

LAMENTATIONS

Issue 19

S.U.C.C.E.S.S

February, 1994



April is a month we associate with new beginnings. This is a time of year that the ground is tilled for planting flowers and/or vegetables. To *till* means to cultivate. To *cultivate* is to prepare; to help grow by labor and care; to improve; to give time, thought, and effort to; to promote the growth or development; to establish or strengthen; to seek the friendship of or to make better acquaintance with. I'm not going to say it. . . Yes I will. . . that reminds me of our grief and our relationship with each other. Our grief process is a form of *tilling*. Take a few minutes to reread these definitions and see how these definitions parallel with your grief

It is my belief that by contact with each other we are cultivating our S.U.C.C.E.S.S. By becoming better acquainted with our grief and our association with each other, we are "growing" to become (hopefully) a beautiful flower or a sustenance to our fellow travelers. *Sustenance* is a means of sustaining life; nourishing; supporting. Rain (or tears) is probably what permits the flowers, as well as ourselves, to grow through our grief. The old saying "April showers bring May flowers" also pertains to our tears bringing relief and new growth. Tears are such a great release of anger, hurt, loneliness, and our great loss. May we each plant seeds of happiness



April 1 is **April Fools' Day**, and it was observed first in France after Charles IX adopted a reformed calendar in 1564. Prior to 1564, the New Year celebration began March 21 and ended April 1. When New Year's Day was changed to January 1, some people continued to celebrate it April 1. They came to be known as *April fools*. We now observe this day by playing jokes on each other. Perhaps you can "fool" yourself into making the day a S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Plan the day, and try to "pull off" at least one good April Fool's joke. You, the "fooler" will probably enjoy it more than the "fooled."

April 1 is also **Good Friday**, the day that Christ was crucified. *Crucify* is defined figuratively as to treat severely, to torture or persecute. Since the death of our loved one, we feel we have been crucified. We feel tortured and persecuted. However, we like Christ can be resurrected. *Resurrection*, when defined figuratively, means to bring back to sight or into use. We know we will never be the same, but we can have a new life. A life, of course, without our loved one, but a life that can be of use. We would not want our life to be the same as it was before our loved one's death, because that would mean that their life was of no consequence. However, we should want our life to be one that can have meaning and purpose. So often it is difficult to find meaning and purpose. This takes time and patience. Strive for *resurrection* rather than *crucifixion*. Let us select Easter as our goal. It may

not be April 3, which is Easter Sunday this year. But, may it be any day when we feel that we are being resurrected. It is not a specific date, but a certain day when we realize that we will not only survive our terrible tragedy, but we will live and hopefully share the great love we have with others. I hope you will be able to come down from the cross.



April 3 is not only Easter, but also the beginning of **Daylight Savings Time**. We lose an hour. Maybe we can look at this loss as one less hour of our grief. When we gain that hour in October, I hope we'll look at it as an extra hour to honor our loved one, not to mourn them. We know we have a great capacity for love because we have such a great capacity for grief. Dr. William A. Miller explains this capacity in his book *When Going to Pieces Holds You Together*. He says that there is a positive correlation between the love we have for someone and the intensity of our grief

We cannot currently show our love to the loved one we have lost to death, but we can reflect that love by sharing it with someone who needs it. I have found that the more love you give away, the more that comes back to you. This love may be given to a new fellow traveler, an old person who doesn't have any family members. Of, if you can't find anyone else, I can always use some extra love. I don't think one can ever have too much love!

Grief Grafts

On the first observance of Shane's death, Carol Mann placed the following poem in the local newspaper:

In Loving Memory of Shane Van Deren

Jan 4, 1975 - Jan 12, 1993

*A heart of gold stopped beating.
Two shining eyes are at rest.*

*God broke our hearts to prove,
he only takes the best.*

*A million times we've needed you,
A million times we've cried;
If love could have saved you,
You never would have died.*

*It broke our hearts to lose you,
But, you didn't go alone;
For part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.*

Shane's symbol
is a rottweiler.



Clark, the 16-year-old son of Doug and Kathy Elliott, was killed in an automobile accident, 6-20-93. Kathy wrote to say: *So many friends and family helped me to get through this special, but difficult day. (Clark's birthday 2-14) Although it was like you said in your January Lamentations, the dread and the days before were more painful than the actual day. When I awoke on Monday my prayer was to "celebrate Clark's special life" and not to mourn his death--Because of all the love of God family, and friends, I did it--I'm healing.*

Clark's symbols
are golf clubs and hearts.



Shelby, the 18-year-old son of Jaybo and Rowena Warner, died due to complications from Hodgkin's Disease, 10-2-92. September 30, 1991, Shelby wrote the following:

Dying to Live

No one can really determine exactly what will bring on change in their

life nor what those changes may be. Each moment in a person, life draws out either un-reform or reformation of character. Every hour of every day, every minute of every hour, whichever it may be, each is significant. Due to this fact, I really cannot explain all the changes that have occurred in my life. Although there is one particular event that has changed my life forever. Here is my story.

On February 13, 1991, my seventeenth birthday, what should have been one of the happiest days of my life was turned into something ugly and hateful. I was diagnosed as having cancer. Trust me, this is something that no one wants to hear, especially not on their birthday. But, as it may be, I heard anyway. Every thought that could possibly be though ran through my mind. "Am I going to die? Am I going to live? What about my family? Help me! Someone please help me!" Then like a stunned animal, I thought of nothing. Absolute silence. I had been given a sedative and could no longer remember much of what happened the rest of the day. Maybe it was for the best that I do not remember or do not even try.

The next day was the big question. "I am fighting a war with cancer. Now, what must I do to win?" What seemed the only logical answer was chemotherapy. WOW' C-H-E-M-O-T-H-E-R-A-p-y what a word! Wait! What is chemotherapy? I mean, I had heard of it before on television etc., but I had never really thought about what it was exactly. I did know, however, that it did cause you to lose your hair. Oh NO! My hair! Well, that was a small price to pay for my life. What I did not realize was that I was in for one of the biggest struggles that I would confront in my life. One that had the power to either grant it or take it away. After the first session of the chemotherapy, I thought, "Hey, this is not so bad. Pretty harmless stuff" Then it hit me' I was so sick and in so much pain from the constant heaving that I could barely open my eyes to see who was in the room with me.

"I cannot do this anymore," I thought. "Let it go, you cannot win. Enjoy the time you have left with your

friends. "Then out of the darkness something hit me like a bolt of lightning." Hell No! You have everything to live for. Do not give up now! You CAN win and you will 'Mind over matter' Who runs your body anyway, you or the cancer?

Well, by this time I was determined. I was going to conquer this. It was a road that I would have to travel alone, but I was no longer afraid I had experienced change. I am still on this road, but not alone. God, my family and my friends follow close behind to catch me when I stumble. But, I am in the lead. Every day is different. Everyone better than the one before.

Now it is months later and I have been reevaluated and I am now in remission. A lot has changed in my life over the course of the last year. I am down to the final two treatments of chemotherapy and all continues to go well. After I finish treatment, I only have to see the doctor periodically.

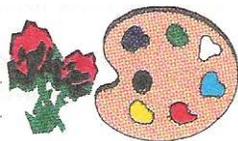
In all, this has made me a more independent, responsible person. Although I would never wish it on anyone, it has definitely helped me in my understanding of life and the people and things therein.

*Thank you, Shelby, for teaching us so much about life in your dying. The family has chosen an artist's pallet and a rose. To quote an article written in the **Upward Bound Bugle** telling about the scholarship created in Shelby's memory: Shelby was a very special person to everyone he knew and an extremely talented artist. He was appreciated not only by the teachers who were pleased with the kind of young man he was, but he was also cared about greatly by the students who lovingly nicknamed him "The Great Shelby Warner."*

Shelby wrote a letter to his fellow senior classmates and he ended the letter saying: I would like to thank you guys for the best friends anyone could have. To the Seniors and underclassmen included They say pictures

say a thousand words, but memories...
they speak forever.

A rose was also selected because Shelby always had plants growing in their home and flower beds in the yard.

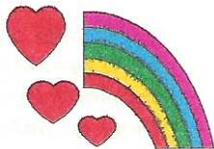


Joe and Elaine Stillwell began a *Compassionate Friends* chapter in Rockville Centre, New York, when two of their children, Denis and Peggy O'Connor, died as the result of an automobile accident in 1986. Elaine said that she, too, read everything she could about grief. She stated: *I truly believe that's what kept me alive after losing Peggy and Denis together. . . I just had to know how others survived.* She and Joe began the chapter in 1987 and the group has grown to 80-100 people in attendance each month. The Chapter has planted 350 trees and shrubs at Molloy College, where the chapter has met since it was founded. Each tree is tagged and bears the name of the child being honored. In the March/April edition of *Bereavement Magazine*, 1992, Elaine wrote a



loving tribute to her children. If you would like a copy, let me know. I am assuming that Denis and Peggy's symbol is a rose.

Karen Lacy shared how she had spent her daughter, Mary's, birthday. Mary was killed in an automobile accident 9-25-91. Karen said that she "actually had a great day." She had breakfast at Denny's, which was the favorite place for her and Mary to go on special occasions. She explained: "On days like this I just do whatever I feel like doing. It gets easier each year." Mary's symbols are hearts and rainbows.



William and Evelyn Davidson's son, Chris (17), died of a massive heart attack, 11-22-93. Chris was born with a heart disease. Before the age of 5, he had two open heart surgeries. However, a few weeks later the family was told that Chris had developed a lung disease and he would not live to see his late teens. Chris was a junior at Iroquois High School and was loved by his classmates. The school is planting a tree and a plaque in his memory. Evelyn said "I am so proud of being his mother. Chris was a beautiful person inside and out." Chris loved to draw cartoon sketches and was very good. He also loved rap music, and had a big sports card collection. His favorite was basketball cards. Chris never knew the meaning of feeling good and struggled for every breath he took. Evelyn explained: *We are having a really hard time trying to accept Chris' death. I am going to try one day to volunteer to work with sick heart and lung patients at Children's Hospital where Chris spent most of his childhood*

Chris' family has chosen a basketball and balloons to symbolize him.



Quentin, the 13-year-old son of Hubert and Pam Meade, died from Synovial Cell Carcinoma, 8-8-93. Pam feels that poetry is the only way she can put on paper how she feels. She says it helps her to write it down. Pam has written these poems:

God's Master Plan

*I know with time we're to
Understand things by and by Yet
there is so much I don't
No matter how I try.*

*To God I turn with question
will I ever know the answer
Why our Quentin was chosen
To deal with such an enemy--
Cancer*

*Oh! How my mind works
At times I wonder, I seek*

*An answer to this question
Of which I speak.*

*When my life is over
If that heavenly home I trod
Will I get my answer
When I come face to face with God*

*Will I need to ask God
Or will I just understand
That God knows what's best
It's all part of His Master Plan*

The family selected praying hands and legos as symbols for Quentin.



A Question Answered

This morning when I awoke
How I seemed to be filled with strife
I had a dream, suddenly remembering
That seemed so true to life

In this dream was Quentin
How happy to see him, oh how real
He asked me this question
Then with sadness my heart did fill

I was so happy
To see my baby once more
I know he came to show me, tell me
To put a halt to my grief
Oh! How much I wanted to say
But his stay was so very brief

How I've missed him
This I wanted to say
But you see, I didn't have time
For not long was his stay

This dream was given to me
For what reason I did not know
Then I remembered his question
The reason, I think I finally see

I was in the kitchen
Working on some task
When I heard "Mommy will you
Check my throat," He asked

My heart took a jolt
I jumped like lightning on a bolt
Oh! How I hurt, how I shook
Doing what he wanted I did look
Then it came to me

What God wanted me to see
If He had not called him when
He did How much more suffering there
could be

You see about a month
Before Quentin passed away
This was something he asked me
Almost every day
It's so hard to write it down

To put it in a verse
That the tumors were growing
They had gotten so much worse

Not keeping him much longer
I knew I was right
I could see it in his eyes
After every sleepless night

Oh! Quentin was in so much pain
But not once did I hear him say
"Why me lord"
I never heard him complain

Quentin would sit up in the middle
of the couch
Leaning on my chest
He would say "Sing to me Mommy I
would, wanting for him nothing
but rest

Night after sleepless night
To God I would pray
"Dear God please don't let him Suffer,
not this way
Please take him home with You
To where I want him to stay"

In this dream that seemed so real
Quentin was so happy
No longer in pain
We'll always miss you Quentin
For our loss, is heavens gain

This dream of mine
It showed me so much more
For you see I got to hold Quentin
In my arms as I had done
So many times before

I know it was sent to show me
God's wonderful love
That someday I'll see Quentin again
In that heavenly home above

I know Quentin was telling me
"Mommy look and you shall see
The wonderful love
God has shown to me
And when God calls you
To this heavenly shore
I'll be here, Mommy, to welcome
you home
To be together forevermore"

In the October '93 issue of *Lamentations*, Becky Powell requested pictures of our "angels" for a photo album she is calling, "Special Angels." She has received 20 of these angel pictures and asked

that I thank you for sending them. If anyone of you would like to send a picture, her address is:

198 Woodwind Court
Nicholasville, KY 40356

Becky shared: "I'm now finding that I can read the newsletter to the end without having tears streaming down my face! I guess I'm getting there!" Becky and Jerry's son, Justin (age 11), was killed when getting off the school bus, 4-11-93.

David and Peggy Webb's daughter, Janna, would have been a seventh grader this year. Peggy wrote: "Her father, brother, and I have lost the light in our home. Hers was the smile that made the day brighter, hers the laugh that gave life its vigor. Janna and I have always had a special bond and closeness. I have lost my baby, my little girl, my best friend and companion, and the woman she was going to be. We had planned so many dreams already--The first prom dress, the wedding dress, her children and what we would call them--None of which will happen now."

Carlos, the 34-year-old son of Clifford and June Morris, husband of Lois, and the father of Mary Joyce, was killed in an automobile accident, 8-12-93. Carlos was a staff attorney for the Social Security Administration. He was also a founding member of the Knox County Archaeological Society (KCAS) and was a board member of the Kentucky Historical Society.

The president of the KCAS described Carlos: "His wise counsel, good taste, fine judgment, perseverance in getting things done, and keen sense of humor will be missed." June wrote: "It's consoling to know that we're not suffering grief alone, as we had thought in the beginning." Carlos was their only child.

Myra, the 21-year-old daughter of Gene and Peggy Stamper, died from Leukemia, 6-14-89. Myra wrote the most loving poem:

If You Could See Where I Have Gone

*If you could see where I have gone,
The beauty of this place,
And how it feels to know you're home,
To see the Savior's face.
To wake in peace and know no fear.
Just joy beyond compare.
While still on earth, you miss me yet.
You wouldn't want me there.
If you see where I have gone.*

*If you could see where I have gone,
Had made the trip with me,
You'd know I didn't go alone,
The Savior came with me.
When I awoke, He was by my side,
And reached out His hand,
Said, "Hurry Child you're coming
home
To a grand and glorious land
Don't worry over those you love
For I'm not just with you,
And don't you know with you at home
They'll long to be here too. "*

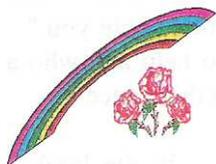
*If you could see where I have gone,
And see what I've been shown,
You'd never know another tear,
Or ever feel alone.
You'd marvel at the care of God,
His hand on every life,
And realize He really cares,
And bears with us each strife,
And that he weeps when one is lost,
His heart is filled with pain,
But Oh! The joy when one comes home,
A child at home again.*

*If you could see where I have gone,
Could stay awhile with me,
Could share the things that God
Has made to grace eternity.
But no, you could never leave,
Once Heaven's joy you'd know,
You couldn't bear to walk earth's
paths,
Once Heaven was your home.*

*If you could see where I have gone,
You'd know we'll meet some day, And
though I'm parted from you now.
That I am just away.*

So, thank you family,
 For living for the Lord,
 For teaching me to love Him,
 To trust Him and His word.
 And now that I'm at home with Him,
 Secure in every way,
 I'm waiting here at Heaven's door
 To greet you some sweet day.
 Love, Myra

Myra's symbols are 3 roses and a rainbow. The 3 roses represent her and her two best friends.



Eric, the 15-year-old son of William and Anita Davis McCarty, died from a gunshot, 10-10-93. Eric enjoyed any outdoor activity, especially hunting, fishing, and camping. Photography and drawing were also his interests. He also enjoyed baseball and basketball. Eric had gone deer hunting during the 1992 bow season and had bagged a 10 point deer, of which he was very proud. Eric was very active in Cynthiana's Boy Scout Troop #70. Eric was eager to earn his Eagle Scout Badge, Last summer he had helped a fellow scout construct a footbridge over a small creek which adjoined two scout hiking trails. This was a project his fellow scout member had to complete to earn his Eagle Badge.

Eric enjoyed farm activities and would help the family cut, house and strip tobacco. He was always willing to help mow yards etc., to earn money for scout trips or to buy new clothes or shoes he wanted.

The following poem was written by Anita's sister, Betty:

Images that Linger

One bright fall day he left
 Picking walnuts was his goal
 Wandering down a lane with friend,
 When destiny took its toll
 Reluctantly, he had to choose the path

Which led him to his heavenly home
 And with tears of sorrow
 His family mourned the tomorrow

In my mind I still have the memories
 Of a toddler with a smiling face
 Of a teenager with special dreams
 And of a nephew who hold, a special place
 In the heart of his laying aunt.

It lightens life:, pain
 As I again relive the joy
 Of those days when James Eric
 Was my sister's little boy.

The family has chosen "Sun and Water" to symbolize Eric. Anita explained the symbols: *The "Sun" is round like the circle of life. Life is one great circle, never ending. "Water" is the gift of lift. These symbols have a special meaning for me as I remember water as a place Eric could fish, the sun reminds me of the outdoors for his enjoyment of hunting hiking and other activities.*



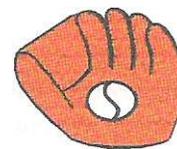
Curtis and Pat Livingston's 18-year-old son, Scott, was killed in an automobile accident, 10-14-93. Pat described Scott: *Scott was full of life, There were not enough hours in the day for him. He loved to make people laugh, played sports since he was seven, loved music, especially 'base,' and loved to play the game of baseball. Hunting and fishing were his hobbies. He would have graduated this June, 1994.*

His future plans were to go to college and play college baseball and maybe even professional ball. (A dream)

A memorial fund has been established in Scott's name and a scholarship will be given to a member of his graduation class. A bronze plaque is being placed in the lobby of the gym in his memory. Scott's classmates are placing a bronze plaque on Paul G. Blazer

High School's campus as well as planting a tree on the school's campus in his memory.

Scott's family has chosen a baseball symbol to represent him.



Ron and Debbie Reinstedler's son Bryan was killed in an automobile accident, 10-17-93. The Reinstedlers gave this poem to Bryan's friends:

AWAY

*I cannot say and will not say
 That he is dead. He is just away*

*With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand
 He wandered into an unknown land
 Left us wondering why life is so unfair
 and what he needs are
 Since he lingers there*

*Think of him as he was on his happiest days.
 And love him here as you loved him there.*

Think of him the same; I say he is not dead

He is just away

-Danielle Helm



Bryan's symbol is a dove.

Bobby Diebold, the 14-year-old brother of George who was killed by a teen-age friend 4-2-93, wrote this poem:

Clouds

In Memory of my brother

*Glazing skyward, I see clouds
 And I wonder of their inhabitance.
 Who's a walkin' on those clouds?
 And somewhere, off in the distance,
 Remembrances of past times are
 Surrounded by those clouds.
 And for a moment, sadness fills my heart.
 But it always leaves me faster than it came.
 'Cause he's a walkin' on those cloud"
 And someday, I'll be a walkin' with him.*

George's parents are Don and Linda Diebold. His symbol is a football.



Many of you have said that scholarships have been formed in memory of your children. These remembrances are to be given by schools, churches, etc. Before next month, I would like for each of you to send me the information on those scholarships, including the mailing addresses. This is a difficult time for those of us whose children will not be graduating (young Jim was killed the night before his high school graduation). However, it is also a time we can be touched by the fact that our children are being remembered, and that their lives and deaths have, and are making a difference in others' lives. We, most assuredly, would give anything to have our loved ones here, but since that is impossible and we cannot change that, we can draw some comfort in knowing that their memories live on.



My husband, Jim, made a statement several months ago which at first disturbed me, but after thinking about it, it was profound. He said that perhaps Young Jim's life will mean even more in death than it may have if he had lived to be a senior citizen. We would all like to think that our loved ones would have changed the world. And, in some cases it may have happened. But, if we are realistic, how many people really change the world? But we all change the world in our own ways by the acts of kindness we show toward others. Young Jim was a great kid, the best! Since his death, we, with the love and help of so many wonderful friends, family, and caring people, have formed a scholarship that will educate students at Cumberland College from

now on. His scholarship may permit many to change the world. We are blessed. We cannot change the fact that they are gone, however, as a result of their deaths, we can accept the challenge to change what we can, and that is to help others, to make sure that our loved ones' deaths were not in vain, and their memory will live on because of us.

There are many different ways we can do this. George Diebold's picture is part of a documentary on children and guns. This has been shone on MTV and in a national magazine. Kathy Akers is beginning a program to educate school children on gun safety. My husband and I insisted that a guard rail be erected where our son was killed so that no other family would have to go through the heartbreak that we have experienced. Sally Arias ministers to other parents whose children have Leukemia. Ronnie Lawrence speaks at school assemblies on what a child's death means to a parent, and also visits with newly bereaved parents. Hubert and Pam Meade collect soft drink tabs to send children with catastrophic illness to summer camp. Rodney and Kay Bevington publish *Alive Alone*, which is a newsletter for people who have either lost all of their children or their only child. The address for the newsletter is:
11115 Dull Robinson Road
Van Wert, OH 45891

There are so many of you who are making a difference in this world since the death of your loved one. I hope you will write to tell me what you are doing and how you are doing it. We can all support each other and we can make a difference. It is up to us. We can become bitter or better, we can change some of the wrongs of this world if we try. Which and what will you choose? If you need help from any of us, all you have to do is **Whistle!**

There is a parable about a small child who struggled to lift a very heavy rock, but was unable to budge it. The child's father watched his struggle and then asked the child, "Are you using all your strength?" The child answered, "Yes" quite agitated. "No," the father replied, "You aren't. You have not asked me to help you." We are all willing to help any who are trying to make a difference.

In the book, *When Mourning Comes: A book of comfort for the Grieving*, William Silverman and Kenneth Cinnamon write: *You are a human being with the will and the power to choose, to say yes or no, and to make a decision to deal with your grief. You can turn your frustration into fulfillment, and transform your tears into a triumph. Out of the sorrow and the anguish can arise something indescribably meaningful. This can happen if you determine to make it happen. Only you can make it happen.*



I am sending you an Easter basket filled with eggs. I hate to do this to you again, but I love words and their definitions. Please permit me this one last definition (at least for this newsletter.) An *egg* is *an animal reproductive body consisting of an ovum together with its nutritive capacity to develop into a new individual capable of independent existence*. I am sending you many eggs, with the hope that one of them will be "fertilized," which will give you the capability of overcoming your grief and giving you the capacity to develop into a new individual, capable of independent existence.

And, of course, during this struggle for developing, we must need nourishment. My suggestion-

Chocolate!!!!