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Listening

Hearts

A Gathering of
Bereaved Moms...

We Have a New Look

Welcome to the November/December issue of the Listening Hearts Newsletter! Beginning with this issue, we adopt a fresh look that includes a few new features, in addition to the content you have always enjoyed. I hope to continue the exemplary efforts that our co-founder and lead author/editor of this newsletter, *Debra Reagan*, established.

I am excited to be your new editor, but as we all know, deeply saddened for what brings us together. We each

personally walk this difficult journey—a mother's loss of her precious child—and so we also know how much we need each other.

Let us continue to support each other through our submissions of our favorite quotes and photos, but let us also provide helpful tips and resources as we learn of them. Let us continue to share our thoughts in articles, poems, and open letters that we write to our children. Let us also lift each other up with good news and happy events

that happen for us on this journey we call life. Let us strengthen our community in any way we can through the love that we share as mothers.

There are lots of options to submit content. You can:

1. Send an email.
2. Put a stamp on it and send by regular mail.
3. Drop items off at the meetings.
4. Scan items while you wait.

-- *Amparo* (Tony's mom)

Meetings and Events

Since we cannot change that which is out of our control, we work to help ourselves and each other to process this devastating and life-altering loss by gathering together. We meet monthly at alternating locations, in Knoxville and Morristown. You can join us at both locations, or choose one that is most convenient for you.

Knoxville

The Eye Institute
Conference Room
2020 Kay St.

Saturdays
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

- ♥ February 2
- ♥ April 6
- ♥ June 1
- ♥ August 3
- ♥ October 5
- ♥ December 7

Morristown

Walters State Community
College, Humanities
Complex, Room 105
500 S. Davy Crockett Pwy

Saturdays
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

- ♥ January 5
- ♥ March 2
- ♥ May 4
- ♥ July 6
- ♥ September 7
- ♥ November 2

Combined Events

The Eye Institute
Conference Room
2020 Kay St.

December 1
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

- ♥ Candlelight Ceremony

In Remembrance

These adored children have birthdays in November and December.



*Forever in
our hearts*

November Dates

- ♥ Alan Armstrong (11/22/82)
- ♥ Ronald Cooper (11/02/56)
- ♥ Damon Fewer (11/23/95)
- ♥ Brett Friberg (11/23/76)
- ♥ Zachary Ryan Griffin (11/22/83)
- ♥ Dustin Carter Kitts (11/12/82)

- ♥ Calvin Lewis Medicus (11/01/09)
- ♥ William Myers (11/05/73)
- ♥ Danny Pedro (11/01/90)
- ♥ Carlos Santos-Silva (11/04/77)
- ♥ Natasha Whitmore (11/15/79)
- ♥ Eric Wolf (11/19/75)

December Dates

- ♥ Brandon Arms (12/28/84)
- ♥ Lana Mae Hopkins (12/21/10)
- ♥ Carson Howard (12/31/90)
- ♥ Paul Sanders (12/31/74)
- ♥ Marty Short (12/02/74)
- ♥ Condrige Willis (12/01/73)

These cherished children have anniversaries in November and December.

November Dates

- ♥ Louis Carl Balogh (11/23/09)
- ♥ Calvin Lewis Medicus (11/01/09)
- ♥ Bradley Prosisie (11/08/05)

December Dates

- ♥ James Randy Allred (12/31/96)
- ♥ Brian Christ (12/15/04)
- ♥ Billy Crocker (12/02/08)
- ♥ Brett Friberg (12/23/07)
- ♥ Devin Scott Gorman (12/20/07)
- ♥ Carson Howard (12/02/08)
- ♥ Krystal Thelms Long-Duss (12/10/03)
- ♥ BJ Outlaw (12/01/03)
- ♥ Danny Pedro (12/19/02)
- ♥ Dawn Reynolds (12/08/08)



Behind the Eyes

Lana Golembeski

No one can see behind my eyes;
 The tears fall silently
 Trying to cleanse the pain in my heart.
 On the outside
 It appears that I have healed
 That I have moved on
 But the reality is that behind
 The laughs,
 The smiles,
 There lies a broken heart
 That can never be healed.
 Courage fuels each and every day
 Courage that I never knew that I had
 Courage created from such a horrific event
 Courage from the heart of my daughter
 The tears never end.
 They are silent.
 And no one knows.



Lana's precious daughter, Alicia Golembeski

Tired

Lana Golembeski

So tired of the pain
 So tired of the missing
 The never ending emptiness that comes with
 Losing your child and your dreams.
 There are no more tomorrows.
 There is no future.
 There will be no grandchildren—ever.
 I am held together by my friends
 And my pets
 But sometimes, that is simply not enough.
 People try to help
 But there is no help
 No one can bring your child back and understanding THAT
 Is the only way to help
 But those who have not lost a child, they simply do not
 understand
 For some reason, they believe things will get better
 But the reality is that NOTHING will get better without our
 child.
 So we ask you to stop...and think about how YOU would
 feel
 If you lost your child.
 What would make you feel better?
 The answer is obvious.
 NOTHING
 There are no easy solutions
 But hugs and love can help ease the pain
 And that is all we have to help us in this most difficult
 journey
 That we would never wish on any—not even our worst
 enemies.
 So just please stop
 And listen
 And let us feel our pain
 Please hold our hands
 Give us a hug
 That will not end our pain
 But it will help us continue on our journey.

Brian's Giraffe

Lee Ann Christ

We just got back from a safari to Tanzania with Katelyn! It is something I have wanted to do since I was a child—going to Africa (remember Dakitari?!).

I felt Brian's presence with us. It is absolutely something he would have done. Maybe even climb Mt. Killamanjaro.

We met people from the Massai tribe, saw a school and met the children, stayed in a tented camp in the Serengeti, and went to Ngorongoro, Caldera (crater), which is one of the seven natural wonders of the world. We saw tons of animals and animal behaviors while out on the safari drives, including lions stalking and chasing zebras at a water hole and

elephants chasing lions away from their kill at a river.

When we went to the KY conference that Dinah Taylor sponsored, we picked a symbol for our child if you remember. I picked a giraffe for Brian's. We saw so many beautiful giraffes. They are so graceful and peaceful looking. Here's an excerpt from Brian's site when I wrote about the conference:

I chose a giraffe because the long neck represents spiritual foresight. They are very curious and can defend themselves with one quick blow from their hooves. Brian was very curious and bright all through childhood, introspective and

thoughtful in his thinking, and held a black belt in Tae Kwon Do. When he was little, he was peeking out through his blinds. When I asked him what he was doing he said, "There might be a giraffe looking in!" I got him a little giraffe that he carried with him to college. I guess he was facing his fears.

<http://brianchrist.com/>



Brian Christ, Lee Ann's beloved son

"There might be a giraffe looking in!"

My Joy

Clint's Friend

I took my tree down to the shore.
The garland and the silver star
To find my peace and grieve no more
To heal this place inside my heart.

On every branch I laid some bread.
And hungry birds filled up the sky.
They rang their bells around my head.
They sang my spirit back to life.

One tiny child can change the world.
One shining light can show the way.
For all my tears for what I've lost.
There's still my joy for Christmas Day!

The snow comes down on empty sand.
There's tinsel moonlight on the waves.
My soul was lost, but here I am...
So this must be Amazing Grace!

One tiny child can change the world
One shining light can show the way.
Beyond my tears for what I've lost
There's still my joy
There's still my joy
For Christmas day!

Forever in my heart,
sweet Clint
I will forever love you!



Debra's little boy, Clint Reagan

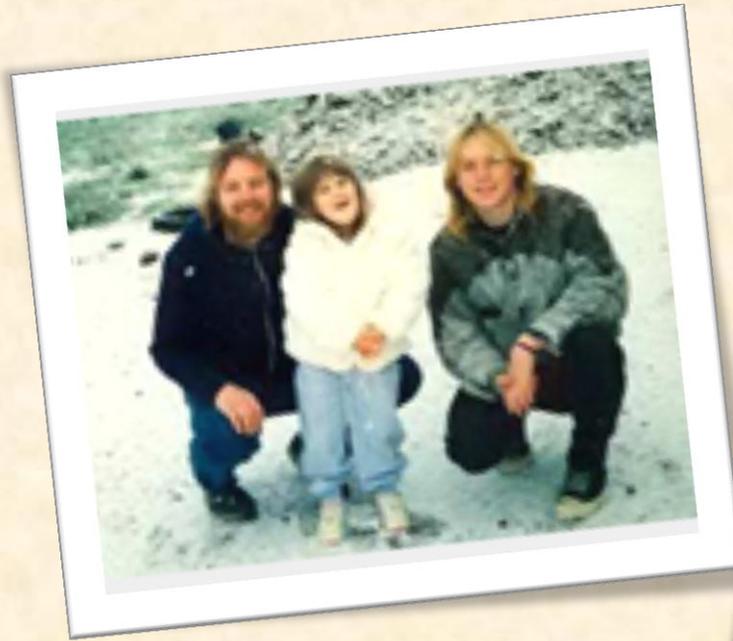
A Sister's Delight

Diane Taylor

My son, Paul, was always so sweet with his little sister, Meghan Rose. One Christmas Eve, after Meghan was asleep, Paul took their dad's work boots and dipped the soles in the fireplace ashes. He then made footprints all around the Christmas tree as if Santa had been there!

I have never known anyone else who brought so much delight to a little sister!

Love is all you need.



Above, a teenage Paul Sanders (right), beloved son of Diane Taylor, with his little sister and unidentified man.

At right, helping Meghan Rose to blast open a piñata at her 5th birthday party.



Christmas Day

Melissa Price

Joshua Humphreys (left), adored son of Melissa Price, with his mom, Melissa Price, and sister, Miranda Humphreys. This was their last Christmas together, in 2010. Josh was 20 years old.



Meet Your Board, Officers, and Leaders

Board of Directors

Debra Reagan
Alan Reagan
Katie Helms
Ruby Buchanan
Karen Archer
Pamela Johnson

Elected Officers

President
Debra Reagan

1st Vice President
Ruby Buchanan

2nd Vice President
Barbara Bell

Secretary
Debra Prosis

Treasurer
Reneau Howard

Outreach
Katie Helms

Leaders

Leader
Ruby Buchanan

Asst. Leader
Mitzi Akins

Secretary
Becky Allred

*A mother's heart
holds the memories
close.*

*It understands how
precious time is.*

*Love and live each
day.*

Announcements

Keep In Touch!

Plans are underway to develop a hard copy address book of Knoxville and Morristown area moms. You'll be able to easily send cards and letters for those difficult occasions. **Contact Debra to confirm** your contact data and to provide consent for release of your information. Include your mailing address, phone, e-mail, your birthday (month/day) and your child's birth and anniversary dates if you'd like to be included in the address book!

Reply by November 15.

Be a Listening Sister!

Have you ever needed to talk or wanted to ask a question between meetings? The Board may consider a proposal submitted for a new initiative to seek volunteer moms who are willing to provide support to other moms having a difficult day.

Let us know if you prefer to be contacted by phone or email, how long you have been bereaved, and the nature of your loss. For example, your child may have been an infant or an adult. Your child may have

been murdered or suffered from depression. You may have experienced multiple losses. Your unique situation may help another mom in similar circumstances.

If you have a special interest, such as hiking, reading, or quilting, let us know that too! Your interests may match those of another mom.

Contact Debra or Amparo by November 15 if you'd like to join the special listening network, to be discussed during the next Officers' Meeting.

**SOMETIMES
ALL A PERSON NEEDS
IS A HAND TO HOLD
AND A HEART TO
UNDERSTAND**



Listening Hearts

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WE'RE CONNECTED!

Visit us at:

www.listeninghearts.net

Join the conversation on:

facebook

Closed group for private posts;
email us for access

LOVE GIFTS

Your tax deductible donations make it possible to reach out to other grieving mothers through this newsletter, group sessions, and website.

Love gifts can be made at all group meetings or mailed. Make checks payable to Listening Hearts.

Thank you for your generous support!

ANONYMOUS DONATIONS

Thank you for the contributions!

Resources

The Grief Toolbox

www.thegrieftoolbox.com

Resources and tools to help with the pain of the first year and the reality of the second year and beyond.

My Child Has Wings

Search for the open Facebook group, Wings of Hope. Wings can be added to a photo of your child by "liking" the

Facebook page and then sending a request. This service is free of charge.

The Compassionate Friends

www.compassionatefriends.org

Grief support at chapters throughout the country and the world, in addition to annual national conferences and regional meetings.

Calling All Moms!

Our next issue will feature winter memories for the January/February edition.

Do you journal, write poetry, or snap interesting pictures? One mom's precious memories, favorite quotes, random thoughts, or photographs may uplift another mom in her time of sorrow. Share your snow or winter photos, New Year's Eve memories, treasured Valentine's Day card, or love notes from your child.

Hard copies as well as electronic files will be accepted. We will try to include all entries received

in the next edition, although we may hold your submission for a future newsletter, based on space limitations.

For your convenience, we will have a scanner available at all meetings, at both our Morristown and Knoxville locations. Your items will be returned as soon as we get them scanned! If you can't attend, you can still submit! Simply send your content by regular mail or e-mail.

Please include the following information for any items submitted:

- Name of your child
- Approximate age of the child when the photo was taken
- Relation to the child of any other people in the photo
- A brief memory of what was happening in the photo
- Any other background information you'd like to share for any writings, drawings, etc. your child may have done

About Us...

Listening Hearts is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. It is a self-help gathering of bereaved mothers from all walks of life. We wish every day that there was not a need for such a group.

It does not matter the age of the child or the cause of death. Nor does it matter the length of time since the child's death. All bereaved mothers are welcome.

No one should travel this journey alone. Join us, as we help each other find ways to carry the pain of this loss and the joy of the love for our child in the same heart.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the making of this newsletter. We are honored to share the love and memories of your precious child. Photographs and articles submitted may be used on the website, unless otherwise noted.