

LAMENTATIONS

Issue 32

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

MAY 1995



May is a month that is filled with so many events and special days. It is a month filled with many "ups and downs"

May 1 is **May Day** and is often celebrated as the "official" beginning of spring. The most widely accepted reason for this month being named May is that it was named for *Maia*, the Roman goddess of spring and growth. Perhaps we can select May J as the beginning of our "spring of growth." May it be the date we feel we are progressing through that "winter" of anger and depression and "spring" into the season of acceptance. I truly believe we would all be more accepting if we could receive an answer to "Why?" But, this will not happen, so we must go from there.



Thursday, May 4, is **National Day of Prayer**. Two years ago I had the great and humbling privilege of hearing Mother Teresa speak at the **National Prayer Breakfast** in Washington, D.C. She talked about peace.

Mother Teresa quoted Jesus: *My peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. She continued, He came to give the peace of heart which comes from loving - from doing good to others.*

I would like to encourage each of you to say a special prayer for each of us on this day designated for prayer. Pray that we will each receive peace and a hope for the future.

We, as heart-broken parents, are seeking

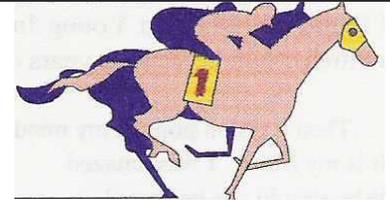
peace, that **Peace at the Center** that David Dick wrote about.

Nurse's Day is May 6. To nurse is defined as to promote the development or progress; to care for and wait on; to attempt to cure by care and treatment; to hold in one's memory or consideration; to consume slowly or over a long period. Let us become nurses to ourselves, our family members, and our fellow travelers. We honor all of you who are nurses.



Derby Day is the first Saturday in May, which is May 6 this year. Our grief is so like a horse race. At the beginning of the race (the loss of our loved one), we all start out at exactly the same point. However, shortly after, we are all going at our own pace. Some have not "paced" their grief and have started out of the gate too fast, only to fall behind later. Others "bet" that it would be easier to remain at the gate and try to ignore that monster, **grief**. Those who have chosen to ignore their grief, or not "deal" with it, find out later that they have to stay on the race track and complete the race, no matter how long it takes. We often think it is easier to try to "go around" our grief rather than going through it. This is only wasted time and energy. Our loved one's death will not change, so we must change.

Some have paced their grief, and are heading to the finish line (S.U.C.C.E.S.S.) at a slow but methodical pace. If you are like I am, these "track positions" all describe me at different times. May I be quick to add that we have not started on the same day or the same year with our race, but, hopefully, we will end at the same place.



I'm betting on all of us!!!

May 14 is Mother's Day. This seems to be the beginning of an intense time of grieving for me. Some feel that you are no longer a Mother if you don't have living children. I can never be a grandmother and my own Mother passed away last year--so what do I do on this day? Last year I suggested we each wear a pink flower in remembrance of our children who have died. Hopefully you will also wear pink.

As you look at your family unit and think of those you have lost, also look to see what you do have and say a word of "Thanks." May you be honored this Mother's Day by those you love and love will surround all of you.



Grief Grafts

May 20 is the fourth anniversary of Young Jim's death, and the fourth year of being a childless family. As I said previously, Mother's Day begins an intense time of grieving for me. I often wonder what he would be doing if he were still here. He would probably be graduating from college during this week and looking forward to a future full of great promise. Our 27th wedding anniversary is the 24th, and Jim's mother's birthday (who died 6 months before Young Jim) the 28th and my mother's birthday on the 31st.

In cleaning out a drawer last week, I found a little poem Young Jim had written when he was 12 years old:

...Then a vision pops in my mind,
It is my Mom. I was amazed.
Why should she be there?
Well, she's my Mom!

May 29 is Memorial Day, and Pam Meade wrote the following poem, May 31, '94:

Memorial Battle

*Each year in the month of May
There is set aside a day
That we remember our loved ones
Who have passed away.*

*We also honor our veterans
For the pride of their country they
fought
Oh, the loss of so many
What sadness it wrought.*

*So many of our countrymen
Were not so very blessed
As the ones we call "survivors"
Those who withstood the test.*

*These great wars, the battle
On the outside we could see
But in the minds of those who fought
What thoughts should there be?*

*"Will I make it
Will I get out of here alive*

*What are my chances
That I could possibly survive?"
So to you survivors
Who fought thru thick or thin
We give you the honor
You fought so hard to win.
We remember our loved ones
Who have passed away
To me, everyday
Is this memorial day.*

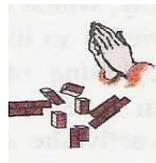
*You see, there are other great warriors
Who fought a good fight
The battle for life
Fighting with all their might.*

*The enemy in this battle
Something we cannot see
Try to understand somehow
What the purpose could be.*

*Praying to God for strength
And knowledge to understand
Leaving everything to God
Putting it all in His mighty hand*

*Now begins another battle
Deep inside of me
I'll have to give it a good fight
Keeping my mind on the track that's right
And pray to be the person I know that I
should be.*

Pam and Hubert's son, Quentin, died from cancer, 8-8-93. Quentin's symbols are Lego's and praying hand



Lisa, the 14-year-old daughter of Darrell and Shirley Grisham, died from an explosion with 3 other teenagers, 7-2-93. Shirley is interested in joining "Fellow Travelers" in the western part of Kentucky. If you are interested in getting together, you can write her:

Mrs. Shirley Grisham
387 First Street
Clay, KY 42404
502-664-6703

Lisa wrote the following poem to her Mother in June of '93, shortly before her death:

Why God Created Mothers

*God created mothers because babies
need someone to take care of them.
God created mothers to take care of us
when we're sick. God created mothers
to tell us what's right and what's
wrong.*

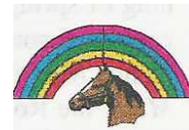
*God created mothers to teach us how
to be mothers.*

*And if God lined up all the mothers in
the world, I'd pick you,
because you're the perfect mother and
God couldn't have done any better.*

*God created mothers 'cause He could-
n't be everywhere.*

*And I'm glad it's the way it is, 'cause
there isn't a better mother than you!*

Lisa's symbols are a rainbow and a horse.



I have heard from four families that have planted memorial gardens in memory of their children. Gary and Nancy Bilderback continue to add to their garden in memory of their son, Cary. Rodney and Kay Bevington have a beautiful area in their yard in memory of their daughter, Rhonda. Terry and Kathy Gutsell's mends have started a memorial wildflower meadow in memory of their son, Andrew.

Leon and Jerry Jonas lost two sons, Leon Jr., and Wayne, in an automobile accident on 10-26-90. Since that time, the family has started a ministry called "Footprints" which is a support group for bereaved parents and families in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. On the anniversary of their sons' deaths, Jerry gave the gift of life by donating blood. The Jonases also planted a plant in a garden in memory of their sons. The community has planted a memorial rose garden in memory of all the children in Mecklenburg County who have died. The park was established as a healing place for families. Each family can

plant a rose or can buy a brick with their child's name etched in it.

Footprints also helps families plan "Celebration of Life Services" on the anniversary of the death or birth of their child. If you are interested in this ministry, write:

Footprints Ministry
12601 Oakhaven Drive
Charlotte, NC 28273



Leon's and Wayne's symbols are two roses and a car.

Kevin and Anna Byrnes' son, Jimmy, was killed in an automobile accident, 11-10-84. Anna told of her family: *Jimmy was our second of five children. His sister Kathleen Mary pre-deceased him in 1976. She died before she was born. When Jimmy died, he had an older brother Kevin who was 19 at the time, a younger brother Brian who was 15 at the time and a little sister Erin who was just 6 at the time. She was the reason I got up in the mornings after Jimmy died. Jimmy was a funny kid A typical teenager who sometimes drove us nuts -but a funny; funny kid -- always smiling -- very kind) especially to little children and poor children) -- a hard worker.*



He was very good with his hands and liked to take things apart and put them back together again. He worked on cars and made furniture in shop class, so I think his symbol should be a hammer and a screwdriver. Had he lived, he would have been a good carpenter like his father was. He had a part-time job after school and was working for someone else after he finished his own job on the day he died He was killed in a car crash -- the driver was arrested for drunk driving, but later the charge was dropped to driving with ability impaired - and he was driving around in a new car before I had a headstone up on Jimmy's grave. Jimmy was a big, strapping young man.

He was 6'4" and was very healthy. He had big blue eyes and a handsome smile. The last time I saw him alive our eyes met and held for a moment-you know how that can sometimes happen, your eyes just lock for a second-well that's what happened to us just hours before he died I sometimes wonder if this was a gift to help me remember his beautiful blue eyes.

Anna wrote the following poem:

A Bereaved Parent's Prayer

Here I am God... Where are you?

Deep down in my heart I know you are there... but I don't feel your presence.

*I have been hurt so deeply...
I feel betrayed, angry,
broken in pieces.*

*I have lived through the ultimate tragedy...
the death of my child*

*I know I can never be the same as before,
so help me to be a better person.*

*Help us all to help one another pick up the
pieces of our lives.*

by Jimmy's Mom

Ross and Betty Parks have formed a group called, **Parents of Murdered Children** in Fletcher, North Carolina which is part of the national organization. This support group is very active and can help parents that are involved with the judicial system and the many problems and frustrations that creates.

If you would like further information contact:

POMC, Inc.
100 East Eighth Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
513-721-5683

Casey, the 10-year-old son of Frank and Beth Russell, was killed in a train accident, 6-20-94. Beth described Casey: *Casey was a great child. He was my most affectionate child. He always had a hug or kiss for me no matter what I was doing.*



We have chosen a heart with "BRAVE" written in the middle of it for his symbol. When

I think about his life, it is hard to believe that I would choose this as his symbol. He was the biggest chicken. He was 10 and yet, if it was dark outside and he had to go to the basement, I would have to get his brother, Corey, or his sister, Kerri, to go with him.

At times in Casey's life, I worried because he didn't have a lot of close friends his age. He had a few he would do things with, but not a big group he hung around with. Now I look back and I can see how he touched everyone. He had friends young and old He used to call one of the men who was a pallbearer on "ole Geizer." I would just cringe and think he should have had more respect, but I know now that this will be a precious memory to this man now.

Casey was a great kid, very easy going. He wasn't perfect, in fact when he died he was not minding. The thrill of going to the railroad trestle and sharing it with Adam (who was killed in the same accident) was more important. I'm sure he did not even remember me telling him not to go. I was like that when I was a child I guess all kids are like that and that is why we have each other now.



Julie Byrd wrote the following poem after her 2-year-old daughter, Kendra, died in a tragic house fire. Kendra's symbols are an angel and rose buds.

The Last Promise

I have to stay here for my job is not done,

But, I promise you I'll be there when my time comes,

Until then, I'll be right here missing, loving, and needing you every single day.

We'll be together again when my body is lowered next to yours in the ground to stay,

And my soul meets with you in Heaven on some grand and glorious day.

Then together forever my beautiful daughter

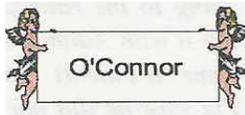
We shall stay as one, the way it should be.

Your loving Mother

Elaine Stillwell's two children, Denis and Peggy O'Connor, died from an automobile accident in 1988. Elaine has decided to retire after teaching 27 years. She and her husband, Joe, began a **Compassionate Friends** group in New York. Elaine spoke every month for 6 years at these meetings. Elaine explained: *I recently spoke at a Family Grief Seminar and enjoyed helping the people--now that I'm 8 1/2 years along the Valley of the Shadow.* (How descriptive is our grief)

It would be wonderful if she would compile these speeches into some type of book; it would be of help to so many of us.

Denis and Peggy's symbol is an angel. Their scholarship is:



Peggy and Denis O'Connor

Memorial Scholarship Fund
University of Dayton
300 College Drive
Dayton, OH 45469-1658

Craig, the 24-year-old son of Joel and Judy Blumsack, was killed in an automobile accident, 5-4-94. Judy asked the question: *How do I put 24 happy, loving years of Craig's life into a few paragraphs?*

Craig grew up with his brother, Todd, 16 years older, and his father and me at the Connecticut shore. He was always a fun-loving little child.

During high school, Craig was a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. In

college he was active in the DARE program. He had laughter that was contagious and a smile that could light up a room. He was the epitome of a People Person. His very favorite experience in college was taking a Marine Island Ecology Course in the Bahamas where he spent the better part of 6 weeks deep sea diving.

After graduation, Craig came with us to Georgia. He was hired into a management trainee program for a finance company and had just been promoted to the Assistant Branch President—had just received his business cards. He had just moved into his own apartment with two friends.

On Wednesday, May 4, Craig left his office to do an errand and a truck broadsided his car. He was killed instantly. A major part of me died then also.

Six months later his office held a ceremony and awarded us a plaque (another is on their office wall.) It was presented to us by the head of the Company. It said-Respected by his Colleagues and the Community of Acworth--we will greatly miss his friendship and outstanding service. A scholarship fund at his high school in Connecticut has also been established. One of Craig's close friends just had twins, one was named for Craig.

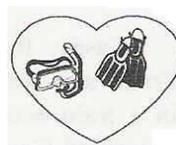
Craig was, is and always will be a special member of our family. The four of us have always been so close and we still are. Our families, parents and friends have been supportive, but nothing takes the pain away.

I do try to concentrate on all the wonderful memories.

This is an excerpt from a poem a friend of Craig's sent to us:

*We've known so much of happiness
We've had our cup of joy
And memory is one gift of God
that death cannot destroy*

Craig's symbols are goggles, fins and a heart. His scholarship is:



Craig Blumsack
Memorial Scholarship
East Lyme Scholarship Assoc., Inc.
P.O. Box 190
Niantic, CT 06357

Art and Eleanor Foss' 28-year-old son, John, died from bladder cancer, 10-5-93. Eleanor shared what she truly believes:

1. *I am not insane.*
2. *I will be with John again-- MOST IMPORTANT!*
3. *People can be so cruel and insensitive-for whatever reason.*
4. *It is really O.K. to laugh again.*
5. *It is really O.K. to cry.*
6. *There are kind, compassionate, understanding and caring people out there.*
7. *There are far. too many parents in our fraternity--and to echo Wanda Willis, "My heart breaks for each and everyone of us" and my heart takes comfort in our mutual compassion. What a shame to have met all these beautiful people in such a tragic way!*
8. *God does indeed have his plan for us.*

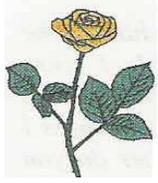
Again to echo Wanda Willis, "This second year has been harder in many ways." The raw, raw, raw, grief of John's unbelievable, torturous pain and suffering has softened. But the paperwork, phone calls, business matters, have all been put to rest and the space his presence filled is so vast. He was the "psychic center" of our family. The intensity of his love, laughter and all the problems he had, that we had to nurture, are gone. The light has gone out, the glue is coming apart. The "daily living" does indeed bring such sadness.



John's symbols are an angel, yellow roses and a red BMW.



Audra, the 19-year-old daughter of Alan and Vicki Sparks, died of cancer, 11-3-94. Audra's symbol is



a yellow rose. Vicki wrote the most beautiful biography of Audra's life which is entitled *From Mom's View Point*. I have included several excerpts:

The birth of Audra Hope Sparks was the happiest and most exciting event to date for her parents. She was an average child to everyone except her family. In spite of being the only child and the only grandchild, she was never a spoiled child. She didn't seem to take for granted the "things" that we all did for her and gave her.

In November of 1990, Audra's maternal grandmother, Viola, was diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer. The prognosis was dim but we all had faith. Mamaw Viola went through a mastectomy, 7 months of chemo and 30 radiation treatments.

One year later, Mamaw Viola developed a malignancy in the other breast. At the same time, Audra's mom, Vicki, found a lump in her breast. On the same day, Mamaw Viola and Mom had surgery. Mamaw Viola had a second mastectomy and Mom was diagnosed cancer, and scheduled for a mastectomy one week later. Mamaw faced 30 more radiation treatments, Mom-7 months of chemo and several months of doctors and surgery for reconstruction. As bad as it seemed, these things would prove magnificent in a very short time.

Two months later, Feb. '92, Audra developed what appeared to be a pulled muscle in her stomach. Our local doctor recommended we have our surgeon look at it just to be on the safe side.

Upon the recommendation of the surgeon, Audra had a CT scan. The scan showed a mass on the liver. A needle biopsy proved our worst fears. Audra had a malignant tumor on the liver.

Audra was to have a very lengthy surgery (7 to 9 hrs.), but the surgery could not be done. The tumor was much more involved than expected and that Audra had possibly 6 months to a year to live. This was truly the blackest moment of our lives. A daughter so loved and wanted, so cared for, was being taken away from us.

Audra's explanation, "I don't know what it is, but I know there's a reason for this."

Audra was not a candidate for a liver transplant because there was also lymph node involvement.

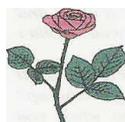
Audra continued to be active at school, never complained and never questioned "Why?" she had to have cancer. Audra finished her senior year on Homebound. The Senior Trip was to Florida and Audra was determined to be a part of this. Shortly after returning, her pain became more constant.

Audra participated in graduation and spent the summer of '93 planning for college. That part of her life was never to be.

We spent the next year loving and giving, being all that we could be each day. We traveled some, but Audra preferred being home.

Only 3 weeks of Audra's illness did she truly appear sick. On November 3 Audra ceased her suffering. She left us with love and peace in her eyes. Without saying a word, she gave us a life time of hope to cling to.

Audra was a gift from God to me and so many others. As her mother, I felt that she was my special gift. For her, I worked daily to be the best mother any child could have. I wanted her to have a love for God, compassion for people and respect for herself I wanted her to be the best that she could be in anything that she tried to achieve. I never expected perfection, only that she be her best. Audra was all of these things and so much more. In her words, "I want you to know that you never let me down, as I know I never let you down either." I thank God for our 19 1/2 years with her, for the person she was and the life and love that I had because of her. Not even death can take those things away. She will always be in my heart. I will always be "Audra's Mom."



Jessica Steven's symbol is also a rose. Jessica is the daughter of Judy Bowman, and she was killed when struck by a car, 10-19-93. Judy wrote:

I'm doing pretty good these days. Of course some days are better than others. Two steps forward and one step backward. But my life is getting a little better each day. Finally I can see a little further into the future. That is, I can think past getting through today. I feel I am moving toward S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Jamie, the 17-year-old son of Lee and Regina Cox, committed suicide, 5-23-94. Regina says that her 23-year-old daughter, Connie, is having a difficult time dealing with Jamie's death. Connie is interested in finding someone she could talk with who is going through the same loss. Her address is:

Constance Ard
1601 Fincastle Road
Lexington, KY 40502

Jamie's Scholarship:
James D. Ard
Memorial ROTC Scholarship Fund
First & Farmer's Bank
P.O. Box 820
Somerset, KY 42501

Jamie's symbols are a horse and a baseball cap.



Ryan Young, the 14-year-old son of Gene Nochta, died as the result of a seizure, 7-11-94. When Ryan died, Gene and her husband, John, requested donations be made to teachers who promote creative, integrative opportunities for children with disabilities. Debbie Mack, one of the teachers who received some of these moneys, described Ryan as "always smiling and gave 110 percent of anything you asked him to do. I remember his smile and his hugs. He helped all of us to see that even though he was different, we're all different but in the same regard, there were a lot of similarities, too. He just changed my perception of everything. He changed the students' perspective."

At Leestown, in Lexington, Ryan washed the girls' basketball uniforms in the school's home economics department as part of the learning curriculum

"He felt good about delivering the uniforms and hearing 'thanks.' He sort of became a little mascot," Gene said.

"He would get anything for anybody. Because Ryan's teachers had the right values and innovative preservation to create integrative opportunities, he grew in spirit and abilities. Not only did Ryan grow, but his non handicapped peers and teachers grew also."

Ryan's scholarship:

Ryan Young Fund
ARC of the Bluegrass
898 Georgetown Street
Lexington, KY 40511

Ryan's symbols are a heart, star and water.



Dwight and Jeannie Marshall's 8-year-old daughter, Katy, was killed by a drunk driver, 2-1-89. Jeannie describes Katy: *She was our baby. Her oldest sibling, a brother, was 15 when she was born spoiled her and enjoyed her. There are two sisters and another brother and all will tell you the same things about Katy. She was always a happy child and made everyone around her laugh. She couldn't stand to see anyone or anything suffer, always mothering and caring for others. She had a habit of giving away money, toys, clothes, any item was likely to be given because she simply loved the feeling of making people happy.*

She was a very sweet child and a good student, talented at drawing and her voice was so incredibly deep. She was so pretty that people used to stop us when we'd be out to comment on how beautiful she was.

You would think the other kids would have been jealous, especially the girls, but that was never a problem because she had a sort of charisma that drew people in and made them feel so special. I often said, and it has haunted

me, "Katy, you're too good for this world"

She died on the road where we live, killed by a drunk and drugged man, along with Cindy Messer who had worked for us for years as a sitter.

My life will never be the same. I am trying to be productive and live in a way that would make them happy. I cling to my faith which was in crisis for two years after Katy died God has allowed me to emerge with a greater understanding of faith and love. I am trying to pursue a degree in Psychology and Theology, work as a Certified Bereavement Counselor, direct the Bereavement ministry in our parish, and be a visible sign of survival and God's love and mercy. Staying busy is crucial to my well being. I am an avid gardener and love to restore antiques.

I would be so very grateful to any parent willing to share the experience of their grief I am a writer and have a great need to reach out to other parents. Those who find it painful to write about their loss can send it on cassette. I will not publish any material without consent.



I have chosen a Fairy as Katy's symbol... she sprinkled fairy dust all along her path.

Jeannie Marshall
4240 Shaffer Road
Paducah, KY 42001

Jeff, the 22-year-old son of Lonnie and Janice Stewart, was killed in a dune buggy accident, 6-9-94 Jeff wrote this poem to his mother, 11-6-90:

MOTHER DO YOU THINK?

Mother do you think back to when you were my age, or has time closed those pages in your past? Can you remember back to when you were a child and what it felt like to have your mother there to take care of you?

Has the pressure of being an adult changed your mind about growing up? Do you remember back to when you were a senior and how you and your friends felt about growing up?

Will I forget what being a child is like in time? Will all the people I know fade in my mind? Will I forget those special ones because of the pressures I will face as an adult? Mother do you think?

Jeff wrote the following poem for Janice on Mother's Day of 1991. It was in the school paper since he was a senior that year.

Mother

I can't begin to tell how much I appreciate everything you have done over the years. I can't ever do anything to repay you for all you have done for me and the rest (if the family). I can't say that I don't get mad and say mean things, but I don't mean them. I also realize that when you get upset it's only because you love me and I will always love you.

Jeff's symbol is a star.



Ron and Phyllis Sieg's 15-year-old daughter, Leigh Anne, died from cancer, 2-9-93. Phyllis described Leigh Anne as "such a great kid and deserved so many more years than the few she got."

The family is still trying to decide on a symbol since Leigh Anne was interested in so many things.

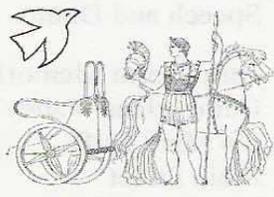
A scholarship is given to a Floyd Central High School volleyball player that is going to college with a top GPA and in need of financial help. Leigh Anne played on the school team. There is a tournament held each year to raise money for the scholarship.

Leigh Anne Sieg Memorial
Scholarship Fund
% Ron Sieg
1880 Canal Lane
Georgetown, IN 47122

Jason, the 17-year-old son of Curt Davis and Barbara Davis, was killed in an automobile accident 5-1-93. Jason was president of the Beta and German clubs; a debater; a member of the basketball, weightlifting and

track teams; and a lineman on the football team. Jason's Memorial fund is raising funds for scholarships and to erect a bronze statue of Jason to be placed at the entrance to the football field which he loved so much.

Jason's symbols are a dove and a gentle warrior.



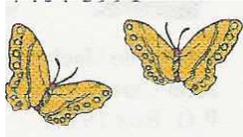
Jason P. Davis
Memorial Scholarship Fund, Inc.
Committee for the Gentle Giant 5600
South Highway 27 Somerset, KY 42501

Luther and Rosemary Smith lost two sons, Drew and Jeremiah, in an automobile accident, 7-23-92. They have remembered their sons in many different ways, one of which is the beautiful dome in the Cumberland Lodge. It is breath taking and I hope that each of you will come to our picnic in June and see our special dome.

They have established a scholarship fund for students who attend McCallie.

Drew & Jeremiah Smith Scholarship Fund
The McCallie School
500 Dodds Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 17404-1991

Their symbols are yellow butterflies.



Justin Eller, the II-year-old son of Jerry and Becky Powell, was hit while getting off the school bus, 4-11-93. Becky writes: Thanks for helping us to get to the point where we can get beyond the past, and look toward the future...and laugh again! (You are our inspiration!)

Justin Eller Memorial Scholarship
Central Baptist Church 1644
Nicholasville Road
Lexington, KY 40503

Kristie, the 16-year-old daughter of Michael and Susan Kauffinaun, died

from a congenital heart problem, 3-6-93.

Kristie's scholarship is for a person who wants to attend Sacred Heart Academy but cannot afford the tuition. The recipient is to be a good student, but not one that has already received an academic scholarship. Kristie's symbol is an angel.



Kristie Kauffman
Scholarship Fund
Sacred Heart Academy
3175 Lexington Road
Louisville, KY 40206-3097

Joe and Susan Walters have written to tell of the many "reinvestments they have made in memory of Ralph.

Memorials to Ralph Joseph Walters
October 31, 1988 - July 29, 1993

"On July 29, 1993, our only child, Ralph, was killed in an automobile accident He was and is our treasure, and we miss him with all that we are. Following is information on memorials that have been set up in Ralph's name and memory. They are listed in the order of their establishment"

Ralph's Fund

This is the most informal of the memorials, and the original one. It was set up soon after the accident to handle contributions that came in lieu of owners. It was our intention to use whatever moneys accrued to give in Ralph's name in ways which we thought would please him. That remains our focus, though the source of the moneys has been changed

Since during that first year life was in upheaval for us, we put the original \$5000 in a savings account.

Due to efforts of our wise, caring lawyer we were still able to give to others that first year without liquidating actual gifts to the fund Contributions were made to the local rescue squad that had been quickly at the accident scene, to a dear lady who had

been a teacher of Ralph's and to two local charities which help families in crisis. Through the further efforts of our lawyer (through litigation in a wrongful death suit), and his firm (by their large contribution in reduced legal fees), we hope been able to purchase an annuity which each year will yield that initial amount that we can give in Ralph's name. This fund is administered by us and given at our discretion

Ralph Joseph Walters (RJW) Memorial Fund

*The Foundation for Roanoke Valley
Roanoke, Virginia*

The foundation for the Roanoke Valley is a collection of many separate tax deductible and endowed funds established by individuals, corporations, and others to enhance the quality of life in the Roanoke Valley Since many of the original gifts in Ralph's Fund were from Catawba, and nearby Roanoke ,we thought it appropriate to reinvest those moneys locally The original \$5000, along with additional funds were given to the Foundation and set up in a donor advised fund Not only does this mechanism allow us to provide general direction for the fund, but each giving period we are allowed to indicate specific recipients for the year's donation The address:

*The Foundation for Roanoke Valley
P.a. Box 1159
Roanoke, VA 24006*

Ralph Joseph Walters Valedictorian/Salutatorlim Scholarship of Campbellsville College

This scholarship has been set up at Campbellsville College, with which Ralph's maternal grandparents are Closely associated The scholarships are given to area valedictorians or salutatorians who choose to attend Campbellsville College. This scholarship is an existent award that has been renamed in Ralph's memory The re Naming, however, is also in honor of

Ralph's grandparents, Ralph & Laura Tesseneer, and their significant contributions to the College. The mutual affection between Ralph and his grandparents is enormous and it so pleases them to have the scholarship named in his memory. Ralph is buried in Campbellsville, where his granddad can see his grave from his office window. Since this is an institutional award funded by Campbellsville College, it is not set up to receive outside contributions.

RJW Memorial Fund Campbellsville College

This memorial is funded through life insurance policies now owned by Campbellsville College. It is the second of the tax deductible avenues of giving in Ralph's memory. Having one such fund in Virginia where Ralph lived most of his four years and nine months, and one in Kentucky where much (if Ralph's family lives, allows for those who have given in Ralph's memory to continue doing so within their local area. Also, the fact that one such fund provides benefit specifically for children in need and the other is specifically directed toward higher education permits further specificity in contributions. Especially this one in Kentucky also provides an avenue for persons wishing to honor Ralph's grandparents in some way to have a unique avenue to do so. Contributions can be made to this fund as follows:

Office of Development
200 West College Street Fund
Campbellsville, KY 42718-2799

Although not a fund set up specifically with Ralph's name, efforts made through the process of estate planning have been made with the same focus as

"Ralph's Fund," i.e., to do things for others which we feel would please Ralph. We as Ralph's parents had chosen professions long prior to his birth, in ministry and education, which were by no means lucrative. We felt that, by our God's aid, we had much to give our

precious child, but that which we gave would not be so much monetarily. We sought to be wise in preparing for his present and future but had little extra, and that was fine. We were giving what we as individuals and as parents felt was important. But life did not go as we planned for the three of us, and now part of Ralph's legacy to us is monetary. We are the ones who have to give in his name now and we want to be wise for him.

Ralph's symbols are international children.



Paula Atkins' 19-year-old son, Jeremy, died on Labor Day (9-5-94) from injuries sustained from falling from a bridge. Paula explains his scholarship:

Jeremy's true love was the theater. This fund allows an annual scholarship of \$1,000 to be given for higher education to a graduating senior. Eligibility rules are only that the individual demonstrate unbounded enthusiasm and love for the stage during all his/her high school years. Airy area of the theater is considered equally whether it be in acting, make-up, lighting, or design. Academic achievement and financial need are not criteria. Jeremy's symbol is a twinkling star.

Jeremy Hardin Memorial Scholarship
Our Lady of Providence
High School Highway 131
Clarksville, IN 47130



Ralphie, the 19-year-old son of Ralph and Dana Coomer, was killed in an automobile accident, 6-11-94. Ralph's scholarship will be awarded annually at Lee County High School to a graduating senior selected by family members. Ralph's symbols are praying hands and an Eagle.



Ralph D. Coomer, Jr.
Memorial Scholarship c/o Teresa Mays
P.O. Box 831
Beattyville, KY 41311

Arnold and Elaine White's 19-year-old daughter, Amy, was killed in an automobile accident 6-20-92. Amy's scholarship is to be presented to a South Laurel High School student who is interested in Speech and Drama. The address is:

Amy North Memorial Scholarship
Cumberland Valley National Bank c/o
Mark Huff
Main Street
London, KY 40741

Amy's symbol is a guardian angel.



Stephanie, the 21-year-old daughter of Mary Kate Gach, was stalked and murdered 10-9-92. Mary Kate just found this poem written by Stephanie only a few months before her death.

I Love You

I love you with all my power,
I love you with all my might,
I love you at any hour,
I love you by day or night.

I hope we will soon be married,
But if I should die before,
See to it that I'm buried
Somewhere near your door.



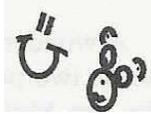
Stephanie's symbol is a brown rabbit. Her scholarship is:

Stephanie Gach Memorial Scholarship
John Carroll High School
P.O. Box 19907
Birmingham, AL 35219

Ray and Sue Hutcheson's 20-year-old daughter, Leslie, was killed in an automobile accident, 2-21-93. Leslie's scholarship is endowed through:

Phi Mu Foundation
3558 Habersham at North Lake
Tucker, GA 30084
Designate:
"Leslie E. Hutcheson Memorial
Scholarship Fund"

Leslie's symbols are a smile and a bear.



David and Cindy Jo Greevers' 9-year-old daughter, Michelle, died 5-22-93. Cindy Jo described Michelle: *Michelle Marie was the youngest member of our family. She was the sweetest, kindest, and most generous and loving person I have ever met in my life. She lived to give and give she did, even in her physical death of this earth. Two men received sight, two infant boys received her heart valves and a little three-year-old girl received her kidney; they are all doing great. The other organs were rejected by the recipients (the other kidney and her liver.) Michelle was attempting to catch her school bus when a car struck her, causing a brain stem injury which led to brain death*

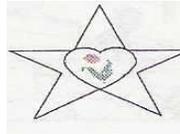
Michelle had auburn hair and eyes a brilliant green. She was always happy and smiling, sharing, helping others, talking about God, singing, doing skits, drawing and creating things, decorating our house, but most of all, loving...She loved animals and creatures great and small, including insects she would display and hold in her hands!!

Michelle was always helping around the house, folding clothes, picking up, peeling potatoes, setting the table and anything else she thought needed to be done. She utilized every moment to its fullest. If she was working, she was drawing or creating something.

Michelle loved to perform plays after making up her own wardrobes from household items. Michelle performed her first solo at the age of 4 at our church for the Christmas concert. She sang, away in the Manger." She went on to be included in Select Choir as the youngest member and her voice was beyond comprehension for a child so young. On her eighth Birthday, Michelle received a full electronic keyboard. Not having ever had lessons, she taught herself how to play, using both hands. She would play songs for us when we appeared down, to cheer us up and she would amaze friends that would visit.

If I had to think of symbols for Michelle, it would be tulips in the center of a heart and a star on the outside. Michelle told me to look for the brightest star if she were ever to die before me and think of her shining and smiling down on me. The heart is appropriate for Michelle as she was the sweetest, kindest and most loving person I've ever met in my life. Michelle loved flowers and always delighted In discovering the spring tulips and bulbs as they pushed through the ground

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



Cindy Jo has just started a support group in her area and has also started writing a newsletter entitled:

Heart to Heart Hope and Healing

For Bereaved Parents
Cindy Jo Greever, Editor
P.O. box 6292
Spokane, WA 99207-0905

It is a Christian-oriented newsletter and is geared to parents who donated their children's organs.

Mike, the 18-year-old son of Kline and Betty Wright, died of a heart attack, 7-4-94. Betty shared: *There have been times when things are really bad and sometimes I have thought it was just me and then I get a newsletter and find it is normal to feel this way. I want to thank each of you.*

Mike graduated from high school, June 5, 1994. He get sick, April 25. I took him to a cardiologist and he said it was a pulled muscle. Mike didn't have any more trouble, so we thought he was OK. We went to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, over the 4th of July. He died that morning before we got back home. We never dreamed there was anything wrong other than a pulled muscle. They did an autopsy and found out he had just had a prior heart attack.

I think I would like to pick a smiley face and a pick-up truck



for Mike's symbols. He always wore a big grin on his face and he dearly loved trucks. In fact, he was going to be a truck driver like his dad is. Mike was the sweetest kid

It helps to read the newsletter, but oh Lord, how we miss Mike, he sure was an out-going kid.

Stacie, the 20-year-old daughter of Tom and Ramona Bell, was killed in an automobile accident, 2-27-91. Stacie's scholarship is:

Stacie Bell Scholarship Fund
Quail Creek Bank
P.O. Box 20160
Oklahoma City, OK 73156



Stacie's symbol is an angel.

George, the 16-year-old son of Don and Linda Diebold, was murdered, 4-2-93.

George's symbol is a football.



His scholarship is:

George E. Diebold Scholarship Fund
Saint Xavier High School
1609 Poplar Level Road
Louisville, KY 40217

Don V., the 16-year-old son of Don and Janie Drye, was killed in an automobile accident 7-27-93.

Don's symbols are an airplane and an eagle.

Don V's scholarship is:



Don V. Drye, IV Memorial Fund c/o People's Bank
Gravel Switch, KY 40328

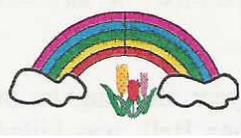
Richard and Geri Vallotton 18-year-old daughter, Alicia, was killed in a truck accident 3-25-93. Alicia's scholarship is for music and drama.

Alicia Vallotton Scholarship Fund
MSU Foundations
Morehead State University
Morehead, KY 40351

Alicia's symbols are a dolphin and daisies.



Brandon, the 16-year-old son of Denis and Linda Holbrook, was killed in an auto accident, 6-17-93.



His symbol is a rainbow with clouds and tulips. His scholarship

is:

Brandon Holbrook Memorial Scholarship
United Methodist Church
Wheelwright, KY 41669

Brandon Holbrook Football Scholarship
South Floyd High School
Hi Hat, KY 41636

Scott, the 15-year-old son of Curtis and Pat Livingston, was killed in an automobile accident 10-14-93 Scott's symbol is a baseball. His scholarship is:



Scott Livingston Memorial Scholarship Fund
Paul G. Blazer High School
Ashland, KY 41101

Jim and Judy Rose's son, Scott, was killed in an automobile accident, 7-4-93. Since his death, his family has established a wonderful foundation that helps many, many handicapped people in Southeastern Kentucky.

They have also established the Scott Rose Games which is a fund raiser for this wonderful cause.



Scott's symbol is a rose. The Foundation's address is:

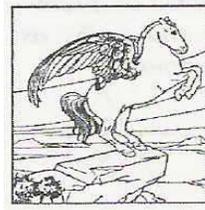
Scott Rose Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 5001
London, KY 40745-5001

Woody and Donna Herndon's 21-year-old son, Roger, was killed in a plane crash, 8-2-91. His

symbol is a monarch butterfly. The address of his scholarship is:

Roger Herndon Memorial Fund Calloway County Board of Education
P.O. Box 6292
Murray, KY 42071

Jim, our 15-year-old son, was killed in an automobile accident, 5-20-91. His symbol is a Pegasus.



His scholarship is:

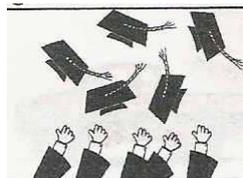
James H. Taylor, II Scholarship
6191 Cumberland College Station
Williamsburg, KY 40769

I hope I have not forgotten anyone's scholarship. If so, please let me know.

Don't we all look forward to the day when we will "Graduate" from this long, long course of grief? *To graduate means to mark with degrees of measurement; to divide into grades or intervals; to pass from one stage of experience to a higher one.* Where are you in your struggle to graduate? Our grief is truly divided into "grades or intervals."

Have you earned your **BS** (Beginning Stages)? Have you earned your **MS** (Moving Successively [following in order])? Have you made it to your **Ph.D.** (Prodigious [amazement or wonder] Healing Degree)? Are you asking, "How much longer does this course run?" If any of you have the answers, please share them. When we graduate, may we be able to toss up those hats that have held the grief inside of us for so long and never have to wear them again.

Join me pursuing these degrees



A wonderful friend of ours sent us these two poems which were written by her Mother, Leila Watts, during World

War II. Her brother, Reid Watts, was co-pilot of a B-17. She would send these poems to parents who had lost children. You can substitute "Mother's Day" for any holiday or event.

This year I cannot wish you "Happy Mother's Day"

'Would seem as though I didn't even care

That loneliness and longing were making

This Mother's Day so hard for you to bear.

And so I do not send you joyous greetings,

I know the sorrow finds but slow release.

But I would have you know that I've been praying

That this day brings to you The Gift of Peace.

If I could do whatever I want to do To make complete your gladsome "Birthday,"

I would not bring a single thing to you, But I would come and take some things away:

I'd take away all trouble from your heart;

Each pain and sorrow I would have relieved;

And every word that caused a single smart,

And every hour through which you sadly grieved.

I'd have them all be gone forever gone-

Forgotten, like the things that cannot be;

And then each hour would be a joyful one, For only good things would be left, you see.

Now that is what I'd really like to do- If I could do the things I wish for you.

In case you don't recognize the picture, it is a picture of me after I have eaten my favorite food -CHOCOLATE. I have coined a new phrase.

VENI, VIDI, EDO COCOLATUM

I came-

I saw-

I ate

CHOCOLATE!



