

# LAMENTATIONS

Issue 44

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

May 1996



Spring is here and it makes me feel that life is beginning once again. (And so is spring cleaning.) When I hear the birds singing, it reminds me that after each dreadful winter, there is a spring. Spring is defined with so many descriptive words, words that almost seem to contradict themselves. When used as a verb, it means: *To be resilient or elastic; to become warped; to issue with speed and force; to grow as a plant; to issue by birth or descent; to come into being; to leap or jump; to undergo the opening of; to produce or disclose suddenly or unexpectedly; to pay for; to make lame; to strain; to release or cause to be released from confinement or custody.*

After reading the definitions, I was surprised that *grief* was not one of the verbs. When our loved one died, we were caused to *spring* into our grief (with speed and force) and we are *bent* by the force of our grief and *lame* with the physical and psychological pain of our loss. We feel that we have physically been *opened up* and our loved one has been ripped from our bodies. Even though we don't want to admit it, we are *warped* by the intensity of our pain, by the strange thoughts we have and by how we now view our lives.

A verb, shows *action or a slate of being*, so that proves to each of us that we need to grieve; that we

have to grieve in order to reach our own S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

When spring is used as a noun: *A source of supply; an ultimate source, especially of action or motion; a time or season of growth or development; an elastic body or device that recovers its original shape when released after being distorted.*

May we each adopt spring as a noun. The greatest *source or supply* for me has been my belief in God, you, my fellow travelers, and the promise that I will see Young Jim again. You understand and accept my grief and I thank you. So we must each get into *motion* and make this season a time of *growth and development*. Yes, we are elastic or we would not be here today. We will not return to our original shape because such a large part of us has been taken, but we can recover to a somewhat *distorted* original shape if we can release ourselves from this terrible burden of grief. What do you say--It is time to do our SPRING CLEANING!!



May 12--Mother's Day-- What an emotional day for each of us. I never understood, until Young Jim was born, why my mother became so emotional whenever I made her a Mother's Day card and homemade presents. Three dates, Mother's Day, Young Jim's birthday (July 26) and his death date (May 20) are the saddest dates for me. In eight days I travel that long road of being reminded that I am no

longer a mother, to the day that my life and title of "Mother" was removed from me. But I have the privilege of being an "Aunt Granny" to four precious great nieces, and a great nephew who is named after Young Jim. Life is good when I look at this *spring* of my life. I hope you can find something this spring for which you can be thankful. May this Mother's Day bring each of us some sunshine in our lives and may our loved ones who have died know that we love them and are busy making sure they are not forgotten.



Memorial Day will be observed May 27. It is a day that our country honors those Americans who were killed while defending our nation. It is also a day that we place flowers and flags on the graves of those great warriors.

Our loved ones who have died were also great warriors and I hope you will honor them by placing a flag or their symbol(s) on their grave so others will see those symbols and, in the future, remember them.

I never cease to be amazed by those who are remembering Young Jim after my telling them about him and his symbols. Angels, a Pegasus and a horse will never mean the same to them (I hope.)

## Grief Grafts

Adrienne, the 1 month daughter of Mark and Cathy Averett, died from a congenital heart defect, 12-10-95. Cathy shared:

We have a 6-year-old daughter, Britany who is healthy and perfect. Mark and I tried again and I miscarried every 6 months. I had 3. Then I decided I would give my body a rest and waited a year.

Adrienne was induced because of complications and she was born, prematurely, at 3:15 p.m. on November 10, 1995. She had my eyes, head shape, hair and mouth. She was not breathing well and they detected a heart murmur. She was rushed to UK Hospital. Adrienne had a genetic translocation. Her heart problem was Tricuspid Atresia. She had two holes in her heart and a missing valve. They told us it was serious. She was in the N.C.U. for 12 days and the P.I.C.U. for 3 days. She was released and was home with us a week. We were very nervous. She died December 10, 1995 of heart failure in Mark's arms.

We miss her so. Mark handles his grief a lot better than I do. I feel as though my heart has been torn out.

The following is a poem that Adrienne's great grandmother gave us at her death. It was very special.

### Life

Life is but a stopping place,  
A pause in what to be,  
A resting place along the road to sweet  
eternity.

We all have different journeys,  
Different paths along the way.  
We all were meant to learn some things.  
But never meant to stay.

Our destination is a place far greater  
than we know,  
For some, the journey's quicker,  
For some the journey's slow.

And when the Journey finally ends,  
We'll claim a great reward,  
And find an everlasting peace  
Together with the Lord!

I had a fourth miscarriage in February '96. I can use a few friends right now. I have found out that I am a

carrier of the genetic problem, Trisomy 22.11.

Our Christmas tree was put up on the day she died. We are going to put it up every year on December 10. We named the angel on the tree Adrienne and will put her rocking horse ornament on it every year. I sure miss my little angel. I really am having a tough day. Maybe I need to break into those Girl Scout cookies. Couldn't hurt. Yummm, Caramel Delights, my favorite. In fact, that feels much better!



Adrienne's symbol is a guardian angel holding a perfect heart.

Lewell and Doris Marcum's 18-year-old daughter, Christy, was killed in a horseback riding accident, 10-11-88. Doris writes:

Even after more than 7 years since Christy's death, I have a very hard time expressing my feelings of losing Christy. I always weep for those who recently lost a child because I see myself in their words of grief, and I know their pain.

I know in my heart that Christy would not want to return to the troubles and trials of this world when she knows only the joys of Heaven and a life with God, but that does not stop my selfish desire to reach out and touch her hair or hear her giggle. She seemed to find it easy to laugh and had a way of making others laugh and enjoy life with enthusiasm.

After 7 years, the pain is a dull ache and I have learned to live with it, but it is something I know I will never be without. At times my heart still wants to know "Why?"--no matter what the answer was, it would be satisfying to a Mother with a grieving heart.

I still miss Christy very much and a part of me died with her, only to be reunited when God calls me home.

Ronnie, the 23-year-old son of Shorty and Wanda Willis, was killed in a motorcycle accident, 5-22-93. Ronnie's symbol is a smiley face. Wanda wrote the following letter after Mother's Day last year and included Erma Bombeck's column:



The month of May has always been a favorite of mine, but the last couple of years it seems as if a veil of sadness covers me as May approaches and continues to linger throughout the month. My daughter and sister-in-law expressed the same feelings. Ronnie was such a "breath of spring" to all of us. It's really hard to experience "spring time in the heart" without him. I'm not saying that he was all I lived for-it's just that he added so much to my living.

I tried really hard during the Easter season to concentrate on the Resurrection of Christ and His promises and hope to us. I just wish we could make a visit now and then to heaven to see our loved ones; But then, I'm sure we would not want to come back "down to earth," would we?

I keep Young Jim's picture in my Bible with others that have been sent to me. Every time I look at the pictures of all of them, I think of this little verse that is on a plaque given to us in memory of Ronnie. I think the words are so fitting for all of our children.

**Some people come into our lives and quickly go,**

**Others stay for a while and leave footprints on our hearts.**

**We can never erase and we are never the same.**

This lovely poem is also on the plaque:  
When my days on earth are ended  
And I heard my bugle call  
I want no grief in any heart  
I want no tears to fall.

The happiness that I have shared  
with loved ones may it spread  
Just think of me as gone awhile  
Don't think of me as dead.

And when you think about me  
Remember with a smile  
That as you walk along life's road  
I am with you all the while.

For life on earth's a detour  
And with faith for all it ends  
In a land of everlasting joys  
With loved Ones and old friends.

Erma Bombeck's column is entitled, "Some mothers don't get a perfect, happy ending,"

If you're looking for an answer this Mother's Day on why God reclaimed your child, I don't know. I only know that thousands of mothers out there today desperately need an answer as to why they were permitted to go through the elation of carrying a child and then lose it to miscarriage, accident, violence, disease or drugs.

Motherhood isn't just a series of contractions; it's a state of mind. From the moment we know life is inside us, we feel a responsibility to protect and defend that human being. It's a promise we can't keep.

We beat ourselves to death over that pledge. "If I hadn't worked through the eighth month." "If I had taken him to the doctor when he had a fever." "If I hadn't let him use the car that night." "If I hadn't been so naive, I'd have noticed he was on drugs."

The longer I live, the more convinced I become that surviving changes us. After the bitterness, the anger, the guilt and the despair are tempered by time, we look at life differently.

While I was writing my book **I Want to Grow Hair. I Want to Grow Up. I want to Go to Boise**, I talked with mothers who had lost a child to cancer. Every single one said that death gave their lives new meaning and purpose. And who do you think prepared them

for the rough, lonely road they had to travel? Their dying child They pointed their mothers toward the future and told them to keep going. The children had already accepted what their mothers were fighting to reject.

The children in the bombed-out nursery in Oklahoma City have touched more lives than they will ever know. Workers who had probably given their kids a mechanical pat on the head without thinking that morning were making calls home during the day to their children to say, "I love you."

This might seem like a strange Mother's Day column on a day when joy and life abound for the millions of mothers throughout the country. But it's also a day of appreciation and respect. I can think of no mothers who deserve it more than those who had to give a child back.

In the fact of adversity, we are not permitted to ask, "Why me?" You can ask, but you won't get an answer.

Maybe you are the instrument who is left behind to perpetuate the life that was lost and appreciate the time you had with it.

The late Gilda Radner summed it up pretty well, "I wanted a perfect ending. Now I've learned the hard way that some poems don't rhyme and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle and end Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what is going to happen next. Delicious ambiguity."

Don and Nancy Lee's 12-year-old son, Dusty, was tragically killed 3-19-93. Nancy wrote these encouraging words:

We have had a better year, and God has helped us learn to deal and live without Dusty. The pain isn't as bad after three years. I miss him, but I will see him again. I know you already know all this, but isn't it great to know you really can remember your loved one and just smile instead of crying all the time. I love the Lord for giving me Dusty and helping me get through this horrible time.

Dusty's symbols are a smiley face and a football.



Chaps and LuAnn Burnett's 8-year-old daughter, Anna Beth, was killed in a tragic accident, 5-9-93. Lu Ann sent this acronym to me for Mother's Day:

**MOTHER:**

**M**oving through life with a bright, happy smile.  
**O**ver life's valleys you fly  
**T**rusting the power within  
**H**elping comfort so many fellow travelers  
**E**nergy for so many tasks  
**R**emembering our loved ones in such a helpful way

Love, Hugs and Tears, LuAnn and "Chaps"

Anna Beth's symbol is a rainbow-colored cat.



David and Cindy Jo Greever's 9-year-old daughter, Michelle, died 11-5-93. Cindy Jo wrote the following letter last May:

The tragedy in Oklahoma has left me feeling devastated for the many suffering families. We understand their shock and trauma in light of the suddenness and not expecting it don't we? I have been praying diligently. How sad. ..

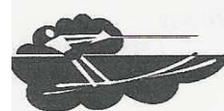
Two weeks ago, locally, there was a special Memorial Service held at Sacred Heart Medical Center's Chapel for the families who donated their loved one's organs. It was wonderful. Families burned candles for their loved ones during the service and afterward were given a purple heart pin, all handmade with their loved one's name hand-written in gold. Very touching. Afterward, they had a brunch with delicious foods and beverages and let anyone speak who wished. I was one of several who spoke and shared the story of our Michelle. They also passed around roses and asked everyone to pick out a rose that reminded them of their Loved one. I chose a Tropicana colored rose, (orange-red) as it reminded me of Michelle's auburn hair. It was the first Memorial since the organ procurement agency started in 1990, but they want to have one every year from now on as they believe the donor families should be recognized more than they have been.

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



Cary, the 18-year-old son of Gary and Nancy Bilderback, was killed in an automobile accident, 1-13-89. On Cary's birthday each year, the Bilderbacks place 18 red roses and white roses for the number of years since his death in their church in his memory. I think this is such a wonderful idea and I plan to do this on Jim's death date this year. It helps others to remember, too.

Cary's symbol is water skis.



Mildred Hodson's daughter, Lydia Copeland, died from complications from treatment of Hodgkin's disease 10-28-91. Mildred compiled pictures and some of Lydia's poems into a precious booklet and dedicated it to her grandson, Ashton. Mildred gave a synopsis of Lydia's life:

*Lydia was a native of Lawrenceburg, KY where she spent her childhood days. She attended junior high and high school in Lexington and graduated from Henry Clay High School with highest scholastic honors. In 1972, she was America's Junior Miss. She graduated in 1976 from George Washington University with a degree in International Affairs through Communications.*

*During the bicentennial summer, she worked for Kodak in Washington, Dc. Lydia moved to Mobile, where she was employed by the America's Junior Miss Office as administrative assistant. Following her career choice, she co-hosted a morning show, then P.M Magazine in Lexington. Moving to Louisville, she was on P.M Magazine there. She later did professional writing and organized her own company, Lydia Copeland Productions.*

Lydia wrote the following poems:

*I wanted to say  
I wanted to reach out to you and say  
the things you are  
In my mind  
I wanted to tell you  
That you being what you are  
Presses deep into my life.  
I wanted to speak to you  
Just today.*

*But  
I decided not to  
Then I realized.  
"I know him.  
He is a part of the  
photographic  
Still shot entitled  
This was life when..."  
So I threw out the "maybe I'll do it."  
I wanted to touch your life  
Before the moment was gone  
To say*

*I know you, thank God.*

January '91



(I'm particularly touched by the following two poems because the first poem is dated May 20, which was the day Young Jim was killed. The next poem is dated May 24 which is the date that Jim and I were married.)

### **Together**

*So few, the times together we have been  
Yet, those the times have made the  
greatest change  
For, life will flow its unobservant  
course  
And, stop not to hold its rein.  
Just as the life I've lived has rambled  
on  
With, racing minutes I neglect the  
world  
But, stop I here because you have come  
To be someone together in this whirl  
Of life, in this the strength of you  
Will grow, will live  
together. . . .*

May 20, 1970

*Are we the order in a stifled life  
Clinging to what we must do  
And reaching not to what we should do.  
Why let these moments of beauty  
seep in*

*When it's much easier to stick to the  
course  
Never let go and never do what  
we're thinking.*

*Please, life, forgive us for using you  
this way.  
But you see, we thought it necessary  
And just look what we've accomplished!  
What have we accomplished?*

May 24, 1970

Lydia's symbol is an angel



Allen Titlow, the 29-year-old son of Anne Meroney, died as the result of an accidental overdose 3-7-92. Allen's symbol is a buck. On the fourth anniversary of Allen's death, Anne wrote:

*"Wild as a buck" he was, and I've been remembering lots of funny, happy stories related to his love of good times. I've come such a long way down the grief road. It's not true that time heals all wounds, but I guess time does soften some of them, a little bit around the edges.*

David and Helen Gardener's 19-year-old son, Curt, died 11-20-95. Curt graduated from Tates Creek High School in Lexington and was a member of the marching Band and the Poetry Club. He had been active in Intramural Sports at both Tates Creek and at UK. He was an Eagle Scout, and had received his Black Belt from the International Kung Fu Academy. Helen shared:

*Curt died on 11-20-95. He was depressed I guess we never think of children or students as having depression.*

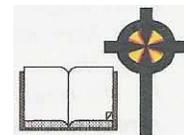
*At least I never did I've done a lot of reading since Curt died and I see his depression now, but I didn't recognize it before.*

*Our daughter, Robin has been having a very hard time and I think someone in her same situation would be very helpful--for both, actually.*

This is the Gardener's address and I hope some of you will write to Robin.

110 Hidden Rock Court  
Cary, NC 27513

Curt's symbols are an open book and an eternity cross.



Michael and Linda Miller's 18-year-old son, Michael, was killed in an automobile accident 2-15-95. Linda laments:

*Our common bond to you and your husband is that we lost our only child Our son, Michael, was born June 30, 1976. He graduated from Bartlett High School in May, 1994. He really did not know what he wanted to do so he was not ready to attend college, so he got a job and went to work. He worked for a plumbing company in Nashville. On Wednesday, February 15, with five miles left to be home on I-24, for some reason, he lost control of his truck and hit a tree. It killed him instantly. Our lives were destroyed and changed forever. Michael was an exceptionally good child We never had any trouble with him. He was very involved in his*

school, church and community. Why do these things happen to our good kids?

I won't write about Michael's life because he was so involved and lived life to its fullest that if I wrote, it would be a book.

We had a memorial service in Bartlett, where we lived from the time Michael was in the sixth grade until he graduated in 1994. Our next door neighbor, Lisa, was 3 years older than Michael but she was the sister he never had. On the night of the accident, she sat down and wrote the following poem. She had never written one before.

**This poem is dedicated  
to my brother, my friend,  
Michael Duncan Miller**

Seven and one half years ago, you  
moved next door to me,

I never knew then what an influence  
you'd be.

A little boy not quite so tall,

Grew into a young man very dedi-  
cated to all.

Although not by blood, in my heart  
you are my brother,

We were always there to help and  
pick at each other.

Michael D., you are one of a kind,

And hold a special place in my heart  
and mind.

Memories created will always be  
treasured,

For knowing someone like you is a  
great pleasure.

A proud country boy from the South,  
Not one harsh word came from your  
mouth.

A son, nephew, cousin, brother, and  
friend,

Everyone could count on you in the  
end.

The dedicated, outgoing personality  
you showed,

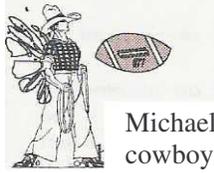
Made a lasting impression wherever  
you'd go.

No one understood what happened or  
why,

You are now in the Hands of the  
Master on High.

Michael D., you're in our hearts, so  
we won't say good-bye,

For we know we will meet again one  
day at the Golden Gates in the Sky.



Love always,  
Lisa Blanks

Michael's symbols are a  
cowboy angel, a football,  
and #77.

Nick Byrd, the 15-year-old son of Teresa Sams, died as a passenger in an automobile accident 3-23-94. Teresa described Nick:

Nick was a special kid. Not just to me, but to his friends, too. He loved baseball, fishing, bean burritos, Garth Brooks and girls. Not necessarily in that order. His favorite song was "The River" and I had it played at his funeral. Several people told me afterwards that they had never really listened to the words until that day and now every time they hear it they say "There's Nick's song."

He was the catcher for his baseball team, the Tigers. He was on the all-star team from the age of 7 until 14. His 13-year-old team won the state Championship and went to the nationals in Biloxi, Mississippi.

I never realized how many friends he had until the funeral.

He was more than a son to me, he was my best friend. He could talk me into letting him do just about anything by grinning at me. I miss him so much.

There is so much more I could say about my son, but I can't find the right words. He also loved Ford trucks. I never could afford one, but with his insurance money, I bought one and had his name, along with "Living Inside My Heart," painted on the tailgate.

His school dedicated a page in the high school year book to him. I also donated Nick's organs, so he still lives on in other people. One of the recipients was a 14-year-old boy in Tennessee. I thank God for giving me the strength to make this decision. So my Nick was a hero in life and in death.

I've included a piece that his friends had put in the paper when he was killed.

**NICK  
"Scooby Dooby"  
BYRD**

Nick Byrd was not only a fellow class-  
mate but a great guy and friend as well. He  
could make you laugh when you

were down, or he could make a  
stranger his best Fiend within  
minutes.

We just wanted to write this in  
memory of Nicky to let him and his  
family know that he was loved and  
will never be forgotten.

Randy Abshear, Deana Sparks,  
Sherry Gibson and All His Friends at  
GRC.

*We Love You Man!*

Nick's  
symbols are a star,  
a tiger and #10



Stevaki Che, the 20-year-old son of Yenna Lobb Hamblin, completed suicide 4-23-90. Yenna described her day on the anniversary of Stevaki's death:

I spent my day driving down to the Amherst College and laid a bouquet of flowers under the crab apple tree that his friends planted on the campus. I bought a card for Stevaki. I have also started a diary where I write to him.



Stevaki's symbol is a  
tropical bird.

Luciana, the 15-year-old daughter of Lucia and Skip Bayne, was accidentally shot 4-30-94. Lucia expresses her feelings:

I am having a hard time this month (April) but I trust that my Father in Heaven is taking care of me and He loves me and has his angels watching over me.

When somebody asks me how many children I have, I always say, "3. Two here and one in Heaven." I can never exclude her. She was born from me and she is and always will be part of my family. So there is no way for me not to include her when somebody asks.

The Angel Shop is doing wonderfully! God has opened many doors for me in the business. My husband and I are planning to start a mail order business with the Angel Shop (nation-wide.) We are in the process of contacting people for everything we will need in this business.

I committed myself to follow the Lord and the three most important things are: To trust Him; to obey Him and to Pray to Him. I know I am

nothing without Him and with Him I can do everything.

Lucia sent the following prayer:

Thank you, Father

It is not how long we live that counts, but how beautifully we live that matters.

Help us to remember that it's the donation of the life more than the duration that adds eternal significance to a life.

We thank you for the treasured memories that will forever enrich our lives because of Luciana whom you have called to live and love with you.

Help us to make our lives more dedicated, more devoted, that we may, through beautiful living, justify in fruitful and creative labor, the younger years you are giving us.

In the name of our Lord, your only Son, who was so young himself when he died on the cross.

Amen



Luciana's symbols are angels.

Vada Barnes' 18-year-old son, Daryl, was killed in an automobile accident, 4-16-95. Vada described Daryl:

He was a senior in high school and had a job after school at **Price Less** store in Irvine. He has one brother, Mikie, 25 years old, 2 sisters, Leah 28 and Mickey, 22. We all called him "Lil-Daryl" not because he was small, but because he was the baby in our family. His brother Mikie loved him dearly and so did his sisters.

It will be a year April 16th. I hurt so badly right now. I can barely live and I can't stand to think about another year without him. Lil-Daryl loved the holidays; Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas. I always cooked a big dinner for my family and friends. He loved those big dinners, he loved to eat.

Lil-Daryl loved people and everyone loved him. He loved to go fishing and deer hunting. He killed his very first deer when he was 12 years old It was an 8-point buck. We had it mounted for him and he has it hanging in his room. His room is just like it was when he was still

here. I don't want to change anything.

Lil-Daryl died from an automobile accident. He was coming home. The paper said that the police clocked him doing 15 mph over the speed limit. The police nor any other official has ever come to us to explain anything about the accident to us. He wrecked 1 ½ miles from our home.

Lil-Daryl died at the UK Hospital. We donated six of his organs. Six people live because of my Lil-Daryl and they have a second chance in life. Oh, how I wish that my Lil-Daryl would have had another chance.



Daryl's symbols are a buck deer and stars.

Larry, the 19-year-old son of Margaret Downing, committed suicide 3-11-95. An article in the **Kentucky New Era** about Margaret and Larry was entitled "A Mother's Worst Nightmare," and was written by Rebecca Logan. It was published on the first anniversary of Larry's death. Margaret said that she hopes the nightmare will end, but she knows it never will. She is proud of herself for making it this far in the healing process and she wants others to know they can too.

Margaret has also made a videotape of herself telling the story of how she lost her only child. The local cable channel has aired it several times.

That is why, unlike many suicide survivors, Margaret talks openly about her experiences and recounts the first year of a nightmare that she knows is far from over.

She spent the first few weeks piecing together what had really happened. There was no note. There was evidence that Larry had probably been sniffing paint

Margaret encourages anyone who has lost someone to suicide to join a support

group. Mary Foster is a grief and bereavement counselor and she said, "The death of a child is always devastating to parents, but when that death is by suicide, all reactions that are typically felt by the survivors are intensified. There are feelings that surface that ordinarily might not, such as extreme guilt, self-blame, rejection and abandonment"

Ms. Foster feels that the most important thing for a survivor to do is to take care of themselves.

Margaret knew that Larry had problems long before his death. Larry had been in and out of drug treatment centers for a few years. She thinks that the death of Larry's father in an accident may have precipitated the problem. Margaret also blames the problems she and Larry had to the drugs.

Margaret speaks to youth groups who are dealing with drug problems and she hopes that her tragic story will encourage them to see what it is doing to their families, and hopefully, they will quit

Margaret is dealing with the bad times, but clings to the good ones. She wears Larry's class ring. "It's hard to remember, but I never want to forget He had a beautiful smile. He was a beautiful child."

The reporter listed several warning signs for which parents can be watchful.

- \*Withdrawal.
- \*Decreased communication or poor communication skills.
- \*Decline in hygiene.
- \*Decline in school or work performance.
- \*Change in attitude.
- \*Loss of interest in things.
- \*Lack of concern for personal welfare.
- A sudden risk-taking attitude.
- \*Confusion or indecision.
- \*Previous attempts.
- \* A plan for the suicide-the more specific the details the greater the danger.

If you are concerned that someone might be contemplating suicide: \*Listen. \* Allow the person to ventilate. \*Refrain from judgment, don't show horror. \*Don't deny suicidal thoughts or argue with illogical thinking. \*Don't leave them alone, even if asked. \*Try to get that person some help.

Larry's symbol is a cross



Craig, the 24-year-old son of Joel and Judy Blumsack, was killed in an automobile accident 5-4-94. Judy sent the following poem that was sent to the family by a young woman who lived in the apartment complex into which Craig had recently moved. She is a journalist and for her, writing is a way to deal with grief. She had lost her 22-year-old brother the previous year. She wrote that she wanted the family to know "The joy and happiness your son brought to others."

**ONE OF US**

*I talked to you last night- tonight you're gone.*

*I woke up- everyone was leaving for work like it was just another day.*

*But it wasn't*

*I did not know you very long, but now you are not here.*

*You were one of us- apart of us.*

*Any of us could have been you.*

*I heard it was instant, you didn't feel a thing.*

*I feel the pain.*

*We talked from time to time, now we never will.*

*Though not knowing you as well as I would have liked, your loss is truly felt*

*One of us is gone.*

*The rain still falls a lot, but the weather's getting warmer.*

*We laugh, we play, we work.*

*Things go on as normal.*

*But what is normal? A friend of 24 is gone.*

*That's not walking to your place and Having a few laughs.*

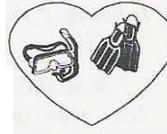
*Normal is flirting at the pool- trying to act like we don't notice.*

*Can life ever be normal when the young are taken?*

*Who am I to say?  
I'm angry - you're gone - I ask "Why?"  
but receive no answer.  
I'm angry and sad.  
I'm happy, too, that you entered my life-  
if only for a while.*

*In memory of Craig Blumsack  
Beloved Friend and Neighbor*

Craig's symbols are goggles, fins and a heart.



Scott, the 17-year-old son of Howard and Sandy Graham, took his own life 4-28-95. Sandy shares Scott with us:

*Our son, Scott, was 17 ½ years old when he died on April 28, 1995. Scott was a shy, kind, thoughtful and intelligent person. He was on his yearbook staff and had been selected as editor for this year's yearbook. He was a member of National Honor's Society and was in Who's Who of American Students. Scott had just qualified for the district meet in track and lettered in track. He had flat feet and bursitis and was in pain every day, but gave his 100% plus effort.*

*Scott was very active in Civil Air Patrol; was a flight squadron leader with the rank of Master Sergeant at the time of his death. Scott loved to fly and wanted to fly F-16's for his country and wanted to attend the Air Force Academy.*

*We have started a memorial fund and will give a cadet from his Civil Air Patrol Squadron a scholarship in Scott's name every year, to help with their flight education.*

*Scott had a girlfriend that put unreasonable requests on him. Right after her making these demands again to Scott, he snapped and took his own life.*

*We feel so cheated. Our son was such a joy and we were enjoying him and seeing him achieve goals he set for himself He was someone to be very proud of.*

*Scott's symbols would be an F-16 and a dolphin. The dolphin is an intelligent animal who is kind and seems*



*like it can fly. The F-16 was a dream to Scott--just his kind of aircraft.*

*We have just one other child, a son Shane, who is 15 ½ years old now. He has had a very hard time since Scott's death. He has so much pain and no life skills to deal with the death of a person he loved so much.*

*The phrase in Harriet Scunoff Schiff's book*

***"Oh call my brother back to me!  
I cannot play alone.***

***The summer comes with flower and bee-***

***Where is my brother gone?"***

*-Felica Dorothea Hemaus*

*says so much. It is hard to accept that we cannot have Scott here.*

*Enclosed is a poem Scott wrote to me and a piece that my niece wrote and read at Scott's Memorial, Scott wrote very well. We have great pieces on flying and that wonderful feeling that Scott felt each time he went up.*

*Dear Mom*

*For the past fifteen years, you've raised me,  
Through all the good times and the bad:*

*You saw me take my first breath,  
You helped me through grandpa's death,*

*You saw me take my first step,  
You were there when I had step,*

*You were there when I lost my first tooth,  
You forgave me even when I didn't tell the truth,*

*You saw me score playing football,  
You soothed my defeat through it all,  
You saw everything I ever did, Mother,  
Even when I bothered my little brother.*

*Now I'm nearly grown,  
And I would have never known;*

*How much you loved me,  
Nor how much I loved you.*

*-Scott Graham  
8 November 1993*

*Laughing or crying?  
Smiling or Frowning?*

*Which one am I doing? I laugh at old times, but*

*I cry at times when I think of what we still could do.*

*I smile at the fact that you are smiling  
down on us and you are happy, but  
I frown at my own pain and others  
pain.  
I don't know how to handle this.  
I know that you are happy and some  
day  
I will be there with you again, but  
I can't stop asking myself "Why?" just  
as everyone else.*

*I've never felt such a deep emotion.  
Am I really feeling such sorrow, or do  
I just think I should?*

*We all LOVE you very much, Scott.  
You're in peace now, and that's what  
matters.*

*Everywhere I look, there is something  
to remind me of you.*

*You are everywhere.  
Even after reading this, I don't feel  
relieved,*

*I can't express all my feelings,  
I am not even sure what some of them  
are.*

*I wish I could make everything better,  
But I can't.*

*You held the power in your own hands,  
none of us did*

*I need to end this speech, but I don't  
know how.*

*The only way I can think of is,  
We LOVE You, We Miss You, and you  
will always be in our Hearts,*

*Good-Bye for now.*

*Tammy Byfield*

Tommy, the 29-year-old son of Bobby  
and Mary Caudill died suddenly from a  
heart problem 1-19-83. Mary expresses  
her grief:

*My son has been gone a long lime  
now, but it seems like yesterday. My world  
is shattered without him.*

*Tommy wrote a lot of poems for me. I  
have one I'd love to share with you (fellow  
travelers.) He had to write an English  
sonnet in his junior year in high school.*

### **MOM**

*She hath given me life and led me on  
The day of birth she held me to her  
breast*

*She cared for me for I was a meek  
pawn*

*I knew not the word. I was a tiny pest.  
I open as an infant in a world of  
grand*

*She taught me the ways of a world of  
keen*

*She showed me the life in a promised  
land*

*I learned how to be a trouble-less  
teen*

*She teaches me what she knows. For  
me to learn well.*

*I listen and try to become a man  
She shows me her ways on which I  
dwell*

*Thus, I know what to do and now I  
can.*

*She hath showed me the way, she is  
my mom*

*I learned the way .from her. I am her  
Tom.*

*I have this on a plaque in my  
kitchen. Tom was an excellent  
cross country runner with lots of  
ribbons and awards to his credit. A  
cross country runner is Tom's sym-  
bol.*



*I am sure he is leading the pack in  
Heaven, running.*

Ginger, the 20-year-old daughter of  
Hank and Joanna Adams, was killed in a  
van accident 3-24-95. One of Ginger's  
AOPi sisters wrote the following poem:

### **The Master's Garden**

*As he looked out over the vast array  
of flowers before him, the gardener took  
a deep breath. He knew what must be  
done. The orders from the Master were  
clear. "I want you to bring me the most  
beautiful flower there is." There was no  
doubt in the gardener's mind that the  
Master deserved the very best. So, he  
gathered his tools and began the search  
for the flower whose beauty '711'passed  
all others. There were rows upon rows  
of beautified floral-marigolds with  
bursts of color as vibrant as the sun,  
and tulips that were picturesque. He  
considered the gigantic sunflower. "Or  
maybe the delicate lilies," he thought to  
himself But then he caught a glimpse of  
some crimson stained petals brightly  
shining in the noonday sun. It was the  
most precious sight he had ever seen.*

*There before him stood a single rose-  
bush. Yet this rosebush was different  
than an ordinary rosebush. It boasted  
one bloom in particular that was espe-  
cially gorgeous--it burst forth passion  
and elegance from every delicate petal.  
Its fragrance was as sweet as honey. So  
the gardener gently and tenderly*

*snipped the stem of that delicate,  
beautiful bloom and then prepared the  
perfect place for it in the master's  
home.*

*Oh, how the rosebush ached with  
every little fiber of its being-down to  
the very root. Every twig winced in  
pain, every leaf shriveled in agony.  
That delicate rose had meant so much.  
She was the Ideal, the perfect example  
to all the tiny buds of what they  
wanted to become. Yet, it wasn't only  
the rosebush that ached for its lost  
bloom, but the whole garden was  
saddened. Even those who had never  
met the rose were touched because of  
the legacy of beauty and grace that  
she left behind That special rose was  
chosen because the Master wanted the  
most precious, enchanting flower he  
could find And there is no doubt that  
the sweet red rose that was chosen for  
Him was the most beautiful bloom of  
them all. She remains alive in the  
hearts and mind, of those whose lives  
she touched while here on earth and  
those she continues to touch today.*

--written by  
Jennifer Gibson in  
loving memory of  
my sister,  
Ginger Adams-



Ginger's symbols are pom-poms  
and a hummingbird.

Gary and Viola Correll's son, Mi-  
chael (15), was killed in an electrical  
shock-drowning 8-9-95. The Correll's  
sent several poems written by  
different family members:

Dec. '95

*Dearest Grandson, Michael,  
Oh how I miss you. I wish I could  
see you in person now...to get to hug  
you again...to look up at you. You  
were growing so tall and handsome.  
You were always so ready with a  
smile. I'm so thankful for the recent  
pictures of you. Your vacation is  
wearing very thin now. I'm ready for  
you to come back, but I know, of  
course, in my heart that I will never  
see you again here on this earth. But,  
oh Praise God, I will get to see you  
again in Heaven. We do have a great  
God, don't we? And I'm a bit jealous  
now because you are already in  
Heaven with Jesus and smiling and  
laughing and romping and picking up  
gold dust...and playing football in that  
big, big yard*

We are getting ready to celebrate another Christmas. You will be missed very much in our usual circle here at NaNa's house. I love you Michael. I love you.

Thank you God for the precious memories of my special grandson, Michael.

January 27, 1996

### I Know

O God, I know you're teaching me,  
With this blessing in disguise,  
And I cannot always see the lesson,  
With these mortal eyes.  
For some reason you have taken him;  
And though my heart is sore,  
O Lord, I know the truth of it-  
I owe you so much more.  
And so I open up my heart;  
My life I give to you.  
No matter how hard this struggle may be,  
I know, dear Father, you'll carry me through.

-Dean Nichols

Dedicated to the memory of  
Michael Correll

How can he be so strong watching his wife mourn over their lost son.

He holds and comforts her as she again asks "Why?"

A tear never shed as faith goes on; he knows they'll be with him in heaven so far above.

Sweet memories we have to dream, as he sings in angelic harmony for Christ our Glorious King.

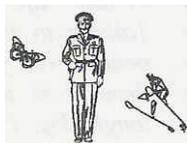
In Memory of  
Michael Wayne Correll  
Rebekah Franklin (cousin)

Once upon a time I had a brother.  
He was nice and he always kissed me.  
I loved him and he loved me.  
His name was Michael.  
Sometimes he was nice.  
Yes, he was the boy who died in Lake Cumberland.  
He drowned from electricity in the water.

I miss him. I love him. The end.

Elizabeth-8 (Michael's sister)

Michael's symbols are a butterfly, a policeman and water skis.



Bill and Brenda Gill's 21-year-old son, Brian, was murdered 2-9-95. Brenda wrote this poem:

### A MOTHER'S LOVE

by Brenda Sue Gill

To understand a Mother's love, begins with that first hug

A kiss atop a wet forehead, leaves you to believe there is nothing to dread

You never dreamed it would be this way, the joy expressed each and every day

To care for a child so dear, grows more of a challenge each new year

Crying, sleepless nights so long, Brian, I give you a Mother's song.

Sleep my child, 'til all is calm. We'll be right here when the teething is done

Walking, talking, playing today, gives way to love and growing up and away

The nest is good when you are a child, 'til he realized the emotions were wild

Disappointment is part of life's great walk, stand tall my child, come let's talk

When AD/HD entered our life, it wasn't wrong, it became another Mother's song.

You were so special, we loved you dear, we worked and planned more each year

Dad, Marvin and Tiffany too, life was exciting when we gathered as a group

Your brother, Marvin, took you under his wing, he didn't understand a single thing

Except that he loved you, his brother, his friend, he stuck by you until the end

She still looks for you, you did no wrong, I can only give Tiffany a Mother's song.

He spent many sleepless nights, he loved his children and wife

They shared the dreams as parents will, he was proud to be Daddy Bill

Children are a blessing from above, He gave them all of his love

He's still there caring for his family today, he visits the crypt every holiday

I cannot come, the times are long, so Dad brings you your Mother's song.

Junior and Charles still look around for the uncle who cannot be found

Sam will not search for you, because, my son he never knew

The uncle who loved and played yesterday, has now and evermore gone away

We will always gently remind them of the times so strong

I will always sing them the Grandmother's song.

To understand a Mother's love, she still reaches out for a hug

A kiss atop the flowers at his head, the stone so cold she has we to dread

She never dreamed it could be this way, the sorrow expressed night and day

To yearn for this child so dear, grows more at this time of year

Crying, sleepless nights so long, Brian I give you a Mother's Song.

William Brian Gill was born September 17, 1973, with a little known condition now classified as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Life became a special challenge to our family. We worked together to overcome obstacles that would bind us together. Along with this, Brian's sister, Tiffany Rose, was pinned between a car and truck August 9, 1982, that left her paraplegic. This became a special bond for Tiffany and Brian. One had a visible problem, one had a hidden problem, together they became one with the world. The oldest son, Marvin Allen, felt he had to become the one who kept everything going smoothly. That is a big burden for a child. We stood along through it all, 'til the end.

When Brian was brutally murdered on February 9, 1995, the family we all knew was not just physically challenged or just mentally challenged, we were emotionally challenged. We weren't prepared for the disassociation that went along with the loss of a child. Not just with each other, but with all friends and family that couldn't face us. It has been just over a year and the battle is not won. The courts and parole boards seem to never stop. There is always the hope that God will reunite us one day, if not here, then in heaven. God's grace is sufficient.

My special prayer this month is for all the mothers who will not have their child to hold on this special day.



Brian's symbols are a wishbone and an eagle.

Mark Nelson, the 16-year-old son of Wayne and Connie, was killed in a 4-wheeler accident 2-8-95. Connie told us about Mark:

*We lost our son 2-8-95 in a 4-wheeler accident. It is hard to write. I don't think the pain will ever get better. Some days are worse. Mark was our baby son and he was so mature for his age. He was a real business-type person who could do anything he set his head to. He was very responsible and could manage money and knew how to make money. He did not waste money. He would use what he had to make more.*

*He worked with his Dad and went everywhere he went. We are in construction business so he worked in it with his Dad in the summer and when he could. He was not lazy like a lot of children.*

*Mark invested some of his money in cows. We had just bought a farm not long before his accident. We laid Mark to rest on our farm. We're fixing a family cemetery.*

*The accident happened four houses up the road from our home. We love Mark and miss him so much.*



Mark's symbol are an angel and 4 aces.

Elaine Stillwell's two children, Denis and Peggy O'Connor, died from an automobile accident in 1986. Elaine gives us hope with this article:

#### TEN YEARS OF LESSONS FROM THE HEART

*It seems impossible that it's been ten years since my two oldest children, 21-year-old Denis and 19-year-old Peggy, were killed in the same car accident! Peggy died instantly and four days later, the day after we buried Peggy, Denis died. In one week we lovingly planned two funerals, proclaiming to the world how much we loved them and how unique each was! Now, looking at their pictures and reminiscing, I ask myself what the past ten years have taught me and I must admit that it, been a lot! Grieving is quite an education.*

*Yes my life has changed My family tapestry has been rewoven. Different*

*routines and traditions were established, new celebrations, friendships and interests were developed as I discovered those things which eased my heart and allowed me to breathe without feeling that excruciating pain that goes down to your toes--the pain from losing someone you love dearly.*

*In the early days of my grief all I wanted to know was, "How do I survive?" To learn, I read everything I could get my hands on. I ran to the public library and devoured all six books they had on grieving. Then I haunted the book stores, searching their shelves for words that would soothe my pain, reading the heartfelt prose and poetry of all those bereaved persons before me. That is how I first heard of "The Compassionate Friends," a national organization for bereaved parents, which later became such an integral part of my life. Story after story touched my heart and gave me guidelines for surviving. On Sundays I reverently took my favorite paperbacks to Church and read their comforting phrases, 'cover to cover as the priest and congregation worshipped around me. Anything that moved me and gave me a consoling thought, I memorized and shared with my husband, Joe, and my daughter, Annie. reading was my first step to recovery in those dark, dark beginning days, pulling me out of the depths and filling me with positive thoughts to get through a day.*

*To conquer the utter exhaustion that assaulted my body, a big component of the grief process, I learned to rearrange my activities to carefully pick and choose those things which would not be overwhelming and might even bring some enjoyment. Simplifying chores and cutting plans into shortened hours made it possible for me to make a "list" of things I could handle and rescue me from defeat. As I got stronger, I was able to include more activities and to increase the time I spent on them.*

*Being surrounded by people I felt comfortable with also helped my healing. It's a normal to want to be with everybody, but when you're hurting you will find you heal faster when in the company and protection of those who put no demands or time schedules on you. Being free to express your needs,*

*fears, and thoughts with a caring person allows you to be relaxed and prepares you to face those individuals who say or do insensitive things. As you gather your strength and your confidence increases, you will find that your support circle expand, too. It all happens very gradually and you feel better because you're more in control.*

*Telling the story of your loved one again and again, sharing your precious memories of that person, helps the "death" to become more real to you and lets your body get used to that fact. When I told the doctor my friends thought he should prescribe some medication for me, he smiled and remarked, "Elaine, you're a talker. Go home and talk and you'll feel better." So I never even got an aspirin from him, but he was right! Speaking to everyone, whether on the grocery line, in a department store, or on an airplane, lightened my burden as I shared my Peggy and Denis with the world*

*Equally helpful was speaking publicly about my children. Fourteen months after my children died, my husband and I founded a chapter of the Compassionate Friends in our hometown and have shared with hundreds of families our "journey through grief" and the people tell us they feel they know Peggy and Denis. Do you know how good that makes us feel? Writing these same thoughts for various publications, I have shared my children and their story with bereaved families all over the world. Making new friends through my Peggy and Denis has been a very rich and rewarding experience for me.*

*When I write or speak, I tell my audience that surviving is all about "what you tell your head" If I say to myself, "I will never see my children again," my stomach does flip-flops and I feel awful. But if instead, I say, "I'm one day closer to seeing my children," my heart rejoices! Thus, by putting things in a "positive" light, you are in more control and able to progress through your grief journey. So put on your rose-colored glasses, it helps!*

*Including your loved one in your "day to day" life helps your heart a lot. Talking to them as you drive along, pouring out your heart to them, keeps them close to you. If I'm having a tough day, I ask Peggy and Denis to*

send me their special strength and they quickly respond by giving a lift to my heart. I have discovered that they are great for finding me parking spaces and insuring good weather for special occasions. As we planned my daughter Annie's October wedding, everybody had a job and I put Peggy and Denis in charge of the weather. I'm sure they loved being included and they came through with a sunny 75 degree day. Also, after we say "grace" at festive family occasions, we light a special votive candle at the table in their memory and though they are not physically present, the glow makes your heart feel they are!

Keeping busy! was a blessing' Establishing a scholarship in their name, announcing it, asking for support, keeping track of donations, and writing "thank you" notes gave me a focus. When the hours tick by quickly and the days go faster and you collapse into bed and fall sound asleep, that is a blessing in itself Keeping their memories alive, keeping them from being "erased," while helping other young people attain their goals was a double reward for me. I anesthetized myself by "keeping busy" mid it kept me alive and productive.

Planting a "Memorial Garden" got us out in the fresh air, doing some mental and physical exercise which made us feel good Our bereavement group planted over 400 trees and shrubs, each one dedicated to a child All this took hours of time. My husband and I could be seen regularly with our wheelbarrow and 500 feet of hose. We can visit and "spruce up" any time and during the year we proudly hang bows, hearts, tinsel or whatever makes our hearts feel good on our trees. Our garden has been treasured by the community and many a prayer has been uttered for the child of the dogwood, the fir, and the maple!

Crying helped Three weeks after my children died, I returned to school to launch my third grade on opening day. My mother used to say, "Do your job and then you can fall down!" And that's just what I did Every day at four o'clock; I sat in my recliner, my "thinking chair" as I call it and I cried for an hour. My tears came without even thinking about them, a blessed healing release and my husband

was "my blotter." Then I made dinner!

When my children died in 1986 angels weren't even popular. But I associated them with Peggy and Denis and the angels made me smile. Wherever I went, I could never "pass up" an angel. After I carted home dozens of angel, of all types, ceramic, felt, wood, crystal, corn-husk, my husband never said, "Enough already!" He seemed to know they were healing to me and they were and still are. That first Christmas without Peggy and Denis, I didn't go shopping for presents because that was too painful, but with every bit of energy I possessed, I wrapped and mailed my special angels to dear friends, relatives, godparents, and college roommates. And if I visited a family, I presented them with an angel, with my children's names and dates etched on its feet or wings. It makes my heart sing to see my angels hanging on my friends' Christmas trees year after year and now ten years later, some trees have ten "Peggy and Denis" angels adorning them! How could our friends ever forget Peggy and Denis as they reminisce and remember the good times while decorating their trees each year with my dear angels? And you should see my tree - proudly filled with loving angels sent by everyone we know from everywhere they've been! Do you see what I so innocently started?

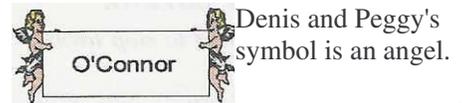
Although it is hard to lean on a spouse who is already "bent in half," Joe and I were blessed that we could turn to each other for comfort, rather than turning away from each other becoming isolated, resentful and lonely. We were only married two years when my children died, so I felt Joe got short-changed because I was no longer the happy "bride" he married His quiet, gentle ways renewed my spirit and preserved my chatty, extrovert personality. His loving arms wrapped around me each night seemed to infuse his strength into me, protecting me and mending my broken heart. No matter what crazy thing I wanted to do to relieve my pain, he never once made fun of it; in fact he gave his blessing and stood smiling by my side. Communication, verbal or non-verbal; taking, sharing thoughts, holding hands, praying together - can create a new, beautiful "oneness" that

transcends what you had before. Being loved and giving love is powerful medicine for the hurting soul and brings that blessed sense of peace.

I've shed my tears and suffered my bad days and even ten years later find it's not all smooth sailing, but I've built a good life that is meaningful and the special love I have for Peggy, and Denis has not been wasted but rather reinvested in many ways, that come back a hundred-fold You, too, can be the beneficiary of that special reinvested love. Try it; it's warm and wonderful, keeps multiplying and brings peace to your heart. And best of all, your loved one will be proud of you!

Lovingly written in memory of my children, Peggy and Denis O'Connor, for their 10th anniversaries, Aug. 2 and Aug. 6, 1996.

We have the great privilege of having Elaine share with us at **J.I.M.'s** Picnic June 8.



Andrew, the 20-year-old son of Henry and Marcia Jones, died from complications of Cerebral Palsy 12-31-93. Marcia shared:

Our little boy, Andrew, was born healthy and wonderful, June 4, 1973. However in October, after the usual series of DPT shots at 4 months, he had a devastating reaction of a rare virus that caused hospitalization and 2 heart arrests, one for over 20 minutes. Doctors told us several times he wouldn't live through the night- I guess that's when I really lost my precious baby boy, because from then on he never learned to speak, walk, hold my hand, feed himself or do anything really except cry and have seizures that never could be controlled

God finally rescued Andrew on December 31, 1993. The end of the year, the end of his earthly suffering.

I had so many fears that God totally wiped away as I was allowed to spend that last morning with Andrew on my lap.

We read all of John 14 together and Isaiah 35:3-6. We listened to

favorite hymns sung by the "2nd Chapter of Acts." Andrew's fever was 107.8 on a digital thermometer. We had been to the doctor the day before, who could find nothing wrong (temp. 105). My fears had been that I would eventually have to put him in a nursing home, or that he would die at school or in a hospital or with a sitter, but God allowed me the privilege of holding him and releasing him into the loving arms of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I would be particularly interested in communicating with parents who have lost handicapped children. I wrote the following poem because so many people said to me that I was so "good" to keep my sweet, innocent, little boy in our home for all of those 20 1/2 years. I wish I could make people understand how precious this child was to me and that there was never a choice about keeping him at home. As the poem says, "How do you stop loving your own child?"

### HOW DO I STOP LOVING?

When was I supposed to stop loving Andrew?

How do you unlove your own child, tell me, please do?

Maybe I was just supposed to say at his birth

"Well, I'll love him awhile, then see what he's worth."

Do I stop loving him because he got sick?

Then there's a whole lot of us that better get well real quick'.

How about when the doctor said he won't live anymore,

Is that when a parent bolts for the door?

Maybe it's the words: "brain damaged" or "retarded,"

That should make moms and dads keep their emotions more guarded

Do I stop loving my son because he can't run?

Or had I better not wait quite that long?

How do you not "get attached" to your own flesh and blood?

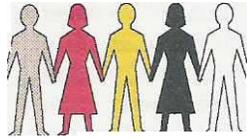
How do you cut those unseen cords when the kid is "no good?"

Tell me, won't you, now that he's gone,

How do you stop loving your very own son.

I find it impossible to shut off the valve

That has fallen in love with this innocent child



Andrew's symbols are children of the world red, yellow, black, white and handicapped too.

-March 1994

Terry, the 24-year-old son of Be a Travillion, was killed in an automobile accident 3-27-95. Bea lamented:

I lost my son just over a year ago. It has been one of the hardest things in my life.

I have lost a lot in the past few years. I lost my Mother and Dad, my husband in divorce, my home, a restaurant I owned was lost in a fire and no insurance which took my job, but when I lost Terry, that was hardest of all. Thanks to God, he left me Terry's twin brother, Jerry. They were both in the accident. Jerry was not hurt. It has been real hard for both of us. We have become much closer since then.

Terry worked at McDonald's when he had the accident. They have a plaque hanging in the store in Manchester in memory of him. I would like for his symbol to be the arches of McDonald's. He loved his work and the people he worked with.



Don, the 36-year-old son of Dale and Claudia Lynch, died from a degenerative lung disease, 6-15-94. Don wrote the following poem. His birthday is May 30.

### The Passing

Another soul is now in heaven  
Another saint has finished the way  
Another person has passed over Jordan  
And rests in the arms of the Father today.

People mourn for their loneliness,  
For the loss of a loved one.  
But yet they rejoice for the Father  
For now there is another that waits for them.

A teddy bear is Don's symbol.



Kevin and Anne

Brynes son, Jimmy, was killed in an automobile accident, 11-10-84. Anne shared this wonderful remembrance:

Three days before Jimmy's birthday (3-22), I received a letter from a woman who said she became a friend of Jimmy's shortly before his death. She had just found and developed an old roll of pictures. "In honor of what would have been Jimmy's 29th birthday, I am sending you this picture of him." It was in that roll. She said she hoped it would be received with good memories and not pain. I was so touched... (but the pain was there too.)

I wrote back and thanked her for her sensitivity and compassion and included this poem written by a woman in New Jersey:

"The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes  
But it never fails to bring music to my ears.

Please, if you really are my friend, Don't stop the beautiful music."



Jimmy's symbols are a hammer and a screwdriver.

Elaine Sherman is a very wise 20th century American writer. She professed:



'Chocolate is heavenly, mellow, sensual, deep, dark, sumptuous creamy, seductive, suggestive, rich, excessive, silky, smooth, luxurious, celestial. Chocolate is downfall, happiness, pleasure, love, ecstasy, fantasy. . . Chocolate makes us wicked, guilty, sinful, healthy, chic, happy! (I'm surprised it doesn't cure cancer!)