and was not able

to celebrate. I was injured and was laid up for several months including the summer so I said - forget it! However, I kept thinking about how important a milestone it was for me, not only to reach 50 years of age, but I had also been in business for 10 years as a business management consultant. I thought, what would Brandon want me to do? Of course, he would want his mom to celebrate. He always enjoyed seeing me happy and I used to be quite the hostess and entertainer. So, I started planning around mid November with a December 23, 2006, date planned. I figured it was 3 days before my 51st birthday so it would be alright to still celebrate my 50th. I decided to call it my 50/10 celebration.

Dinah, this party was just what I needed. And, I planned it just the way I wanted to. We had the DJ play Christmas R&B and then we had a small sermonette from my brother, Ted Glore. He spoke on the parable in the New Testament about the 5 talents. Next, we had what the kids always called Mom's Gospel Power Hour. When we would travel, I would make them listen to gospel music with me for a whole hour before they could play their Hip or Rap music. So I had my niece put together a compilation of some of my favorite gospel selections. And just like with my children, we listened to gospel music at my party for an hour. My brother Gregory made a video featuring me and my family and friends. It was hard to see the pictures and video of Brandon, but I found some joy in between the tears. It made me remember some of the things that made him so special and it showed how close and loving we were. After that we did the Happy Birthday Song to the upbeat Stevie Wonder version. After filling up on cake, we had an R&B Old School Dance Party. I got a lot of nice cards, gifts, money, books and during the Old School Dance Party collected almost \$150.00 out on the dance floor!. When the kids were young, I would entertain them and in doing so would often change into different outfits, emulating some of the entertainers like Diana Ross. So, in like fashion, I wore a white cream pantsuit for the first segment during the Gospel Power Hour. I made some remarks and said thank you to all in attendance. After that I disappeared while they played a couple of games. I changed into a black dress with some black patent leather pumps - I made a grand entrance dancing to James Brown's "We Gonna Have a Funky Good Time." We did not tape it, but I had big fun.

Even though Brandon was not there, I really felt his presence. I heard his laughter and I felt he was there standing in a corner, beaming at his mom's accomplishments. Brandon was always my biggest fan and supporter. He actually helped me with my business by downloading

software, editing my presentations and critiquing my speeches. He was so proud of me.

I made bookmarks for the party. On one side was the agenda and my baby picture. On the other side was Brandon's picture and a poem he wrote and below that was a recent picture of me with a Red cardinal above me.

Here is a copy of that side. Thanks for allowing me to share and God bless you in 2007.

Son of an Angel
by Brandon Butler



*If there was a roster you would be #1 on top.
Ain't need no father, you was my mother & pops.
You were there mom, every time I got knocked.
With me every, second, minute and hour on the clock.
You, like no other, my mother.
My mom, my personal angel that's undercover.
I'm hip to you, I knew you were special when I seen your eyes.
My angel in disguise, business woman that's wise.
I was never, ever surprised.
Remember you modeling in the mirror, listening to Mary J. Blige.
Whatever I got to do to make you happy, let me know.
For you I throw myself in an icebox, 1,000 degrees below.
As time pass and I grow
I just hope that one day I'm close to your level and led more towards God
and away from the devil.
I can only see it one way from one angle.
I was blessed to be born as a son of an angel.*



Brandon's symbol is a Cardinal.

Charlotte Martin's son, Keith (1-16-71) drowned, 2-21-97.

Dear Dinah,

You asked for us to send you our resolutions. My first one is that I am going to make New Year's Resolutions this year. I have not done so since Keith died over nine years ago.

My second one is that I am going to finish redecorating Keith's bedroom, hopefully by 2/21/07 - - Keith's 10th year in Heaven. I'm not doing anything elaborate - - just new wallpaper, comforter and curtains. I've painted the ceiling and baseboards and papered 3 1/2 walls. I feel terrible that it has taken me ten years to do it, but I feel like now that I will feel better when it is done.

My third resolution is to use his room and let others use his room once it is finished - - and to keep the door open all of the time. It has been closed for ten years, and I am usually the only one who goes in there.

I'm going to try to ride a horse again - - at least once in 2007 and since we know there are horses in Heaven, rather than to imagine that Keith is riding with me again, I will imagine that I am riding with him in Heaven and imagine the beautiful sights that we pass along the way.

I'm going to try to stop putting the bleach in the refrigerator and pouring milk in the washing machine. I'm going to try to remember to stop leaving drive-thrus without my hamburger after I've ordered it and paid for it. I'm going to try to remember to see if my glasses are on my face before I waste 30 minutes looking for them. I'm going to try to remember to take my keys out of the ignition before I lock my car. I'm going to try to always remember where I parked my car. I'm going to try to remember to check and make sure that it is my car that I'm trying to start, especially when two elderly strangers are sitting in the back seat. I'm going to try to stop spraying deodorant on my hair and hair spray under my arms, especially when I'm going somewhere. I'm going to try to remember which can of Dr. Pepper I'm drinking from and which one I've put my cigarettes out in. I'm going to stop trying to remember what I needed from the grocery store and take a list with me. And the next time a police officer pulls me over for

driving too slow, I'm not going to voluntarily tell him that it is perhaps because of the new medication my doctor has given me for depression.

And if I catch myself trying to write with my cigarette again while lighting my ink pen, I may try to stop smoking.

If I find myself doing any of those things, I'm going to try to remember that if others are watching me, it is probably NOT a good time to tell them that I'm not crazy.

I have a stronger resolve than ever to try to help create adequate services in our community to help the bereaved. I believe that if our community can develop a good plan, then other communities may be able to duplicate it. I've recently learned that parents whose children (soldiers) have died in the war in Iraq have called upon the Ministry of Defense to give bereaved families more help in coming to terms with their loss. Columnist Katherine Parker recently wrote "There can be no more shameful legacy of any war than ignoring veterans' needs." I believe that it is equally shameful to ignore the needs of the parents whose child(ren) died in the war and the children whose parents died in the war.

*Love,
Charlotte Martin*

Keith's symbol is karate.

Robert and Jackie Searl's son, Dan (4-6-61) died from an inoperable brain tumor, 4-30-2000. Their other son, Alex (10-13-65) died from heart arrhythmia, 6-7-96.

Jackie, like so many of us, knows that our children place us together:

My friend Sari McIntyre, who lost her young husband to cancer three years ago at age 40, and I went to lunch last Thursday and she said a friend had told her about this shop and would I like to have a look. I love consignment shops and away we went. While looking around, Alison introduced herself to me, Sari was some place in the shop and told me how it works. While speaking with Alison, I just knew she was what I have come to recognize "a special person" not knowing any other information about her than just my feeling. I found some lovely pieces of jewelry at such a

reasonable price (10.00) one cross, some earrings and a little lamp for my dresser...it was just made for it.

When I got home I looked at her site and realized what was making her so special to me, but that was not the complete story. The next day, I returned to her shop to get the other cross for my dear friend Margaret, whose only son, Craig was like a brother to my boys and a son to me. Here is where I think the boys went to work in order to show me the rest of why Alison is so special. The conversation was flowing along and something was said about children, dogs and I said that both my children have predeceased me and how Craig, Margaret's son is like a son to me, and that is when Alison said, "I have three daughters, one was killed in automobile accident" ...well there you have it. We talked, cried and held each other and she will be getting one of Charlie's books When There Are No Words this week. Our bond of friendship and fellow traveler has been established.

Yes, our children still continue to work in our daily lives and I thank God each day for that.

*My dear Dinah, have a blessed New Year,
My love,
Jackie*

One other thing that Alison said to me was that her fear now is one of the what ifs....something were to happen and her other girls were taken...then as she looked at me I said, "I know God has a plan for Robert and me and I do not worry. We have been through so much in the past ten years with the boys deaths and then eldercare for Robert's dad and my mom and each time we tried to "fix" it, well, God had other things in mind and His way was, has and will always be the best...we are learning to allow Him to guide us and use us as His instruments...some days it is easier than others, but I can tell you it sure beats trying to control it all ourselves...that never has worked."

Thought you would like to see the four legged boys and their story...they came after Dan passed in 2000 and both are rescues and they have brought so much into our lives. Alison also talked about her dog and how much that has helped her. Our animals give us a way to give and receive care and love.

*Love,
J*



To read more about their dog adoptions, click here:

Dan (Woody)'s symbol is his dog named Buddy. Alex's symbols are deer and fish.

Mike and Deb Campbell's daughter, Rachel (2-13-86) died in an auto accident, 11-14-04.

Dear Dinah,

I just love your website and appreciate all the hard work you put into it. I have shared with you some of the story about my Rachel Anna Campbell. But first, I wanted to let you know about a new website in her honor. The address is below. It is just starting and I plan to add more to it. Rachel attended a private Christian school and we had an 8 ft. glass cross placed through the brick so the sun shines from outside to inside. We did this to encourage others. On a plaque, we placed "Let the love of God shine through you." I plan to place a picture on her website when I get a picture. Thank you for your continued encouragement.

Debbie Campbell

<http://www.virtual-memorials.com/>

Under search, just type: Rachel Campbell

Rachel's symbol is a ladybug.

Mack and Deedee Ransdell's son, Billy (1-21-66) died from a heart attack, 1-4-99.

Dinah...Thank you for the note about Billy's angel date...You, my sister Carol and my Compassionate Friends remembered this date....This year was to have been my year of joy...I thought I had made peace with my grief only to find that our youngest son had joined the National Guard and now he is in Iraq....My grief pain has returned and I pray this new journey is only temporary, but the worry is beyond belief....Keep us in your prayers...The Lord will sustain us, only the Lord....I am always remembering your Jim always.....Thank you again.

*I love you my fellow struggler, Hugs,
Deedee Ransdell*

Keith called us this morning...I sure do cherish his voice...He called us on Billy's angel date, but did not say a word about his brother, but he called and I really think he knew what date it was, just like Beth, our daughter, but they just won't say his name... we do the dance, talking around our feelings...But I guess we have all learned to do that pretty good..

*Hugs,
Deedee*

Billy's symbol is an American flag.

Diane Craddock's son, JJ Wade (9-22-72) died in an auto accident, 1-26-04; her daughter Michele (12-31-76) was also killed in an auto accident, 5-20-04 (the same month and day as Young Jim's auto accident).

Diane reports on the 2nd Celebration of Life that was held December, 31st:

The second annual Celebration of Life was held on December 31, 2006...pictures on display, candles lit, memories shared, heartfelt poems read, and balloons released in loving memory of 230+ loved ones.

This is the poem written especially for the event. The first letter of each line spells out HEART & SOUL.....

Heart & Soul

*Healing moment-by-moment when we
Encourage another grieving person
As our loved ones are on our minds
Remembering their precious memories
Together while sharing our tears*

*Surviving the death of our children
Our loved ones have gone too soon
Unimaginable pain and heartache of
Losses so dear to our heart and soul*

*www.angels-arms.celebration-of.com
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Diane, Mom of Angels JJ and Michele*

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"Live to Remember and Remember to Live"

Dear Dinah,

We're doing as well as can be expected...in 2006 we continue to cope and face hurdles as they come our way. My strength comes from faith, family and friends....I follow my heart and when things seem to be overwhelming, I focus on the moment as even tomorrow seems too far away. The day-to-day struggles of life are magnified after the death of a child/children. My husband and I separated on Thanksgiving Day, after being married for ten years. Tommy decided life with all the turmoil wasn't what he "signed up for" in a marriage. I never imagined my life would turn out this way, when my children were born I thought I would have the "happy ever after" fairy book ending. I could not turn my back on the minor grandchildren who needed (and still need) a loved one committed to putting their best interest in life a priority.

I'm quickly coming up on the third year without my children, JJ Wade and Michele Wade....January 26th for JJ and May 20th for Michele. In some ways, it seems like an eternity since they died and other ways it seems as though it was only yesterday. JJ's sons Brandon (14) and Jamie (13) are still living with me. I see the heartache they have on a daily basis in the loss of their Dad. Michele's youngest son, Michael (5), also lives with me and I get

her other three children the last weekend of each month (and any other days their father will allow them to come), so we can spend time together as a family unit. My thoughts and prayers are with each and every grieving loved one, especially parents, that may read this article. God bless!

*Diane Craddock, Carrsville VA
Mom of Angels JJ and Michele Wade*

JJ's symbols are a Harley and a boy angel. Michele's symbols are a Harley and a girl angel.

Jerry & Gwen Minkin's son, Jason (8-22-72) died in an auto accident, 12-21-96.

A Parent's Lament

Jerry wrote this lament to Jason:

I am writing this in loving memory of my son Jason, a very special person in my life, who was and always will be my very best friend. It's hard to know where to start, as there is so much I wish to express and describe about my feelings for him and the very special relationship we shared.

My wife and I were very blessed when he was born and for the 24 precious years he was with us, bringing much joy and happiness into our lives. Jason has a loving sister with whom he shared many special moments over the years. As a loving, caring father, having two wonderful children, I looked forward to being with them every day, sharing in their lives while growing up, and trying to do everything I could to make their lives enriched and rewarding.

Jason was always full of life and love. As a very caring person, he developed close friendships and relationships with many people. He struggled hard to achieve difficult goals for himself, but his desire and persistence enabled him to accomplish what he planned for himself at this time. With his high sense of values and his lifestyle over the years, he truly developed into a fine young man who I am so very proud of.

When we found out suddenly that we lost him, in an automobile accident, our lives came to a sudden stop. With such disbelief, it took quite

some time for us to realize that this was real and that we would have to get on with our lives and do everything possible to keep him alive as a part of us. Jason is with us in our hearts and in our minds every day of our lives. Wherever we go and whatever we do, I know we are all together.

There are so many memories we have of Jason, to look back on, remember and cherish, for which we are very fortunate. We miss him dearly, but Jason will always be with us to forever love.

I asked permission to use his lament, and he answered:

Dear Dinah,

Yes, it would mean so much to Gwen and Myself for you to include Jason's website in your next newsletter.

It seems that the new year has brought more tragedy to some of our fellow travelers. One of our dearest friends, who lost his son around the same time we lost Jason, just lost his wife, a few weeks ago. And in regard to recent tragedy of Nathan Crim, our hearts and prayers certainly go out to the LaVey family.

Your compassion and support, over and above dealing with your own life happenings, have done so much for the many of us who are truly your "Fellow Travelers." Through the compassionate efforts of yourself and people like Rosemary Smith, we are all able to share with and care about each other; this itself is a real blessing.

Thanks Dinah.

*Love,
Jerry*

To read more about this young man, please visit his website:
Jason's on-line memorial is at [Jason's Virtual-Memorial Main Page](#)

Jason's symbols are a New York Jet's football helmet and a black cat.

Al & Jean Pilant's son, Nate (9-13-88) died in an auto accident, 12-21-06.

Al is a professor at the University of the Cumberlands and he and Jean are dear to us and now fellow travelers. Nate's friend and classmate, Suzie Barr, wrote this poem shortly after Nate's death:

For Nate

*The time that we wasted will be our biggest regret,
Spent in the places we will never forget.
Just sitting and thinking about things we have done,
The crying, the laughing, the hurt and the fun.*

*Now it's just us and hard-driven guilt
Behind the walls we allowed to be built.
Trapped in a body and wanting to run,
Back to our youth with the laughter and fun.*

*But the chase is over and there is no place to run,
We never did anything but laugh and have fun.
With reality suddenly right in our face,
Scared and alone we are stuck in this place.*

*Now memories of the past flash through our heads,
And the pain is obvious by the tears we have shed.
Asking ourselves why and what went wrong,
I guess we are weak when we should be strong.*

*Living for the moment and wings we have grown,
Our feelings were lost, afraid to be shown.
As we look at our past, it's so easy to see,
The fear that we had, afraid to be me.*

*We are getting too old to be playing this game,
Acting really hard with no sense of shame.
What our future will hold I really don't know,
But the years we have wasted are starting to show.*

*We just have to live for the day of a new start,
And the dreams that we hold deep in our hearts.*

Gone But Never Forgotten
Nate Pilant
September 12, 1988 – December 21, 2006

Al wrote about Nate's symbols:

The parrot represents Nate being a Jimmy Buffet "Parrot-Head" fan. The Black Rose is because all Nate's friends were getting various tattoos, and they talked him into getting one also. But, Nate did not want just a tattoo. He wanted it to have special meaning. He knew about my Black Rose and asked Momma (Jean) to check whether I would be upset with him getting one just like it, due to it being associated with my Navy days and Viet Nam. Since he was under-age, I went with him when he got his tattoo. Since his death all his friends are getting that special meaning tattoo, but this time it has an entirely different meaning!

Nate's symbols are a black rose and Jimmy Buffet's parrot.

David & Linda Haddock's daughter, Bonnie (2-6-85) died in an auto accident, 8-13-02.

David wrote this poem which has been a question of many parents:

How Many Children?

*"How many children?" he asked of me.
"Well," I said slowly, "I used to have three,"
Three were born living,
But now one is gone,
Should I answer two?
But, no, that's wrong.
For the one who is gone,
Still lives in my mind,
Still lives in my heart,
Her smiling picture still adorns my desk,
Her presence on earth still remembered,*

*"How many children?", he asked of me.
"Three," I said proudly, "I have three!"*

David described grief:

Grief is Like a Circle

It's been a little over four years since my daughter's death, and I guess I was somewhat surprised that this holiday season was a little sadder than last year's. If time is a healer, then each day, each month, each year takes us that much further from the day of death, and should lessen our sadness. Right? Wrong. We tend to think of grief, healing like an open wound. If our body is healthy, and there's no infection, then an open wound does get better each day. We might think of this physical healing as represented by a straight line reaching upwards. Each day, our body moves forward as the healing process takes place, and attempts to "put us back the way we were."

But what about an emotional wound? Does it heal the same way? We might think of grief/sadness as more of a circle. Although time will help us, we will meet the strong grief/sadness feelings again and again. I believe that C. S. Lewis likened it to a train going around and around up a mountain. There's no need to be discouraged, it just means, that we can't be "put back together" exactly the way we were. When the strong feelings of sadness come, we can still know that time has helped us, and these powerful emotions won't stay with us forever. They will just revisit us now and then.

Bonnie's symbol is a musical note.

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

Dolores wrote this letter to Dennis:

*You are gone physically at 26 years of age.
Twelve years have gone by and you are with me in spirit always.
You did not have time to do all the things that you wanted to accomplish, all for the good of family and man. When you were born in Fort*

Benning, Georgia, I knew you were too beautiful and special. You later showed many talents and skills -- you were too good to be true.

I remember Thanking God for such a Special Gift. I carry you with me always and Thank God for the 26 years of being with you.

I remember the many concerts I attended with you playing the most beautiful classical trumpet in orchestras, winning auditions, and playing for local symphonies and colleges. You were gifted in voice, instrumentals, and in every way.

You were close to becoming a doctor as you were a young man who wanted to contribute to society and help your fellow man. You were not on earth long enough to achieve all the things you worked so hard for, you have certainly left a lasting memory of all the wonderful things you worked so hard for and of all the wonderful things you left behind.

I shall always cherish the times we had together and all the wonderful things you did for me and all those around you.

May you Rest In Peace until we are together again.

Your Mother

Dolores Orsini Tucker

I hope you will visit Dennis' website:

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



Dennis' symbols are a trumpet with music symbol of G clef.

Pam Lager's daughter, Heather (3-21-83) died in an auto accident 1-28-01.

Pam wrote this poem to Heather:

*My first born child, my joy, my love,
Given to me from the heavens above.
Why me, I thought, did God choose to so bless,*

*The answer to this, my mind could only guess.
The unconditional bond of love I instantly felt,
The face of an angel that made my heart melt.*

*Watching you grow over 17 years,
Never knowing my happiness would lead to so many tears.
I thought you would be mine to have all the days of my life,
You not being here cuts through my heart like the pain of a knife.*

*My heart cried out to God "How could you let this happen,
Why did you let her fall asleep,"
My child, he said, was only on loan, and not mine to keep.
"But why after only 17 years did she have to take her last breath?
You could have sent an angel to spare her from this death."*

*He said the answers you seek are all within your reach,
I sent her to show you how to love, and also to teach.
Her mission was accomplished, her work on earth was done,
Take joy and comfort in knowing that you taught her about my son.*

*For now she has eternity with Jesus in the place of your dreams,
She isn't truly gone from you, that's only how it seems.
She is never far from you, you are never really apart,
When you feel she is not with you, just look inside your heart.*

*For there is where the memories and love are stored until for you I send,
You see, you also believe in my son, likewise for you there will be no end.
For in my word I've promised you will be together again one day,
It's only love you will keep, all the pain and tears I will wipe away.*

Written for you my angel, with love, Mom

Read Heather's story on her website
www.geocities.com/regalmap/index.html

Heather's symbol is a dreamsicle angel.

William & Lorraine Ash's daughter, Victoria Helen was stillborn, 6/2/99.

Lorraine is a bereaved parent and an author:

Hi Dinah,

Your Web site is phenomenal. It's like a country for a bereaved parent to explore. I read the story of Jim. It's incredible. Twenty-four hours after that speech. A pole that grazed him by an inch. Wow. His spirit comes through what you've written and what a thoughtful mission he was on when he was felled. (You can read about this on the website under "Jim's Page) You and your husband honor him by embracing his spirit and reaching out to others in his name, and isn't that what we all ultimately want? It doesn't get better than that.

Absolutely, please, put me on your database for particulars on the documentary and for any mailings your group sends out. My husband and I are in New Jersey, but perhaps we can make it to one of your gatherings in Kentucky. In fact, I travel quite a lot with my book, Life Touches Life: A Mother's Story of Stillbirth and Healing (NewSage Press, 2004), and my Wisdom of Words: Writing to Heal the Spirit workshop. I created the latter in response to parents' requests that they wanted ways to be able to write about their own healing journeys, which is what Wisdom facilitates. I can't help it, really. :) Through and through, I'm a writer. I'd be delighted if you spent some time with my site, www.LorraineAsh.com.

I've never come across this idea of having a symbol for a child in spirit. What a great idea. Please, yes, we would be honored to have our Victoria's name on your Birth & Angel Dates page.

After Victoria died at her birth, my fellow writers and editors at the newspaper where I work chipped in and had a star named after her and recorded in a book called Claiming Your Part in the Universe. Like Jim, she certainly has.

Thanks so much. It's good to get to know you.

Warmly,

Lorraine

Lvash@optonline.net

Heather's symbol is a star, bright and clear in the darkest night sky.

Sam & Gloria Carr's son, Aaron (2-22-82) was killed in an auto accident, 7-28-99.

Dinah,

I want to express my appreciation for your commitments to all the parents who have lost a child or children. It has been about seven and a half years now since we lost Aaron and I am always ministered to in a special way when I get your card on his birthday and the card on the day that he left his earthly home. I am truly amazed at your energy and unfailing commitment to this mission. Many of us would just grow weary and withdraw to our own private misery and grief. Your efforts are most appreciated and you serve as an inspiration to all of us. I lost my mother last month just two days before Christmas. As I communicate with my brothers and sisters about this loss, we feel like young children who have lost the mother we need so much, even though some of us are grandparents ourselves.

Another thing that I am experiencing is the familiarity of this grief. I suppose each new grief takes us back so vividly to the old grief especially when it is someone so close to our heart. Thank you for all of the caring. I hope it has helped you the way you have helped me and my husband and so many others. I know your son, Jim, would be so pleased with you, his mother, for all of the hearts you have spoken to and the hope that you have inspired.

Gloria T. Carr

Mother of Aaron Michael Todd Carr 2-22-82 to 7-28-99

Aaron's symbols are a snowflake and the phrase, "Carpe Diem."

Barbi Kinne's son, Joe Frank Banks (10-30-77), completed suicide, 7-17-01.

Barbi's book, When Broken Hearts Choose to Stop Beating, has been published:

I have completed my book and it is now on sale. This book is about my 23-year-old son that chose to die, and the effects it has had on those left behind. I hope this book will prove beneficial to those that think they "just can't go on" when tragedy strikes. Part of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to, The American Foundation For Suicide Prevention <http://www.afsp>

*In hopes that others may be educated on the issue of suicide before it is too late, I am also hoping to begin, "**JoesFoundation**" from the books' proceeds. This foundation will help parents in need of financial assistance in the event of the death of their child to assure a proper burial for that child.*

Her book can be purchased from these websites:

<http://www.booksinprint.com>

<http://www.globalbooksinprint.com>

<http://www.amazon.com>

<http://www.abebooks.com>

<http://www.alibris.com>

<http://www.Borders.com>

<http://www.target.com>

Joe Frank's symbol is "I Love You" hand sign for the deaf.

Bobby & Mary Caudill's son, Tommy (5-13-66), died from a heart problem, 1-19-83.

Mary needs our prayers:

Dear Dinah:

I just wanted to thank you for always remembering Tommy on his birthday and on the day he died. You will never know how much this means to me. I have never met you but feel as if I know you. I think any mother that has lost a child knows how another mother feels. Tommy was my breath. I miss him as much today as when he died 24 years ago. I have cancer now

but am doing well. Please keep me in your prayers as I will include you in mine.

*Thank you again and may God bless you always.
Mary Caudill*

Tommy's symbol is a cross-country runner.

I had the honor of being interviewed by Drs. Gloria and Heidi Horsley, on their radio program, "Healing the Grieving Heart." Their website address is <http://www.thegriefblog.com> It is a wonderful source of information, and as you read the website, you will recognize many of your fellow travelers' names.

I am passing this on to you because it definitely worked for me and we could all use a little more calmness in our lives. By following the simple advice I heard on the Dr. Phil show, I have finally found inner peace.

Dr. Phil proclaimed, "The way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you've started and never finished."

So, I looked around my house to see all the things I started and hadn't finished, and before leaving the house this morning, I finished off a package of Hershey kisses, a chocolate cheesecake, and a box chocolate Valentine candy I had bought for my husband.

You have no idea how wonderful I feel. Please pass this on to those you feel might be in need of inner peace.

My email address is: dinah@ucumberland.edu

The website's address is <http://www.ucumberland.edu/lamentations/>