
LAMENTATIONS

Issue 118

middle

March, 2008

It is time for you to put June 6 & 7 on your schedule for J.I.M.'s Conference. Within a week, you will be receiving complete information in the mail, unless I don't have your correct mailing address.

This is the last conference, so I hope I will get to see each one of you in Williamsburg, Ky on the University of the Cumberland's campus where we have so many memorials dedicated in memory of our children. These are very special places, and I want you to see them as we celebrate our children and their lives.

All the information about the conference will be on the web site. I hope you will read comments from those who have attended previous conferences. They will answer any questions you may have about whether or not to come. It is truly a healing time for all of us and showing the Smiths' "Space Between Breaths" documentary is going to be wonderful. Those of you who did not get a chance to come last year will now be able to see it. Even if you did see it last year, you will, I'm certain, see a lot you didn't remember. And at the end of the documentary, our children's pictures will be shown.

We are finishing up the bricks in J.I.M.'s Commons, so we are going to have a re-dedication. Wayne Perkins, my nephew, is going to play the bagpipes during the service. He and young Jim were like brothers, and Jim was going to his house when he was killed. Wayne is very special to me. He was born on my birthday and Jim was born on my sister's (his mother's) birthday.

There are going to be several surprises also. You know me, I love surprises. I ask this favor of you, please come if at all possible. I love each one of you and your children.

Grief Grafts

Terry & Wilma Caudill's daughter, Mandy (7-25-79), died from liver failure resulting from by-pass surgery, 1-28-05.

Wilma tells of so many deaths in their family:

Dear Dinah,

I have been going to write you before now, but I just didn't seem to get around to it. I got the card you sent today and I really enjoyed it, thanks, it really does help me to know that someone else knows how I feel. I lost someone that was so very precious in my life.

Mandy and Tera, her sister, were the world to me. Tera's getting married in June. She has become a nurse and I know Mandy would have been proud of her. Mandy wanted to go back to school and take computer lessons. She was good on the computer, but she got too sick to go.

I have had a lot of deaths in my family since Mandy died. In 2006, I had a first and second cousin and an aunt to die. While my aunt's funeral was being held, my sister found out she had colon cancer. She went in the hospital in November to have surgery and was in there on Thanksgiving. She didn't get to be with us. She was home for Christmas and we all spent Christmas Eve with her. She was born on Christmas day. She started taking Chemo in January, 2007 and got very sick. She was put on life-support for 14 days. She seemed to be getting better, so she stayed a few days and came home.

In March, 2007, I had an uncle to die. My sister was told she was cancer free, but she still had to take chemo. The first treatment made her hair fall out, but she kept taking chemo and was in and out of the hospital. On June 28th, she was put back on life-support. She laid a day or two and they called all of the family in and told us she was dying. Her husband had the life-support removed and she died on the 29th.

While all of this was going on with her, the Lord came into my life. I had been going to church every chance I got after Mandy died. I prayed day and night. He answered my prayer. On the 17th of June, Father's Day, I joined the church and was baptized on the 24th, five days before my sister died. I had the Lord on my side through her funeral and He helped me.

This January 28th, Mandy has been gone 3 years. I prayed all day Sunday and all night, and Monday morning to let me go to Mandy's resting place and hold up and not cry. The Lord answered my prayer. I went and stayed awhile by her grave, and I felt it helped me. This week has gone by okay. I still have good days and bad, but I know now that the Lord is with me through everything. He is so wonderful; I praise Him for everything He's done for me and all the prayers He has answered.

I have just found out that I have a first cousin and so does Terry, that has cancer. Terry's brother found out he had cancer in August. It was all in his body. He died September 4th. My sister was 58 years old. Terry's brother was 47. Their deaths were a little over 2 months apart. It has been hard, but the Lord knows best. I'm so happy He's in my life. I read my Bible about every day. I believe Mandy would be proud of her Mother.

Sending you lots of love and thanks for being a good person and friend to me.

*Love ya,
Wilma*

Mandy's symbol is a dolphin.

**Angela Fagan's son, Chris (5-22-84), died in an auto accident,
12-22-01.**

Angela challenges us as we face each new day:

Dear Dinah,

I am writing this a little late to thank you for your beautiful card on Chris' angel date. As always, I am touched and moved by your sentiments and that you continue to remember me.

I hope your holidays were peaceful and that the new year brings you all the great things you so deserve.

I wish I could say the holidays are getting easier, but I would be lying. I find I can't wait till they're over. Another year without Chris, how many more, I wonder?

I can only hope to meet each new day with strength and dignity. People like you sure help. God Bless you for all your acts of kindness.

*Love,
Angela*

Angela's symbol for Chris is that she is missing half of her soul.

Guy & Debbie Jackson's son, Michael (2-12-82), died in an auto accident, 12-15-02.

Dinah,

Thanks so much for your sweet e-mail remembering Michael on his birthday. You know how much it means when other people remember your child's birthday. The words of the poem express our feelings about how much we miss our child. I would also add to the poem that I wish I could have just one more bear hug from Michael. Michael always showed us affection, even in public, which is unusual for a young man. After finishing every wrestling match he would run up in the bleachers and give me a big sweaty bear hug. We miss him so much!

Thanks, Dinah, for your love and compassion towards others. You are an angel to people on earth that have lost their children!

Love,

Guy and Debbie Jackson

Michael's symbol is a shining star.

Ed & Brenda Harvey's daughter, Shay (11-7-69), died in an auto accident, 1-4-93.

Shay is remembered after all these years by a close friend:

Dinah,

As always it is so good to hear from you. My Shay has now been gone from me for 15 years. One of her closest friends from Pharmacy School just had a baby girl, Avery Elizabeth. I sent her a Precious Moments Bible in memory of our Shay. I had a card from her Mom, Allison, yesterday. She is now a pharmacist in Tallahassee, Fl.

She said someday she would explain to her daughter just who her friend Shay was and how she was so fortunate to have such a friend! Did my heart good to hear this!

Brenda Harvey

Shay's symbol is a RX pestle & mortar.

Gary & Connie Hale's son, Tim (11-77-78), died in an auto accident, 2-11-04.

Connie can see blessings through her grief:

Thanks for remembering our son, Tim. February is a hard month for our family since the loss of Tim. My great nephew's 1st birthday would have been the 23rd; my grandmother's birthday was in February, and I lost a dear friend to a car accident last February. We are celebrating my Mom's 75th birthday this weekend so not all is bad. I'm blessed to still have my parents, 3 wonderful step-children, 5 grandchildren, and one more on the way in April. Just continue to keep us in your prayers, and I will you also.

Connie

Tim's symbol is a willow tree.

Harold & Pat McReynolds' son, Steve (7-28-66), died in an auto accident, 7-16-07.

Steve was loved by everyone in his community. This article was in the Murray Ledger & Times about Steve:

By Eric Walker
Editor

It would take more than one word to sum up Steve McReynolds, though a common theme could be found on that list.

Words that tend to come to people's minds when thinking of his familiar face greeting folks inside Wal-Mart include "laughter," "smile," "attitude" and "kindness."

Another word — and perhaps the foundation to his life and legacy — is “character.”

But even though his life was tragically cut short last July in a car crash, Steve McReynolds’ character and the other attributes he was known for will hopefully carry on and a new generation will learn more about him and his soul that crossed all boundaries in the Murray and Calloway County community.

The McReynolds family, the Alpha Department of the Murray Woman’s Club, Character Counts Coalition of Murray-Calloway County, and the Murray Ledger & Times are backing the Steve McReynolds Community Essay Contest with the theme of “A Story of Good Character Counts!” The contest is open to youth in third grade through adults, all residents and students enrolled in local public or private schools, GED students and home school students.

The contest, which carries cash awards for winners of \$100 to \$500, is seeking personal stories of positive character that hinge on the six Character Counts pillars of responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, trustworthiness and respect.

For Trish Barton and Linda Avery, the idea of offering a literacy contest based on good character was a no-brainer. And both ladies said so was the link between character and McReynolds.

“We kept coming back to Steve,” said Avery, chair of the Character Counts Coalition.

Barton, who is with the Coalition and the Alpha Department, explained the Woman’s Club annually holds an essay contest as a focus of its goal to promote literacy, but then decided to work with Character Counts. And with McReynolds’ name on everyone’s lips, the groups sought his family’s blessing.

“Pat McReynolds, Steve’s mother plans to give a scholarship based on character (through the Steve McReynolds for Character Memorial Fund), and it just sounded like a good marriage,” Barton recalled. “Things just fell into place.”

*Pat said she and the entire family were honored by the proposal. “What a wonderful compliment that he had all the traits of character that **Character Counts** represent,” she said.*

“As a mother, you think your son is the greatest — and I’m no exception! But to think other people feel the same way...”

The family wrote in the contest pamphlet: “We hope that through this contest, his story will continue to be an inspiration to the community he loved so dearly. Steve faced many obstacles through his life, yet he never let

go of his optimistic nature, his unique laugh, and his ability to find joy in everything...”

“Steve’s gentle heart and loving spirit was never judgmental. Many people from all walks of life were touched and encouraged by him. He was faithful to his friends and family. More importantly, though, to his God, who blessed him with qualities that allowed him to make a difference in thousands of lives.”

Following Steve’s death, the family was presented two books from Wal-Mart’s local store managers which were filled with condolences, messages and stories of Steve from countless customers who were greeted by Steve when they walked into the store.

In the books, Pat highlighted recurring words such as “smile,” “kindness” and “laughter.” “These are things mentioned by almost everyone who wrote and how he touched their lives,” Pat said.

She has even been approached by people — out of the blue — with stories of Steve’s impact on their lives.

“One young man asked ‘Can I give you a hug?’ He gave me a hug and said how important Steve had been in his life,” she recalled. “He said ‘My wife and I changed our lives because of Steve. We have two children and we tell them about him everyday. I hope they can grow up and be like Steve.’”

And his popularity and personality spread beyond the city limits of Murray, as well. Pat even tells the funny story of her and Steve being at a wedding in northern Michigan and visiting a restaurant.

“I heard these two girls say ‘Steve!’ and I thought ‘No. Not here!’ But they had gone to Murray State and recognized him,” she added. “Everywhere we went, ‘Steve’ was the first word we heard.”

Pat said her son’s attitude of simply being himself and not judging others was at the core of his connection with others.

“He was a true success story. He didn’t have to be president or a professional. Just by being himself,” she said, “he touched more lives than any politician or professional I’ve ever known.”

Avery, who is in her first year as Character Counts Coalition chair, said connecting Steve to character is easy because his impact was — and is — felt by people of all walks of life.

“He was always happy. He spoke to everyone. You’d see him in church and he just radiated happiness,” she recalled. “We need more people like that.”

And, Avery added, perhaps learning of Steve McReynolds’ story will help identify more people like that.

“Hopefully this will spread through the community so people can embrace these traits and make them alive in our lives,” she said.

For additional information, contact Trish Barton at 293-7127 or bartonbilltrish@bellsouth.net

The following article was in the Murray High School paper, The Black & Gold, and was written by Shawn Kinsey, co-editor:

Friday, January 25, 2008

Friendly, kind, affable, jolly...all are words that well describe Steve McReynolds; a young man, and Murray High graduate 1987, who's life was tragically cut short at age 40 in a car crash July 14, 2007.

Family, friends, co-workers at Wal-Mart and Murray Supply, and the rest of the community knew McReynolds for his good traits of character, which ultimately set the foundation for the influential life he led. McReynolds' character is one of the things that sparks memories about him, and carries on his legacy today.

The McReynolds family, contacted by the Alpha Department of Murray Women's club, Character Counts coalition of Murray-Calloway County, and Murray Ledger & Times are working together to coordinate a community writing contest. This contest will give writers the opportunity to share their story of good character.

The essay contest is open to community residents only (all of Calloway County) or must be a student in public schools (grades 3-12), private schools, GED or home schools. MSU students qualify as well.

Students may participate individually or through their individual schools.

The prompt is as follows: Essays must relate to an understanding of the value of possessing good character traits. These essays are to be typed, double spaced, with one inch margins.

The pages of the essay must be numbered and the title of the essay must be included on the top right hand side of each page.

A cover page must be included, providing the title of the essay, name of author; school, grade, address and phone number of the author are also required.

Grades three through five should produce an essay one to three pages in length; page length for grades 6-12, adult community, and MSU students should be two to four pages.

Each participant will receive recognition; and winners will be rewarded.

Steve's symbol is a red spotted purple butterfly.

John & Susan Warren's son, John, III (5-5-84), was killed in a motorcycle accident, 10-1-07.

John and Susan wrote about John, III's life in first person:

Hello... my name is John Franklin Warren, III. I grew up and lived in Georgia most of my life and moved up to Kentucky to be with my parents in August of 2007. I have so many hobbies, including riding my motorcycle, joy riding in my truck, riding dirt roads, mud bogging, riding four wheelers, fishing.... and spending time with my friends and family. The church and the Lord have become a big part of my life here lately. I love the church I had been attending here in Kentucky. The church has done amazing things for me in so many different ways. I wish everyone could feel the peace and comfort I do when I am there. When I lived in Georgia I was always on the go. I had taken on some bad habits, ways of life that I wasn't proud of. My life... my path... wasn't righteous. I was lost. I made a decision to make changes. I wanted and longed for a better relationship with my family and a chance to clearly let them know I wanted and needed them with me every day. I wanted my life to be wholesome and fulfilled with the things and people I cared most for. So I made the change. I love them all so much- the ones nearby and far away, but I needed to work at it- I needed to be able to be pure and true in my ways of loving them. So I moved to Kentucky to start this new way of life. I made new friends, was closer with my family than I had been in years and worked hard at being the Son, Brother, Friend and Love that I was deep down in my heart. I am so proud of the man that I have become. It's hard every day, but I have the Lord with me and he helps me and I am grateful for that. I realize my faults and wrongs and I know there is nothing I can't conquer because I do have that relationship with the Lord now. As you all know- I recently had a wreck on my bike and I can't be with you or talk to you on the phone every day like we used to. But I miss you all. I miss my Momma and my Dad and my Sister and I miss the chance to hug them and be held by them. I miss my friends- the ones who truly love me and care for me, and I miss my one true love. But it's all okay, I'm okay and in a good place. It's hard but I found my way now... I made my peace and

learned to have faith. With that... I now rest wholeheartedly with joy in my eternal life. I am no longer lost... I get to enjoy the most important things in my life from another place... I get to enjoy my friends and family and my love from a place where I can watch them learn, love and grow. I do miss them and I know they miss me too. I miss you guys... But you need to know that I am here with you. If you are missing me... then just call my name- talk to me, leave me a message and think of whatever it is that we use to do that made you laugh and kept us close. I'm here, I'm there... I can hear you, I can read your messages, I will answer you... just be patient!! Don't ever doubt me... believe in me, have faith in me and I will always be with you. Until we are together again..... John Franklin, our son, Fallen But Not Forgotten

Son~

I haven't seen or heard from you lately. I miss you, I miss that smile of yours & yes, your big hugs.

I know I haven't told you nearly enough how proud I am to have you as my son, but I'm hoping that's something you've always known. I once told you that the special love we had... The love between a father and his son would never die... No matter what ever happened. And so it is... you've passed over...but our love for each other goes on, whether you're here or there.

Oh! Since you haven't been around lately to drive your "Black Truck" or put your arms around your Sweetheart, I thought I'd do both for you! Come see me son.

*Love always and forever,
Dad~*

We thought John's symbol would be a horse. Ever since he was 5 years of age he would scream every time he saw a horse. Shortly after his death, we went to a friend's house and a horse was in the field with several others and out of the blue this horse came running as fast as he could toward our truck. We instantly thought of our son.

We have made our reservations for the conference.

You can read more about John on his website:

www.myspace.com/johnfranklin4ever

John's symbol is a horse.

Bobby & Linda Parsons' daughter, Tressa (6-10-69), was killed in an auto accident by a drunk driver, 2-4-00.

Linda wrote the following letter:

Dinah, thanks for the card you sent us. I also wanted to let you know that because of your web site I got in touch with a friend of Tress's that I have been trying to find since Tress was killed. She said that she was watching TV and saw a girl that reminded her of Tress and thought she would get on the internet and try to find her. When she typed Tress's name in, it brought up her birth date and her death date. That was something she couldn't believe; they had been such good friends at EKV (Eastern Kentucky University). Then she read the letter about Tressa that I had sent you. Tress's friend lived in Washington and I had no idea how to get in touch with her. The date on the letter she wrote us was dated the same day I was looking through pictures and found a picture of them at graduation.

Linda Parsons

Tressa's symbols are angels, butterflies, hearts, & smiley face.

Mark & Mary Massarella's daughter, Natalie (12-16-83), suffocated in a cedar chest, 2-24-99.

Mary ministers to other parents by giving them angel pins:

Dear Dinah,

Although we have never met I feel we are friends. Thank you for all the letters and notes remembering our beloved daughter Natalie Marie Massarella.

We find it hard to believe that she has been gone from us 9 years.

I am sorry that I have never sent a picture of her to you. She was a very sweet and kind hearted girl. I truly believe she is our own little angel watching over us.

I lost my mom on Oct.7, 2007 and she had a long illness. After her passing, my sister who was with mom looked out the window and saw 3

mourning doves sitting on a telephone wire. We had been telling mom that Natalie, Dad and her mom were waiting for her. It was like our sign from God that they were there to meet her.

I have met others who have lost a child. I give them a little angel pin with the child's birth stone. I get them at Hallmark. I have worn out my pin for Natalie, many times over, until a new pin replaces it. I wear it every day. When I think of Natalie I touch it and say a prayer for her.

*You are a blessing to all of us. Thank you again for your kindness.
God Bless,
Mary Massarella*

Natalie's symbol is an angel pin.

Joe & Ann Holmes' daughter, Jean (9-4-84), died in an auto accident, 10-23-02. Their son, Tim (12-18-74) died from diabetes complications, 1-21-08.

Joe has a grief web site that he started after Jean's death. He and Ann have just lost another child, Tim:

Dear, Dinah

I would appreciate links to our children on your site:

Jean <http://finditmall.com/grief/jean/jean.htm>

Tim <http://finditmall.com/grief/Tim/tim.htm>

I have placed Jim on my list of memorials at <http://finditmall.com/grief/dir-grief.htm> and your LAMENTATIONS link at the bottom of the memorial list.

Thank you for your empathy, prayers and sharing links.

You have a great site with a lot of work on it and I appreciate seeing others doing something good for free.

Joe Holmes

I just read almost every page on your site and the last newsletter. I am very impressed with the remarkable service you do for others. Our loss is great but not nearly what it would be to lose an only child like you have. Our remaining four children and twelve grandchildren have been a great strength and blessing to us. Your loss is greater but temporary, the day will come you will embrace your son again and God will grant to him greater

blessings in heaven. Also of great importance, our angel children worry about us just as we miss them. If we become despondent and do not progress with a heart full of light and trust in the Savior, it impedes their joy in Heaven.

A Sunday school teacher once asked their class what character in the Bible would you like to be? Several answered with the names of various well known prophets and disciples and then the class fell silent as one said, "I would be the one who carried the Savior's cross." It is the little non glamorous often spontaneous acts that count the most, just as your son did; he was a wonderful young man.

Your kindness to reach out to others is a great example. You have learned that the Savior blesses those who bear their cross and do not hide their light but become good Samaritans giving light to others. Service lightens the burden we carry. May God bless you and your husband in your wonderful work.

You may place me on your "corresponding with other parents" page if you want, and I would love to receive your newsletter.

*Thank you,
 Joe Holmes*

I encourage you to read about these two special young people on their web sites.

Jean's symbol is a long-stemmed red rose. Tim's symbol is a silver trumpet.

Luther & Rosemary Smith's sons, Drew (4-27-74), and Jeremiah (7-4-77) were killed in an auto accident, 7-23-92.

Luther and Rosemary were at the dedication of the garden in memory of David Cooper at the McCallie School where all of the Smiths' children attended and where they also have a memorial scholarship. The family of these young men wished to create a lasting tribute by giving other boys the opportunity to enjoy the "wonderful experience Drew and Jeremiah had at their beloved McCallie." There are no restrictions on the expenditure of the funds.

The following article was written by Clint Cooper in the Chattanooga Times Free Press, February 12, 2008, about the documentary, “Space Between Breaths:”

Documentary explores families’ grief

A documentary film produced by two former Chattanoogaans and nominated for the Sundance Film Festival will have its first public screening Wednesday at McCallie School.

“Space Between Breaths,” produced by Luther and Rosemary Smith of Beattyville, Ky., focuses on 12 families who have lost children and the grief that became a motivational and transformational force in each family.

The documentary was first screened in Lexington, Ky., at a private showing in May but could not be shown publicly until Sundance officials decided whether to accept it.

“I felt there was a message for everyone about what is really important in life, what really matters,” said Mrs. Smith, whose sons Drew and Jeremiah died in an automobile accident in 1992. “It has a broader message of hope, and we all need that.”

Drew had graduated from McCallie the spring before he died, while Jeremiah had been a rising sophomore. When the family’s third son, Jordan, entered the school, the Smiths moved to Chattanooga to be with him.

“Space Between Breaths,” which ultimately was not accepted by Sundance but was sent to 18 other film festivals, will be screened at McCallie one year to the week of the death of David Cooper, a 17-year-old sophomore at the school who collapsed and died after a crew team practice.

Mrs. Smith, a pharmacist by trade, dedicates most of her time now to seeking out and helping families such as the Coopers deal with the death of a child. To date, she has sent out more than 5,000 free packets of books and materials to help families cope with their losses.

A documentary, Mrs. Smith said, would be an even “more visual” testament to the potential healing effects of grief.

The project took nearly six years.

Mrs. Smith said her first step was to find the families she wanted to be a part of the documentary.

“We were asking them to share their innermost thoughts,” she said. “A lot came aboard quickly. Some were reluctant.”

The Kentucky company Big Sky Media — principally Chip and Anne Swetnam — was selected to do the cinematography.

“We wanted people who had the same heart, the same vision,” said Mrs. Smith, who prepared the questions and general outline for the documentary.

During filming, she said, she served as crew for the Swetnams as they crisscrossed the country to tape at the homes of families who had suffered the loss of children and the activities that helped define their grief.

Richard Fong Zhu, a McCallie student the Smiths took into their home as a sponsor family and consider their fourth son, edited the film with Mrs. Smith over a two-year period.

“He said, ‘I don’t know how to do it, but we’ll learn,’” she said.

Mrs. Smith said they poured over 33 hours of interviews with families, background footage and assorted photographs and video clips of the children who died.

“To condense it into less than two hours was difficult,” she said, “but we did it.”

Among the documentary’s 12 families are Joe and Ann Kechter, whose son was slain in the 1999 Columbine High School massacre in Colorado.

“There are so many people out there,” Mrs. Kechter told the Rocky Mountain News in 2007. “They don’t get that kind of support. Hopefully (the film) will help them, give them comfort.”

The original score and songs on the documentary are by Cindy Bullens, a two-time Grammy nominee and former backup singer for Elton John.

A woman who waited to be last in line at a book signing for Mrs. Smith in Columbia, S.C., gave her a compact disc by the singer, who had lost her 11-year-old daughter to cancer.

“The minute I heard her,” she said, “I had to find her.”

Three of the songs on the “Space Between Breaths” documentary are from “Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth,” the release by Ms. Bullens that Mrs. Smith was given at the book signing.

Mrs. Smith and her husband self-financed the documentary, the “conservative” \$200,000 cost of which did not include the editing equipment they purchased.

She said it is to be determined whether they will sell copies of the documentary to recoup the cost of making it, include it in the grief packets she sends out, or both.

Diane Cooper, the mother of the sophomore who died at McCallie nearly a year ago, attended the first screening of “Space Between Breaths” in May.

She said her husband and her late son's twin brother were "not thrilled" to go and that none of them were sure they "wouldn't go screaming" out of the theater. However, she said, "we all ended up thinking it was a very important part of our (grieving) process."

"(The documentary) is extremely powerful and inspirational in the sense that families tested by fire can rise from the ashes with strength and clarity they didn't possess before their tragedy," Mrs. Cooper said.

The Signal Mountain woman said she is convinced even people with the greatest empathy and the greatest imagination can't fathom the death of a child, but she said Mrs. Smith's personal experience has allowed her to know how to help.

After her son's death, said Mrs. Cooper, who had lived in Chattanooga only six months, "people kept saying, 'I hope you'll talk with Rosemary, I hope you'll talk with Rosemary,' but I didn't even know who Rosemary was."

Finally, she asked, was told about Mrs. Smith and sent her an e-mail two weeks after David died.

Mrs. Cooper said the packet she received from the Kentucky woman had "something in there for everyone. The amount of time and energy that must go into it is amazing."

The documentary is just the latest addition.

"Labor of love doesn't even begin to address what Rosemary has done for so many families," she said.

Drew & Jeremiah's symbols are yellow butterflies.

Mike & Diane Cooper's son, David (2-7-90), died at rowing practice, 2-14-07.

To observe the first anniversary of David's death, the Coopers dedicated a garden in his memory at McCallie School where the Smiths' children also attended.

This email from Diane:

The name for the space is "Memorial Walk." We were really clear in the planning stages of this garden that we wanted it to be a space where all

boys whose lives had been cut painfully short could be remembered -- a symbol of hope for the school community that love and memories never die as long as we continue to foster them. Dr. Kirk Walker, McCallie's headmaster, wrestled with names for the space and finally put it out to faculty members for recommendations. "Memorial Walk" is the name that one of the teachers suggested. We thought it was perfect.

We are working with McCallie on an annual ceremony for the boys that will use Memorial Walk to remember those we have lost. It will involve writing messages of hope -- little prayers -- on small plastic discs and hanging them from the branches of the trees, like ornaments. I am not sure when we will do the first one. I am pushing for it to be a Valentine's Day tradition (since David died on Valentine's Day), but Dr. Walker is thinking more pragmatically about possibly having better weather for the outdoor ceremony in the spring time.

Memorial Walk Commemorated With Special Service

One year to the day of David Cooper's tragic death, his family and friends gathered with their McCallie family to dedicate Memorial Walk, a place of reflection on the school's quadrangle...



Above is a stitched shot from the dedication of Memorial Walk, which stretches from the flagpole and stone monuments for those alumni killed in service to country to the side of Tate Hall, where a sculpture memorializing David Cooper was placed.

The Upper School student body gathered in the quadrangle on Valentine's Day to commemorate **Memorial Walk**.

The area, directly across from the [Hunter Arts Building](#), includes the school's War Memorial, recognizing those alumni killed in service to their country. The ceremony also officially honored the sculpture by Jack Denton, chairman of the art department, crafted in memory of David Cooper. It was in his memory, and in honor of his family, that the ceremony was held on February 14, a year to the day after David's [tragic death](#).

The service included remarks from Headmaster Kirk Walker '69 and a message from Middle School Chaplain Jerry Ferrari (*pictured below*), prayers from Upper School Head Kenny Sholl and Upper School Chaplain John Rogers, and songs from the McCallie Men's Ensemble.

To the stone tablets of the War Memorial was added one on which were



written words from a poem by English teacher Kemmer Anderson:

*Their names echo from a teacher's roll book.
Remembered now as heroes from our youth,
Their deeds reflect the lives Plutarch saw
In a mirror of honor - truth - duty.
Their monument, a voice of stone, now speaks.*

The plaque under Mr. Denton's sculpture reads:

*In Memory
David Grant Porter Cooper '09
February 7, 1990 - February 14, 2007*

*Artist Student Athlete
Young Man of Integrity
And Idealism*

Given by Family and Friends

Additional photos from the dedication can be viewed at photos.mccallie.org under "School Life & Other Events."



<http://mccallie.org/Internet/Default.aspx?pid=89&view=ViewArticle&articleId=8095>

David's symbol is a cardinal.

**Marge Semons' son, Robert, III (2-9-67), was murdered,
7-29-00.**

Marge tells how she celebrated Robert's birthday:

*OH DINAH--IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY-ROBERT WAS BORN--I BOUGHT FLOWERS THIS MORNING-SOMETHING TOLD ME TO CELEBRATE--AND IT WAS EARLY AND I DIDNT THINK OF THE DATE WHEN I BOUGHT THEM -BEAUTIFUL RED CARNATIONS --GOD IS GOOD--IT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL THIS MORNING AS I WAS DRIVING TO THE STORE--THE SUN WAS JUST COMING UP AND I THOUGHT HOW BEAUTIFUL ALL THIS IS---I ENJOY THE MORNINGS -BUT FOR SOME REASON I WAS VERY HAPPY THIS MORNING LIKE I WAS WHEN ROBERT WAS BORN--SO HAPPY TO SEE HIM AND WHAT JOY I FELT IN MY HEART LIKE I FELT THIS MORNING---ONLY GOD CAN DO THIS FOR US. IT'S LIKE ROBERT WAS TRYING TO TELL ME HE IS HAPPY AND OK AND HE WANTS ME TO BE HAPPY TO. I AM GOING TO LIGHT HIS CANDLE TODAY AND PUT THE FLOWERS ON HIS TABLE WITH THE CROSS--I AM SURE HE KNOWS HE IS LOVED VERY MUCH--HE WAS MY FIRST BORN AND I COULDN'T BELIEVE HE REALLY BELONGED TO HIS FATHER AND ME -WHAT A CELEBRATION--HIS FATHER GOT ME RED ROSES. I COULDN'T STOP SMILING. HE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL.
LOVE MARGE*

Robert's symbols are butterflies and crosses.

Tara Walker's son, Jeremy, (5-30-80), died from an accidental overdose, 9-14-06.

Tara tells us about Jeremy and explains his symbols:

Dinah,

I want to tell you about Jeremy.

His name is Michael Jeremy Walker born May 30, 1980, and he has been my angel since that day.

He had beautiful black hair and dark eyes that sparkled with personality. He was a very compassionate child and grew into a compassionate young man. When he walked into the room everyone smiled because his smile was contagious. He could make the saddest person laugh, it was his gift. If he knew someone needed something, he didn't sleep until he felt like he made a difference for them. He always told me, Mama you've never walked in their shoes; you don't know how they feel until you have. I was afraid he was gullible to people that would use him. So I would try to discourage him from being around such people. He could stand up and

shake hands with the president and turn around and hug a street person in the same minute.

He just had this attitude that all were equal.

He became a dad at the age of 20 and his little boy was his whole life. It was a difficult rocky marriage because the mother was a few years older and was street wise. It was his son that mattered. His son's name is Michael. Jeremy became addicted to pain meds after going to the doctor a few years before he left us.

Then he went on to other drugs. I have to add tho, in his teens he never gave me a moment's trouble, he was there for me and was proud to be a mama's boy. After his addiction grew, he began to realize he needed help. His wife was and is still an addict. He went into a rehab and became very involved in his program.

He left his wife and brought his son to live with me. He felt hope and was becoming his old self again, when he learned that his wife had gone to jail for drugs. He wanted to help her and he went to see her.

He wanted everyone to be ok. I was afraid of her. His urge for pain pills became strong again and he knew he had to do something, so he talked to a doctor who recommended methadone. I was livid about this. This was the same week Anna Nicole's son overdosed on methadone so we argued about this "methadone program" that he thought would save him. On Sept. 13, 2006, he went to the clinic and started the "methadone" treatment. I didn't see him that night, but I understand that it really put him out of it. He went out with my nephew that night and took a pain pill and some other drugs then went to my mother's house. His son had gone back home to his mother. On Sept 14, I woke up, and I remember thinking, this is the most beautiful day I've seen in so long. I had no idea what had happened the night before. I'm not a euphoric person, but this was just a beautiful day. I called my mother's house that morning and asked for Jeremy, she told me he was still asleep. I went from euphoria to panic. I started crying for her to go get him that I thought he must be in a coma, she told me to calm down, he was asleep and I was overreacting. She laid the phone down and I heard her scream, call 911. I did and I prayed all the way to her house, when I got there the paramedics wouldn't let me in. I saw my family crying outside. I fell to my knees and that's about all I remember until everything was over.

I named him Michael because of Michael the archangel. He was always my baby. Kind, loving and hilarious.

He never had a problem with anyone. He loved baseball, people, and laughter. His greatest love was his son. He has a sister who is 13 months older and she is still overwhelmed too.

He was baptized on NYE of 2000; we know he is in heaven. I know that God sent him here for 26 yrs to show us how to be kind, because he was the kindest loving person I've ever known.

I do want to place my email address up to be contacted by other mothers and families, and his death was ruled accidental overdose. Dinah, I still can't go to his grave. I still can't look at his picture. I still can't believe this is real. I know he would tell me to be strong for Michael and my other grandchildren. He couldn't take anyone being sad. I will go on for my daughter, who needs help because they were more than siblings, they were best friends. Her children and his.

I would like his symbol to be an angel, because he always has been one. I would like his symbol to be frogs, because he collected frog things. His name being Jeremy from Jeremiah, so his nick name was frog by his friends. At his eulogy one speaker talked about him as being compared to the rainbow, so that also would be a symbol I would want for him. I could go on and on and I hope someday, someone wants me to go on and on about him. Until I see him again. Please place my email address on the correspondence page, his birthday and his angel day. His reason for leaving was accidental overdose.

Thank you for sharing Jim and making a difference for all of us as we walk this sad walk.

Tara Walker

Jeremy's symbols are an angel, frog, and a rainbow.

Randy & Jennifer Janssen's son, Kyle, (6-21-85), was killed in an auto accident, 2-24-03.

Kyle was an organ donor and so much more:

Hi Dinah

Thank you so much for you interest in Kyle. I am sending this with a photo attached. This is the only one I have on this computer. It is a full family photo. One that means the world to me since it is the last family portrait before Kyle died. Still so strange to see "Kyle" and the word "died" typed together.

Kyle is our youngest son. He was 17 at the time of his accident. He was involved in a single car accident when he lost control of his car (speeding) and rolled down an embankment. Kyle was the driver. Kyle suffered severe head injury. David, his friend and passenger in the car, walked away from the accident. How does that happen??

Kyle was life-flighted to the hospital where he was kept on life support for one day. With his brain injury, there was no hope. We agreed to organ donation and Kyle was taken into surgery at 7pm the following day. His liver, kidney (discovered he only had one), pancreas, heart valves and eyes continue to live on in this world, which brings me some comfort. We are in touch with the young girl who received his eyes. I can't tell you the emotion I feel when I look into her eyes and know I am looking into the same eyes as our son.

Kyle loved music. Over the past couple of years before his death he had really gotten into using his computerized keyboard and "mixing" all kinds of sounds, beats and rhythms. I was amazed at what he could create. I am also so thankful for the music he did make as it is wonderful to be able to hear his voice on CD. He loved motorcycles and rode dirt bikes with his dad for several years. Once a license & a car came into play, the motorcycles took a back seat. He was working two jobs which helped support his music and was a senior in high school. He had a steady girlfriend at the time of his death. She has had a struggle over these past years. Kyle will always be perfect in her eyes now. That is hard to measure up to.

I miss him every day, as I know you miss young Jim. I smile when I think of Kyle's sense of humor and his smile. He had such exuberance for life. I have reached a point in my journey where I am thankful for the gift of Kyle in my life. It is still so hard to believe sometimes.

Dinah, thank you for all you do for bereaved parents. The J.I.M. conference I attended was my first and so memorable.

I have almost written a book :) Thank you again for your interest. Take care of your fibromyalgia. I hope you are well.

*Blessing to you,
Jennifer Janssen
Kyle's mother*

Kyle's symbols are rainbows.

Stephen & Mel Prue's son, Jeff, (3-10-90), died from auto-asphyxiation, 11-7-04.

Mel died 2-28-08. She wanted to be with Jeff on his birthday:

Meredith Anne (Barros) Prue, 42, of Ellensburg, WA and formerly of Plymouth MA died unexpectedly at her home on February 28. Known as "Mel" or "Auntie Mel" by those who knew and loved her, she always had the ability to light up a room with smiles and laughter. She possessed the rare gift of keen wisdom and her unique perspective on life inspired many.

Mel went to heaven to join her son Jeffrey in time for his 18th birthday. The constant pain and anguish of losing Jeffrey over three years ago had become too much for her to endure. Those who knew Mel, know that not being able to leave home and not being social was not the kind of person she was, but rather who she had become. Mel was a loving, thoughtful, and caring person with a wonderful sense of humor who always had time for family and friends. She was the type of person that made you feel like you had been friends forever from the moment you met her. Throughout her life, Mel helped so many people and always put their needs before her own. Mel was there for everyone, young and old alike. She became an advocate for warning people about dangerous games that are played by kids, which can result in their unintentional death. Countless tributes have been received from so many whose lives she touched. Mel will be greatly missed by all that were fortunate to have shared their lives with her in some way. Mel was born on December 27, 1965 in Providence R.I. to Vernon and Joyce Barros. She grew up in New York and Massachusetts. In 1997 she married Stephen Prue, and in 2003 they moved with Jeffrey to Ellensburg, WA. Mel was preceded in death by her father Vernon, Grandmother Vavor, and her beloved son Jeffrey. Mel is survived by her husband Stephen, mother Joyce, sisters Leslie and Stephanie, stepsons Graeme and Adam, nephews and niece Matthew, Alex and Hilary, aunts, uncles, cousins, countless friends, and the many people whose fleeting contact with Mel left an indelible mark on their lives.

There will be a Memorial Service held on March 10th (Jeff's Birthday) at 10:00 a.m. at Steward & Williams Tribute Center's Chapel on 3rd Avenue, Ellensburg WA followed by a balloon release. The release is part of a world-wide tribute to this wonderful person, which will take place across Australia and New Zealand, Brazil, Europe, and throughout North

*America. *****
*****To my wife, Meredith: My Love, God finally called you home to be reunited with Jeffrey. The difficult path you trod for the last 3 years has finally reached its end. You leave behind so many whose lives you have helped. I hope you now found the peace you so richly deserve, and that you and Jeff have a great birthday celebration. You taught me to love unconditionally, you taught me to forgive easily and to judge not. I Miss You Sooooo Much – I Love you, Stephen, xompl. Rest in Peace – My Angel*

Steve, her husband, needs our prayers and support. His email address is steveprue@inbox.com

You can light a candle and sign the guest book:
http://WWW.steward-Williams.Com//index.php?option=Com_content&task=view&id=86

Sue-Anne Aguilera has made 2 pages where you can sign the guest book. She will then send them to Steve.

[Remembering Mel](#)

<http://www.angelfire.com/nc2/treasuredthoughts/RememberingMel.html>

Jeff's symbols are drums and peace sign.

Dirk & Kathy Strunk's daughter, Katie, (2-5-91), died in a tornado that destroyed Enterprise High School, AL, 3-1-07.

Kathy wrote about her precious daughter:

Dear Dinah,

My husband Dirk joins me in thanking you for reaching out to us after our sweet daughter, Katie died in the March 1st tornado that destroyed

Enterprise High School. Hearing from other bereaved parents truly helps. Though we miss Katie terribly, we take great comfort in knowing that she is with the Lord. We look forward to our reunion day when together we shall bow before His throne.

I was there, only about ten feet from Katie, protecting my own students from the flying debris. Of course, I didn't know that the tornado would touch down on third hall, and bring a wall down on my beautiful daughter. Nevertheless, I do have guilt, especially since I had thought about asking her to come sit with me and my class. But of course, the "if onlys" don't bring me any peace.

In September I went back to the school and stood at the place where Katie died. I found her lint roller, her floss, and her colored pencils. Katie was the most prepared person you ever knew and her friends loved to look through her purse. Just the other day, one of her friends from band wrote on her my-space page that she missed Katie because she needed some scissors. Well Katie always had scissors, and tape, white out a sewing kit, a first-aid kit, gum, candy, and whatever else you might need.

I have enclosed one of my favorite pictures of her, taken last fall when she was just 15 at the Peanut Festival in Dothan, Alabama. She had a gorgeous smile. That is what most of her friends say they'll always remember. One of her friends from band gave us a pair of drumsticks on which he wrote, "To the happiest girl I ever met." That's Katie.

She spread sunshine wherever she went. Two thousand people attended her funeral and we had just moved here. Our preacher said, "How can one 16-year-old girl touch so many lives? I believe it was her mission from God." I think so too.

Again, thank you. We'll be praying for you until that Day when we will be with our children forever.

*Love,
Kathy Strunk*

Katie's symbol is a ladybug.

Jennifer Weeks' son, Joshua, (2-11-89), died from a brain tumor, 9-4-96.

Jennifer remembers all of our children:

Dear Dinah,

I have been meaning to write to you for many years now. I want to thank you for always remembering my son, Joshua.

Your name and newsletter was given to me by a good friend nearly 11 years ago. It was a gift to me and a comfort to see it arrive by mail. I was sorry to hear when it went to a website/e-mail as I do not own a computer or have e-mail but understand why it had to be done. Clearly it has been much work. But you have been able to touch many lives and bring us all closer together. I think of you as a dear friend, Dinah. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

Someday I'll make it to J.I.M.'s conference (Jennifer, this year is your last chance). It is such a nice thing. When I travel to Florida in the early spring down I-75 and pass the Cumberland Inn, I think of us all. It is usually deep in the night when I do, but my thoughts are always about all our children and the dome is lit so softly.

I hope all is well with you and your family. Once again, thank you for always remembering my son and for all that you do. I do think of your son and always remember you and your husband on special days. Take care.

*Love,
Jennifer*

Joshua's symbol is "sweet pea."

Marshall & Lois Powell's son, Tyler, (8-13-85), died in an auto accident, 3-13-02.

Tyler's parents tell us about him:

During the tragic loss of our only child in an auto accident on March 13, 2002, we never dreamed that one day we would say that we had lived a year without him. We didn't think life could possibly go on. But, God has shown us that He is faithful to His word. He has given us hope as we have held on to our son, and as we have tried to let him go. He has given us hope as we, his parents, tried not to live, yet had to live...

Picture a young teen, full of promise for the future, who loved life and lived each moment as if it were his last. Picture a teen whose High School graduation was only two months away. Picture a teen whose

ambition was to be an engineer with plans already in place to attend the University of Kentucky. This was Tyler...

Well known for his smile and "skip," Tyler was always happy. His joy not only radiated from his smile, but he walked with such a bounce that it appeared as if he were skipping. People of all ages were drawn to him like a magnet because he sincerely loved people. The most contentment he found was to be with someone, anyone! Tyler saw no difference in people...

Tyler was an encourager. His positive attitude was contagious, and his zest for life spilled out to everyone around him. He was a beloved soul mate to his dearest friends. He loved having his friends come and go as if our home was their home. And, as parents, we were delighted with our identity as, "Tyler's Mom and Dad." At the age of three, Tyler fell in love with four-wheelers and got his first one when he was four. "Riding the trails" was his lifelong passion, especially if he had someone to ride with him. He also enjoyed video games, fishing, camping, and hunting, but he wasn't content unless he was sharing these with a friend. So, it is obvious that his favorite pastime was hanging out with his friends. We believe he continues to do this in spirit...

At the end of this first year without Tyler, we are still frightened beyond words to think that a future without him continues to be our plight. Each holiday, birthday, and anniversary date serves as a reminder of what we had and what we have so tragically lost.

Part of us died when we were told that Tyler was gone. Our hearts were ripped from us leaving us with an enormous emptiness. Not only was Tyler our only child, he was also our best friend, and our reason for living. Our sweet and beautiful boy who captured our hearts and brightened our lives for sixteen and a half years is gone!! We have never before encountered such a crisis and challenge as the struggle to get through each day continues. The passion to see, touch, and hear him again is heart rending. Yet, unable to fully comprehend what has happened, we go on.

*We wait with hope
We ache with hope
We hold on with hope
We let go with hope
Cause we believe...*

You can read more about Tyler on his website:

Tyler's symbols are dragonflies.

Cathy Knapp's son, Russell, (3-25-67), died from a work-related accident, 10-23-07.

As an assignment from Cathy's grief group facilitator, she wrote this about Russell:

Along with Russell's extraordinary gifts in life, he was faced with equally difficult challenges. He had an insatiable curiosity and loved to read the newspaper and do the crosswords every day. However, his addiction to alcohol and drugs kept him from reaching his goals. As relapse is the nature of addiction, he was in and out of recovery for 20 of his 40 years.

Russell's size was intimidating – 6' 5" and about 250 lbs. His nickname was "silverback" – for the silverback gorilla. I have heard him called the "gentle giant" by his friends – he loved children and animals. His passion in life was football, although he excelled in all sports. Everyone always wanted Russell around because he was so much fun. He was thoughtful, kind and generous to everyone he met.

I called him my Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Although he never drank around me, I knew when he was not sober as I would not see much of him or hear stories about his activities. When he was doing well he jogged in Memorial Park, cleaned house (he called it "operation clean sweep") and participated in life fully. He struggled so much with addiction - he felt he wasn't capable of staying sober. A few months after he died I found a poem he wrote. It was not dated but I think he must have written it sometime during the last three or four months of his life.

Afraid of Death, Sick of Life

Afraid of death, sick of life. Take what's in between.
Eclipsed by a rolling shadow of doubt,
I cower somewhere in between.

My courage extinguished by a wave of doubt.
My hope trapped in a desperate gasp of air.
My direction wavering by a gale wind.
My confidence trampled by the weight of the fighting army that battles
Endlessly in the rolling fog of my mind.
I search for peace only because
I am afraid of death and sick of life.

I asked Cathy about a symbol for Russell and she said either a football or a guitar will work for Russell - probably football (he was chosen All State and All American).

Russell's symbol is a football & guitar.

Sherran McDonough's son, Chris, (9-6-70), died in an auto accident, 7-2-92. Her son, Michael (3-10-74) also died in an auto accident, 8-15-93.

Sherran reminds me that we must be more diligent in reminding people about our children's birth and angel dates. I start telling people several days ahead of Jim's birthday and angel day so I know they won't forget. They may not say anything to me, but I know they are remembering. I hope you will do the same thing.

Dinah.....

Bless you dear one.....your ministry is amazing. You are the only one, besides me, who remembers my son Michael.....I am grateful for your kindness.....you bless so many of us.

I pray I get to come to the celebration at last this year in June to finally get to meet you. You are my inspiration.

Have a joy filled day and a joy filled journey.

Blessings

Sherran McDonough

I asked Sherran if I could print her email:

Yes dear one, please feel free to use my email in your next newsletter.....

My granddaughter, Whitney Michael, Michael's daughter continues to be the joy of my life along with my other young grandson, Colin, who is the son of my youngest child, Keith. Whitney is considering becoming an architect, so much like her father's love of building and creating things.....you may recall, the symbol I chose for him was a hammer. She is an accomplished POINTE Ballerina and enjoys teaching and dancing 4 days a week. She is both beautiful and charming. I am so blessed by her presence in my life and an ever reminder of her father, Michael. Since her mother remarried, we do not celebrate Michael's "angel date" anymore. It must seem too painful for her mother to remember. Again, another reason why I am so grateful that you hold the sacred space in your thoughts and prayers for my beloved child, Michael. I am grateful to know that we pray together for him on those days. Thank you so very much for remembering Michael from the depth of my soul.

I love the way you refer to our children's "ANGEL DATES"....what a beautiful way of naming that day with a joyful meaning. You are a dear, a special person.....I hope to see you on OPRAH one day soon.....have you considered that? I am often very intuitive, and it seems that may be something you may want to consider. Just a thought.

My ministry is yet very undefined. I will be doing another wedding on April 12th, which I am looking forward to. I would love to be involved in a ministry in some hospital setting....and if God so desires, I feel confident that it will be forthcoming. My career as a realtor has taken a few turns lately and I am open to hear the voice of Spirit in directing me to "where shall I go and who shall I serve?"

Wishing you a Peace that surpasses all understanding.

*Blessings,
Sherran McDonough*

I told Sherran that she should write a book since she expresses herself so well. This was her answer. If any of you know of publishing houses that are looking for these types of books, please let me know.

I have in fact, written two books, one on death for children to read and one on divorce, but have not yet been able to get them into print and off the ground. I was very much led to write them to facilitate some type of healing for those who have had to go through the awful pain of divorce

and the other book was to help, in some small way, explain to children what happens when someone leaves them due to death. I ask that you keep those books in your prayers, and when the perfect time is right, I will be able to get them published and marketed with ease and joy!! And so it is...Amen!!!

My granddaughter, Whitney Michael, the Pointe Ballerina, is Michael's daughter. Her mother was two weeks pregnant when Michael made his transition to Spirit. Whitney will be 14 in April. She and her mother lived with me for 2 years after she was born and we are very close even now as she is a teenager! Her hair is very curly as her father's was....and she is a gentle spirit, as her father was and is even more so now in his heavenly home.

I asked Sherran if Whitney had read the book and if so, what was her reaction?

As for Whitney Michael, and her reaction to my book.....she was pleased....it is written about an actual trip we both took to the museum here in Louisville a few years ago.....and somehow or another the story gently unfolds and uses a melted container of ice to show the concept of transition....and illustrates that the essence remains intact. I had a local artist do all the paintings that are used in the book.....the little girl, of course, has curly, red hair....as does Whitney!. The artist knew Whitney because Whitney would accompany me at times while I was selling houses and I sold this artist a log cabin in LaGrange, Ky.

Chris' symbol is a football and Michael's symbol is a hammer.

Marie White's son, Chip Whitley, (9-24-62), died from undiagnosed diabetes/Pancreatitis, 3-10-97.

Dinah,

First, let me thank you for remembering my Chip on his angel anniversary. I appreciate this more than words can say. You are a very special, thoughtful lady.

Here is the memorial I placed in the Knoxville paper yesterday honoring Chip's memory. You have



asked me for a photo for several years. This is a good photo of him. It was taken at the reception for graduating seniors at UT in December 1992. It is one of very few that I have of him. He didn't take photos well. He was always "monkeying" around anytime we tried to take pictures of him - like looking cross-eyed at the camera, etc.

*He was such a terrific young man. He was committed to getting his undergraduate degree from UT (was 30 years old when he got it). But he was not a big UT sports fan. And he had a strong faith in God. My mother always called him her "little boy angel" when he was much younger. I think that suits him best: Little Boy Angel. He was such an easy child to raise.
Marie*

This is Chip's website:

http://www.geocities.com/%7Eatlantatcf/Chip_Whitley/Chip.html

Chip's symbol is a Little Boy Angel.

Margaret Hale's son, Larry Downing, (2-25-76), completed suicide, 3-11-95.

Margaret is just like we all are; some anniversaries and birthdays are harder than others. But you see she has learned from me what to do to make it easier.

Hi Dinah,

Thanks for the beautiful card that you made and sent to me on the 13th anniversary of my son, Larry Downing's death. For some reason this year has hit me harder than the others. I could crawl in bed and cover up my head but I have a TCF meeting tonight. I know what I will do, I will go find me a Twix bar and eat it. I appreciate all you do for all the ones who have lost a child. Love, Margaret.

It is okay to take care of yourself. We have lost someone very precious to us when we lose our child or children. The God that we serve is always with us even if we don't feel his presence like we normally do.

*Love,
Margaret*

Larry's symbol is a cross.

Paul & Claudia Grammatico's son, Paul, (4-20-75), was killed by a drunk driver, 5-16-99.

Claudia has done amazing things in Paul's memory. This is yet another one:

Greetings

Just received word this afternoon that my song "The Gift of Life & Love" will be sung at the opening ceremonies of the transplant games in Pittsburgh this July...So many years of hard work after the death of my Son/Sun Paul through this song spreading the message of organ donation so others can live and have a second chance.....

A Miracle. Un Milagro!!!!

[Click here: National Kidney Foundation: Transplantation](#)

Claudia has been chosen as one of the Orange County Women of Achievement Tribute Awards.

Part of the nomination was the recognition of the documentary **Space Between Breaths** information that was given in the nomination by the hospitals, and DWI MADD Orange County for her work with them as she tells her story in presentations.

She is awaiting the official letter.

Most of her work, of course, rotates around the ***Gift of Life***, and its healing modality for **Donor** Families to give Life after Life and Second Chances for all recipients. Also the key factor, that she founded the first ever bereavement group in Warwick and neighboring towns.

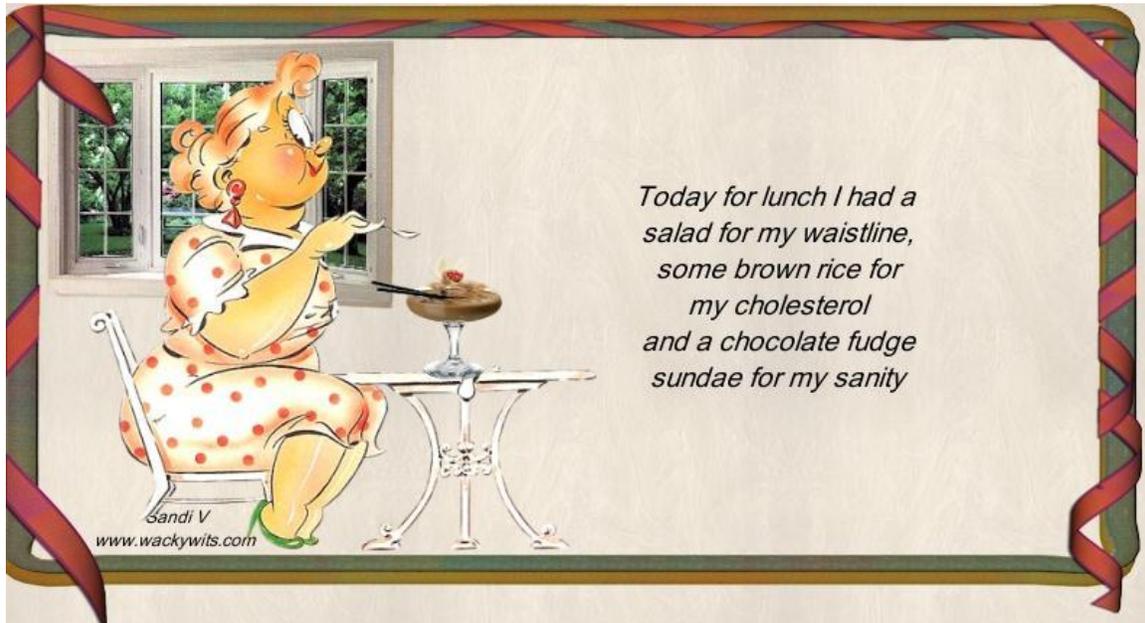
The attachment is what was written about Paul and Claudia.



TributetoWomenofAc
hievementofOrangeC

Paul's symbol is a butterfly.

Thought you might like to see a picture of me enjoying lunch.



My email address is: dinah@ucumberlands.edu
The website's address is <http://www.ucumberlands.edu/lamentations/>