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Listening

Hearts

A Gathering of
Bereaved Moms...

Dreams

Some of us frequently dream of our babies when we sleep, while others of us pray and hope for the occasional dream visit.

I am in the latter category. So, when the dreams do come, I am grateful. Often, my dreams are of my Tony as a little boy, but every now and then he is a bit older. I dreamt once of his imminent death, and another time I woke myself up as I heard my own weeping although I don't remember why I was crying in my dream.

There are different types of

dreams, including lucid (an awareness of dreaming), recurring (repeated dreams), or progressive dreams (a sequence of dreams), and even nightmares. I wish for a series of progressive dreams that take me from one memory to another.

Theories about why we dream range from our brains sorting through the inputs of our day, to connecting to our short- and long-term memories, to reflections of our emotions, among others. Perhaps all these theories are accurate.

I don't care to know the reasons or the science behind the state of dreaming...I just want to be able to see my boy again and again in my dreams.

-- Amparo Atencio
(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

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

Morristown

Walters State Community College
Humanities Complex, Room 105
500 S. Davy Crockett Parkway
Saturdays
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

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

In Remembrance

These adored children have birthdays in March and April.



March Dates

- ♥ Tanner Morgan
(3/10)
- ♥ Brittany Thomas
(3/12)
- ♥ Tyler Thompson
(3/26)
- ♥ Stacy McElhaney
(3/27)

April Dates

- ♥ Bradley Prorise
(4/2)
- ♥ Louis Balogh
(4/10)
- ♥ Colt Porterfield
(4/17)
- ♥ Cindy Allen
(4/19)
- ♥ Wade Buchanan
(4/21)
- ♥ Gabriel Miller
(4/22)
- ♥ Timothy VanWinkle
(4/23)

- ♥ Caleb Norris
(4/26)
- ♥ Aiden Thomas
(4/29)

These cherished children have anniversaries in March and April.



March Dates

- ♥ Donald Lauderdale Jr. (3/5)
- ♥ Sean Powell
(3/10)
- ♥ Joseph Stevens
(3/15)
- ♥ Chad Raby
(3/16)
- ♥ Caleb Norris
(3/29)

April Dates

- ♥ Stacy McElhaney
(4/20)
- ♥ Paul Sanders
(4/24)
- ♥ Steven Anderson
(4/28)
- ♥ Ron Cooper
(4/28)

A Celebration of Life

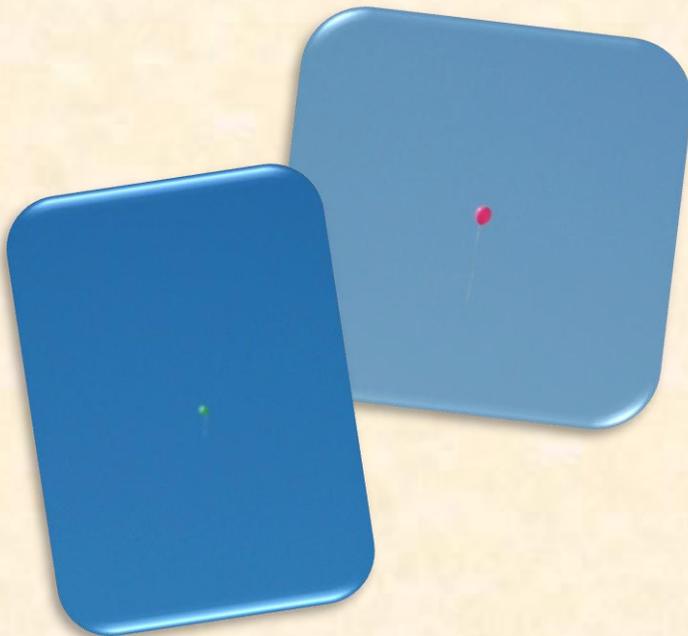
Mitzi Akins

A Celebration of Life Memorial Service was held for Kelby Akins on Saturday, February 9th. Many local friends and family attended, and others joined in spirit from places far away, such as Michigan and New Jersey, to celebrate and remember Kelby during the anniversary of his death, which was also Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week (February 7-14). Kelby's surviving twin, Joshua, is a survivor of congenital heart disease.

Pastor David Williams led a prayer service. Katie Helms played songs on her bagpipes, selected by Mitzi for the special day. Kelby was also remembered by one of his cardiologists in Memphis.

Contact Mitzi at mitaki4@aol.com if you have questions about heart defects or want to get involved.

See more photos on Page 4.



Mitzi shared a touching poem by The Rev. Maureen Christopher, R.Sc.F.:

I imagine a person's life is like a beautifully decorated balloon, tethered by a cord to the earth.

It is buffeted by every breeze and strains at the restraint with sometimes-harsh movements.

Suddenly, a moment comes when the cord is released and the balloon lifts!

No longer fighting the wind;

It is lifted high upon it, graceful and dancing with heavenly movements.

From an earthly point of view, it becomes smaller and smaller until it fades from sight.

I feel my loss until I remember that the balloon itself is not becoming smaller as it lifts,

But larger and larger until at some point it bursts the last vestige of its early life and merges with the highest atmosphere.

The essence of that balloon, what made it a balloon, becomes totally free and part of the air that touches my face,

The power that moves the clouds, even my very breath.

In the same way, a soul merges with the Omnipresent Creator of Life, and is part of the Goodness of God.

So they will always be, in some part, present with each of us, as God is present with us now.



Jimmy's Art

Lori Coniglio

Lori's precious son, Jimmy, decorated this plate when he was in elementary school. His art now hangs inside one of Lori's kitchen cupboard doors, where her family sees it every day.

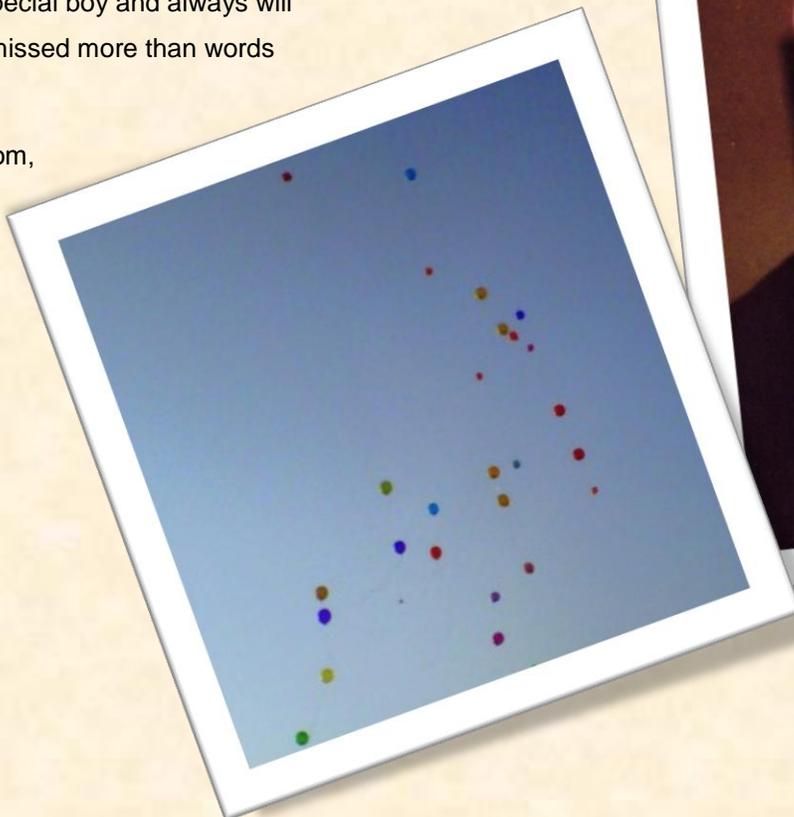
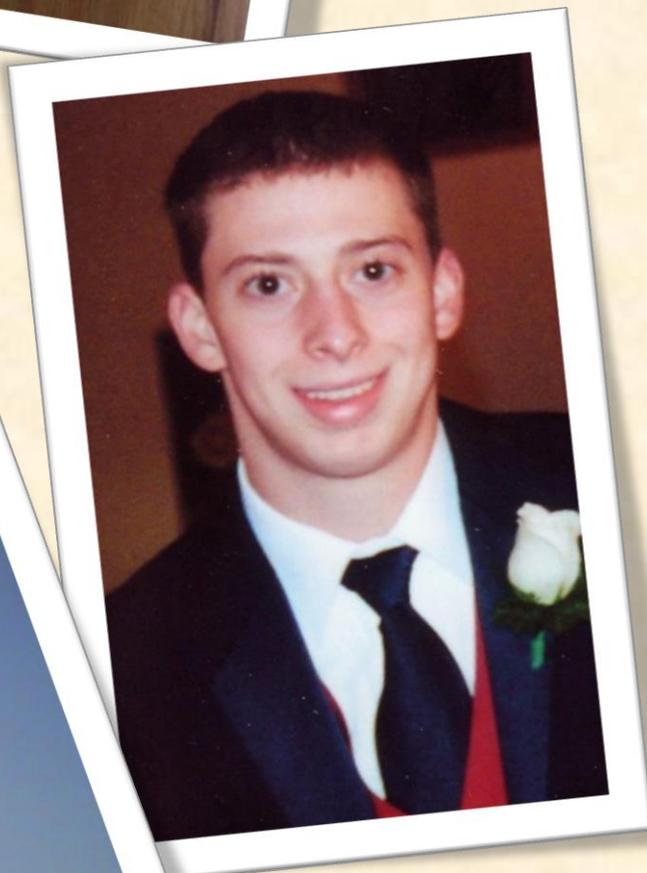
A Note from Mom

Jim Coniglio, sometimes you liked to be called James Anthony, your birth name...It was a warm, early spring four years ago, March 6, 2009, you left us unexpectedly. Although given your addictions, we always knew that it was a possibility. But you were clean—or so we thought—you didn't want us to know that you were still struggling.

You were our special boy and always will be! Loved and missed more than words can say.

Jim's forever mom,

Lori



Secret Sisters Takes Off

The Secret Sisters program is well underway! Many sisters have received words of encouragement, uplifting cards, thoughtful trinkets, playful gifts, and even flowers.

We are happy to see the program taking off. Remember, the intent of the program is to get to know each other better and encourage a mother on her painful journey that each of us knows so well. It is truly the thought that counts, and large purchases are not necessary.

Cards on those special

dates, short notes, and letters are as special as thoughtful gifts. Gifts do not need to be expensive. For example, a packet of seeds for the garden, a used book from McKays, a small box of chocolates, or individual packets of cocoa or tea are all inexpensive items that are sure to uplift the heart of any recipient.

Katie has offered her address, if you would like to list a return address on your package:

4310 Twin Pines Drive
Knoxville, TN 37921

Receivers can acknowledge the thoughtfulness on our Facebook page! It is not necessary to post a photo of the gift—just a brief acknowledgement will let the giver know a package has made it to its final destination.

We're still feeling our way around making Secret Sisters the best program it can be! If you have ideas to help streamline any part of the program, we'd love to hear from you. Contact Debra or Amparo.

Congratulations!

Janice Clay celebrates the graduation of her daughter, LaShunda Clay, from Chattanooga University

May 4, 2013

Listening Sisters Are Available

This new feature offers a listening ear for moms who need to talk or reach out during a particularly difficult time. If you would like to be available to provide support and a listening heart to another mom, let us know. Different moms will be featured in each issue.

Mom	Contact Info	Child's Life Stage	Nature of Loss
Katie Helms	865-773-6672	Young adult	Drugs
Sandy Pedro	865-247-6472	Child	Kidney/stroke
Janice Short	423-748-1597	Adult	Prescription drug overdose
Deb Prosis	865-405-4682	Teenager	Car accident
Amy Dortch	Tarheels78fan@gmail.com	Infant	

Encourage...
support...
uplift...
listen...

Listening Hearts

PHONE:
(865) 679-1351

E-MAIL:
ListeningHearts08@gmail.com
AmparoAtencio@gmail.com
drdreagan@gmail.com

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!

Lynette Balogh Newman, in memory of her brother, Louis

Gladys Roberts, in memory of her son, Greg Reagan

Alan Reagan, in memory of his son, Clint Reagan

ANONYMOUS DONTATIONS

Thank you for your contributions.

Resources

Workshops and Conferences

The Compassionate Friends (TCF)

A regional workshop is scheduled in Frankfort, KY, April 5 and 6, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel. The theme for the workshop is "Walking Toward Stars of Hope." Registration is now open.

<http://thecompassionatefriendsfrankfortky.com/>

The annual national conference will be held in Boston, MA, July 5-7, at the Boston Sheraton Hotel. The theme is "Beacon of Love; Rays of Hope." Hotel reservations can now be made.

http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Conferences/TCF_2013_National_Conference_Boston.aspx

We Need You for the Next Issue

Our next issue will feature love letters to our children for the May/June edition, to commemorate Mother's Day.

As always, we also welcome your blog posts, poetry, or interesting pictures. One mom's precious memories, favorite quotes, random thoughts, or photographs may uplift another mom in her time of sorrow. Share your Mother's Day cards, spring photos, 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.