

Regular Features:

Meetings & Events	1
In Remembrance	2
Listening Sisters	3

In This Issue:

Candle Lighting	1
Secret Sisters	3
Photos	4
Alan Armstrong	5
2014 Fundraising	6

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Listening Hearts

A Gathering of
Bereaved Moms...

Candle Lighting Ceremony a Success

Listening Hearts moms, dads, and guests attended the 6th annual candle lighting ceremony on December 7, in remembrance of our children gone too soon. Moms lit memorial candles as they said their children's names, and candles were also lit on behalf of local mothers who were not able to attend.

The evening included an invocation and poetry readings, door prizes and refreshments. Background music was provided by Elizabeth Farr on harp.

Ms. Farr holds music degrees from the Peabody Conservatory of Music, the University of Tennessee, and the Mozarteum in

Salzburg, Austria. She has won the Knoxville Arts Council's Artist of the Year Award and is past president of the East Tennessee Chapter of the American Harp Society.

See Page 4 for photos of the event.

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 1

Morristown

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

♥ January 4

In Remembrance

These adored children have birthdays in January and February.

January Dates

- ♥ Steven Anderson (1/22/78)
- ♥ Donnie Lauderdale, Jr. (1/23/97)



February Dates

- ♥ Carmen Hernandez (2/27/09)
- ♥ David Poore (2/6/64)
- ♥ Chad Raby (2/27/84)
- ♥ Sawyer Webb (2/5/92)
- ♥ Noah Winstead (2/14/02)

These cherished children have anniversaries in January and February.

January Dates

- ♥ Sloane Comeaux (1/1/13)
- ♥ Jaymee Steward (1/26/12)



February Dates

- ♥ Kelby Akins (2/9/08)
- ♥ Rick Anderson (2/9/12)
- ♥ Alan Armstrong (2/25/07)
- ♥ Danny Berry (2/8/05)
- ♥ Colin Breheny (2/3/13)
- ♥ Davey Hurst (2/26/11)
- ♥ David Poore (2/16/08)
- ♥ Aiden Thomas (2/27/10)
- ♥ Brittany Thomas (2/27/10)
- ♥ Timothy VanWinkle (2/6/95)

Listening Sisters Have Listening Hearts

These moms offer listening ears for moms who need to talk or reach out during a particularly difficult time in between gatherings.

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
Amparo Atencio	865-310-1130	Adult	Murder
Amy Dortch	Tarheels78fan@gmail.com	Infant	Birth defect
Deb Prosis	865-405-4682	Teenager	Car accident
Sandy Pedro	865-247-6472	Child	Kidney failure/stroke

Secret Sister Kicks Off Again

The Silly Santa gift exchange provided a light-hearted atmosphere after the Candle Lighting Ceremony in December. Another opportunity for a brief respite from mothers' difficult grief journey was the selection of names for the next series of the Secret Sisters program.

This is an anonymous and optional program for moms to give and receive random acts of kindness in the form of cards, notes, and small gifts on special dates or just because. The thoughtful gestures are at the discretion of the giver. The focus is on the love and care, not the number or monetary value of gifts. The giver remains anonymous throughout the year.

Recipients are encouraged to post an acknowledgement on the closed group Facebook page, although details or photos of gifts are not necessary.

This is the second year for the project, and last year moms' spirits were lifted up with flowers, candies, notes, cards, and other gestures for Mother's Day, their birthdays, or no specific occasion. We look forward to another year of moms lifting moms up in love.

Secret
**Sisters: moms
 lifting moms up
 in love.**



Deb Prosize, President, welcomes moms and guests



Lit candles, in honor of our children



Elizabeth Farr provides beautiful melodies



Selection of door prizes

Alan Armstrong, Gone Too Soon

Pamela Slaughter-Johnson, Alan's Mom

Alan graduated from ITT Technical Institute on December 13, 2006, at the Foundry, in Knoxville, TN. He was so happy because he graduated with honors. My dad, sister, and niece drove up from Nashville to surprise him.

Before he graduated, he was hired at Images Matters on Sutherland Avenue. Sadly, he lost his life only a couple of months after his graduation. At his funeral, his supervisors told me he was one of the best technicians he had hired in many years. He could do anything within the electronic world! He supervisor also told us that he had knowledge of electronics that could not be taught in a school setting and that it was unfortunate the world would never know what he could have offered. Another coworker told me Alan was very polite and had good manners. Now that is the kind of compliment parents like to hear about their children!

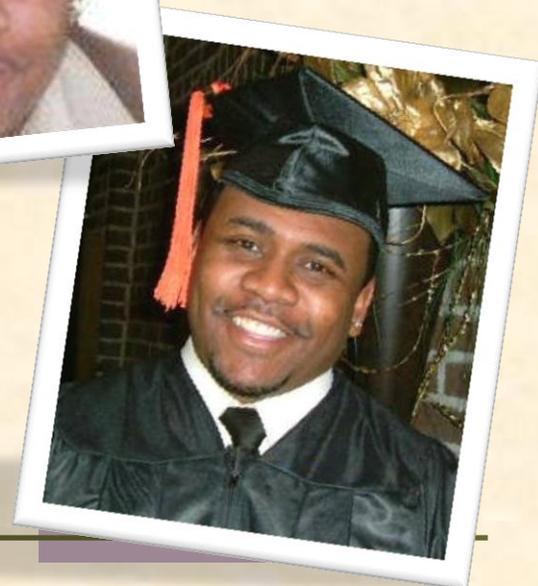
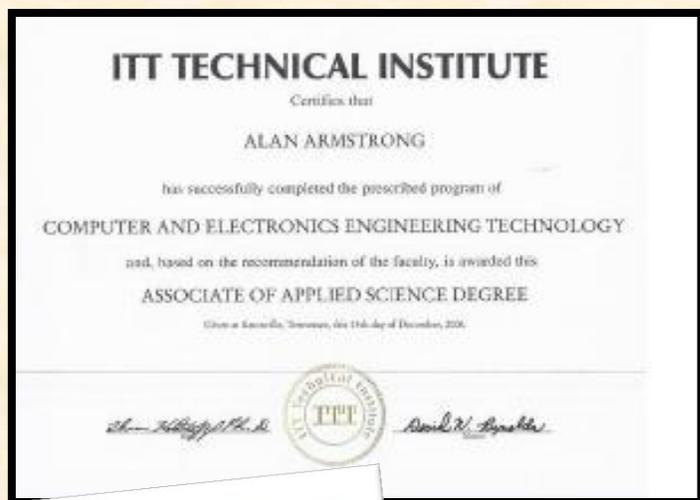
One of Alan's favorite Bible scriptures, and mine as well, is Psalm 23...

1. The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.
3. He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.
4. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
6. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the Lord forever.

--New International Version

As a Listening Hearts mother, I would like to emphasize Verse 4.

As we know, death casts a frightening shadow over us because we are entirely helpless in its presence. We can struggle with other enemies—pain, suffering, disease, injury—but strength and courage cannot overcome death. It has the final word. Only one person can walk with us through death's dark valley and bring us safely to the other side—the God of life, our shepherd. Because life is uncertain, we should follow this shepherd who offers us eternal comfort.



Listening Hearts

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WE'RE CONNECTED!

Visit us at:

<http://listening-hearts.memory-of.com>

Join the conversation on:

 facebook

Closed group for private posts;
email us for access.

Follow us on:

 twitter

Pin us at:

 Pinterest

LOVE GIFTS

Your tax deductible donations make it possible to reach out to other grieving mothers through this newsletter, monthly gatherings, and social media networks.

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

Thank you for your generous support!

ANONYMOUS DONTATIONS

Thank you for your contributions.

2014 Fundraising Plans

In 2014, Listening Hearts plans to increase its outreach efforts. It is our mission to provide support and increase awareness about bereavement issues because we believe no mother should have to endure her grief journey alone. In order to reach moms who may need our support, we recognize that it will take funds to implement some of our strategic plans.

We hope you will be able to take part in upcoming fundraising events we have planned. Stay tuned for more information, coming soon.

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.