

# LAMENTATIONS

Issue 24

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

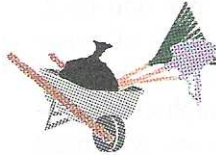
February, 1994

# Sept

This month is an anniversary (of sorts). I began writing *LAMENTATIONS* two years ago this month, and I can tell that my grief is progressing as I read past issues. Can you see a progression of your grief? Of course, I continue to regress at times, and that is to be expected. But, I have found that when I do regress, it doesn't seem to be as far as the last. I guess it is the principle of "Three steps forward and two steps back." How is your progression and/or regression? If we had known we would lose our children, would we still have chosen them? When I consider this question I have to answer that I am thankful for the time we had with Young Jim.

Teilhard de Chardin, a French philosopher, once wrote that it is a necessary part of our grief work to become more empathetic and discover ourselves in others. There is a Hebrew translation of the Golden Rule which reads: *Love thy neighbor, for he is as yourself* I also believe that we can help each other, for who else really knows our grief.

The following is a wonderful quote from Moshe Lieb: *When do I truly love my neighbor? When his pain is my sorrow. If someone comes to you and asks your help, you should not turn him away with pious words, saying? "Have faith! Take your troubles to God, He will help you." No! You should act as if there were no God, as if there were only one person in the world who would help this man--YOU.*



When thinking of **Labor Day**, September 5, I was thinking of my own physical labor and delivery of Young Jim. Whether yours was a physical birth, or you "labored" with adoption, we all struggled (as we do with our grief.) In Silverman and Cinnamon's book, *When Mourning Comes*, the authors relate a parable about twins being born, and their unique views. The parable concludes with: *As we separate and "die" from the womb, only to be born to life, so we separate and die from our world, only to be reborn to life eternal. The exit from the womb is the birth of the body, the exit from the body is the birth of the soul. As the womb requires a gestation period of nine months, the world requires a residence of a certain number of years. As the womb is an anteroom preparatory to life, so our present existence is a vestibule to the world beyond.*

I hope you will "labor" for someone else who needs you. Sympathy has been defined by Silverman and Cinnamon as "your pain in my heart." Empathy is "feeling compassion for another, identifying, seeing ourselves in the place and condition of another. It motivates us to do something for another. It means sharing and helping." In July

I mailed names and addresses of those of us who truly understand grief, especially the grief of losing a child -- Show empathy to them (us), for they are we and we are they.

September 10 will be a very special day for us, It is the day our new football stadium will be dedicated in memory of Young Jim and the first football game in the new stadium will be played. I am reminded of the first football game we played at Cumberland. Young Jim was only 12 years old, and was the first "ball boy." Never would I have fathomed that in 10 years a new stadium would be built in his memory. His death was a great loss, but in his death he continues to be a positive influence. He will be remembered -- and that comforts us.

Sunday, September 11, is **Grandparents Day** (Thanks to Hallmark). Even though I will never be a grandmother, I am an "Aunt Granny" to 5 precious children, I hope I will be able to be a "grandparent" to them and help mold their lives in a positive way, To those of you who are grandparents, treasure the moments you have with them, and make as many memories as possible (and take many pictures).



September 23 is the first day of Autumn which begins a beautiful season of the year. *Autumn* is figuratively defined as *a time of maturity and the beginning of decay*. I am in the *Autumn* season of my own grief I am maturing in the acceptance and the release of grief and I hope the bad memories are decaying (*to decrease in volume or intensity; to grow less powerful.*) Your Autumn will come too.

## Grief Grafts

Are you ready for the latest saga in the life of Jim and Dinah Taylor? After I finished writing last month's newsletter, I, too had to go to the hospital and have surgery. Jim was in the same hospital at the same time because of complications with the appendectomy. It is very rare for a hospital to have a husband and wife as patients at the same time, unless they are involved in an accident.

Which brings me to how I was treated after they found out that we had lost a child. There were only 3 lines on my chart and 3 on Jim's. One of those lines said that we had lost our only child. As a result, the doctor decided that my pain was psychosomatic. I explained that I had sharp pain and was tender to the touch. The doctor had that "all knowing look" and even told our friends he thought it was mental. I finally told him that if he didn't wish to pursue my problem, I would find a doctor that would. He then "considered" my pain. My problem was physical and I now have the scars to prove it. I am telling of my experience to caution you about accepting this type of diagnosis. Yes, I do have pain from the loss of our child, but I knew this pain was physical. Do not accept this type of diagnosis if you think something is wrong. We are happy to report that we are both doing well -- and we are glad this summer has ended.

We hope you will be able to attend the dedication of the football stadium. Our Congressman, Hal Rogers arranged for us to get a flag that had flown over our Nation's Capitol on Young Jim's birthday (7-26), so we will fly it over the stadium at the dedication. A horse flag will also fly over the stadium since that is Jim's symbol. If anyone knows of a Pegasus flag, please let

us know. The stadium is located across the road from the Cumberland Lodge off I-75, Exit 11.

Ralph and Dana Coomer's son, Ralphie (19) was killed in an automobile accident, 6-11-94. Dana described Ralphie as a person who "loved to swim, play ball and pool. He liked all different types of music and especially Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty. Ralphie was always there to help anyone who need him, and could cheer people up on bad days. He was very well mannered and never did anything to hurt anyone else. Dana said: *Ralphie had friends who were wealthy and friends that were poor n everyone was the same to him.* Dana always told Ralphie that he would be her baby, even when he was 40. (I can remember saying the very same thing to Young Jim.) Does that sound familiar?

Ralphie's symbols are an eagle and praying hands.



A big cheer for McDonough-Armstrong, such great news:

1. She and Bill were married Feb 28<sup>th</sup>
2. She moved April 2 (Sherran said: *Leaving our house of 20 years was not as difficult as I had envisioned. Bill and I love our new house. Michael (19-year-old who was killed 8-15-93) left this world a father-to-be of only 2 weeks, His daughter Whitney Michael and her mother now live with us, Whitney is wonderful and brings much joy to our lives,*)
3. Whitney Michael was born April 18,
4. Sherran went to school and received her real estate license,



Michael's symbol is a hammer.



Another son, Chris, who was killed in an automobile accident 7-2-92, has a motorcycle as his symbol.

and Marlene Stokes' son, Darren (age 20), committed suicide, 3-31-86, Darren's birthday was 7-22 and Marlene writes: *Birthdays of loved ones are always special. Our time of celebrating is past but the time of remembering will always be there.* When talking about Darren's death. Marlene rhymed: *We never get cured just learn to endure.* (And I



would like to add, we learn to "celebrate" their lives and what that meant to us,) Darren's symbol is a deer.

Curt and Debbi Dickinson have lost 3 babies which were miscarried in the 2nd trimester of pregnancy: Junior-12/24/80: Kimberly Melissa 8/25/87: and Angel Winter Dawn - 12/25/89, Debbi's father, John Lundin, passed away. July 24, '94, Debbi is a widely published poet. and sent several of her Mother's poems, I have included two:

*I want to be where you is  
Instead of where I be  
Because I are where you are not  
And it is no place for me*

*I used to think the world is great  
But now I think it isn't  
For you have gone where I is not  
And left me where you isn't*

Kind hearts are gardens,  
Kind thoughts are roots,  
Kind words are blossoms,  
Kind deeds are fruits,

Curt and Debbi have chosen hearts and angels as the symbols for their babies.



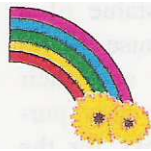
Rev. Jerry and Martha Norsworthy's daughter and son-in-law. Carol and Bryan Luffman, were killed in a van accident 12-22-93. These two young people were involved in a van ministry at their church that had been collecting enough toys, clothes and food for more than 30 needy

families in their area. Martha wrote that Carol was always a happy child, and would wake up singing in the mornings. Carol and Bryan were involved with the Norsworthys' ministry at their church and their lives were closely knit. Because of this, Martha said, "This has made the emptiness seem so great. They spent any spare time with us instead of running around. They were our best friends in addition to being our children. They truly were wonderful young adults and we really miss them!"

Woody and Donna Herndon (who lost their son, Roger, 8-2-91) made a commitment to finish what the Luffman's had planned to do. Carol and Bryan's Christmas dreams were fulfilled by the community.

A church member described the Luffman's as: *Gardeners, in a way. They were taking children flowers that God put in this world, and watering them. They gave them love and kindness, candy, a slicker, a coloring book, just so they'd know that somebody cared.*

Martha described their symbols: *When Carol was little, she always picked "buttercups" from our neighbor's yard for me. She would bring them in to me and then we would have to go over to the neighbor's house and apologize for picking them. In April, 1993, Carol came in to my office with a "buttercup" that she had picked. With a big smile on her face, she said, "Who do I go apologize to for picking this for you?" At 4:00 p.m. on December 22, 1993, (the day Carol and Bryan were killed) Carol and I were returning from church. It had been a beautiful day with the sun shining all day and the temperature was just right for a sweater instead of a coat. Carol said "Oh Mother I see a small rainbow in the sky. It isn't like a regular rainbow. It is just a short one." I couldn't believe it because it hadn't rained. When we got to another clearing in the road I slowed down and looked where Carol pointed and it was a short rainbow. It*



*wasn't like we see going all the way across the sky. It was a short but complete rainbow. For the above reasons we have picked a rainbow, and a buttercup for Carol's symbol. Bryan and Carol always wanted to go look for deer and we did that a lot. I know that I am not*



*Bryan's mother, but in my heart and mind I have picked a deer and a rose for his symbol (He always sent Carol a dozen roses for special occasions and also for no special occasion at all.) We have a heart with hand symbolizing God's hand reaching down for their hands with the words' "In His Service" on their grave marker. In my heart and mind this is their symbol together.*



Jenny Curtis came up with a great idea for duplicating pictures at a very low cost. She says she gets enough pictures to fill a page and then copies them on a colored copier. This is much cheaper than having reprints made. Roy and Jenny's daughter, Mary, died from a heart attack, 6-21-93. The family has not chosen a symbol, but the family's favorite picture of Mary is in a cheerleading outfit.



Arnold and Elaine White's 19-year-old daughter, Amy, was killed in an automobile accident 6-20-92. At the time of the accident, Amy was wearing a seat belt. Elaine describes Amy: She was a good student and we never had any problems with curfew, alcohol, drugs, or morality issues. I don't mean to imply she was a saint because she was a typical teenager, but she didn't give us any major problems and very few minor ones.

Amy's best quality was a genuine love for people. She had lots of friends and never met a stranger. The family has chosen a guardian angel as Amy's symbol because she and several of her close friends wore an angel on their right shoulder for at least a year prior to her death.



The following poem was written by dear friends of the Whites:

Amy  
Our forever Angel  
You will always be forever  
Seventeen

*Your memory will always be full of love  
Your memory will always be full of laughter  
Your memory will always be full of blue skies  
Your memory will always be full of hope of youth  
Your memory will always be full of innocence  
Your memory will always be far too brief.  
You will always be forever seventeen  
You will never know disillusionment  
You will never again know hurt  
You will never know failure  
You will never again know frustration  
You will never see love fail  
You will never again know fear  
But, for now and forever  
You will always be our forever angel.  
Written for our treasured friends forever, Elaine and Arnold  
With lots and lots of love, Wayne and Loraine*

Joe Allen wrote the following to Arnold and Elaine:

*To the Parents of Amy North:  
I was Amy's English teacher in the 11th grade. She was a very capable student. I asked her to be my student aid as a senior and she accepted. It was through this process that I came to know Amy as a person. She was certainly a delight to be around. She was vibrant sparkling and cheerful. She*

was the type of person you just couldn't stay mad at for very long. Her 11th grade class was unruly filled with boys who had no desire to learn, much less to learn about English. Amy was the one and only one who encouraged me to keep my chin up and persevere. For a teacher, this type of student doesn't come along very often. Every day Amy would come to class with her bubbly smile and would truly be the oasis of my 6th period desert of despair. Even the times I fussed at her, usually for talking (Scarlett Roark was in this class also so you understand why talking loud would be a problem), she never became angry and resentful as many students do. She always left class with a smile on her face.

I write this letter to express my condolences on Amy's death. Amy touched my life as I'm sure she did to other people as well. I only knew Amy for two years, but in that brief span, she made her presence keenly felt. My prayer is that God will sustain you through these trying times, may God bless you.

Joe Allen



Bobbi Lou, the 17-year-old daughter of GE and Connie Gaddie, was killed in an automobile accident 1-11-94. Connie wrote that Bobbi Lou loved "Precious Moments" figures and drew this picture of a little girl. She also loved kittens, so the family has chosen a "Precious Moments" little girl holding a kitten.

Bobbi Lou was described as a very pretty girl with beautiful hair and a loving smile. She was a very social, outgoing teenager. She was voted "Most Outgoing" in her Senior Class of 1994. Connie said she could see why she was selected for this honor because she was always "out" and "going". Connie closed by saying that Bobbi Lou "was a 'Precious Moments' because she was with me so short a time."

Gary and Nancy Bilderback's son, Cary, was killed in an automobile accident, 1-13-89, Gary and Nancy have made a water garden in his

memory and placed a statue of a boy and his dog, because it reminded them of Cary and their golden retriever. They also purchased 10 hardback books for the school library. Cary loved animals so much that they felt it was only fitting that 2 of the books were "The Lion King". This year they added March Brown's "Arthur" for the "Easy Shelves" Cary's symbol is water-skis.



Luke, the 16-year-old son of Terry and Kathy Gutsell wrote these two poems after the death of his brother. Andrew, who died 8-6-93:

### SERENITY

An old barren twig  
so skillfully aged  
the place where it sits  
a haven of sorts  
Is just a mere spot to be filled  
this little brown sparrow  
that quietly rests  
is not given notice  
for its peace is secretly hidden  
My own crystal spring  
runs native and free  
taking the place for unspoken thought.



### BLACK AND BLUE MEMORIES

I tip-toe to let you sleep  
I fear your insight  
and envy your state  
how could I see you as inhuman as an angel  
When ,your harsh words killed me  
I listen for a word, a sign, a dream,

Emptiness runs like a plague in those  
You have left  
I can't just say a little prayer  
I can't remember our good times  
without crying

What I constantly ponder is why  
I wish I could have a black eye to show off  
and say, "Andrew, my brother did this"  
but I have nothing  
Luke Gutsell

Myra Stamper the 21-year-old daughter of Gene and Peggy Stamper died of Leukemia, 6-14-89. One of her very close friends, Lisa Lacy wrote the following tribute in the local newspaper.

### Laughter, memories and love

Your leaving look me by surprise. Not that I thought that you wouldn't go, only that you left so soon.

Life was a funny way of tricking us into thinking what we hold is ours--then cruelly snatching it from our grasp. I guess that is why today is so important, dreams necessary, the past so precious.

I love to pretend In my fantasy are here. But the in reality, steps in as a ringing phone or other common sound that shatters my glass dream and the menagerie lies broken.

In the silence of the night, when monsters of fear feed on my soul and I feel so alone, I hear your laughter, laughter as the promise of spring in a bird's song or the innocence of love in a child's heart,

Once the future seemed so bright with promise, We planned to always be friends and share each happening in the lives of our family and friends. Now marriages will come and go, births and deaths will continue. But you, my friend will never be plagued with the trivial problems that in wide my peace,

I suppose it is well that one should believe in tomorrow. We believed with such intensity and faith, scarcely afraid to doubt. Disillusionment is perhaps life's most painful blow.

Yet I continue to believe--only my subject has changed all else remains the same. And I continue to pray, realizing prayers are answered in many ways,

I find it hard to be excited about the future. I tend to cry easily and often pick up the phone to call you, Once you would have shared the love of my plans for tomorrow but now you can offer only yesterdays. I find myself speaking for you when I need your opinion. I knew you so well I can anticipate your reacting. I can even hear your voice in my thoughts.

*I talk about you a lot. It seems only natural to include you in my conversations. Every day you invade my thoughts. I miss you.*

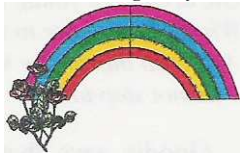
*Silly little words don't fill the void left in my life or memories of you wipe away my tears.*

*I must shop without you and don't have anyone to watch scary movies with or spend long nights talking about dreams of a husband and children.*

*Now, as I have chosen a new path in my life, I begin the journey with thoughts of you. Just as I have a new home at college, you have a place in Heaven. Thought I cleaned and scrubbed my trailer, the angels prepared your home--you were the only thing missing*

*You can't go with me now but leaving you is impossible. Once again, there is no answer.*

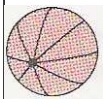
*Now you are home and I am sitting here missing you. Your leaving took me by surprise. Not that I thought you wouldn't go, we all must someday. It's only that you left so soon.*



Myra's symbols are three red roses at the base of a rainbow.



Eddie and Michele Cain are excited to announce that they are the proud parents of a healthy son, Allen Duane, who was born June 9, 1994 weighing 8 Lbs. 1 oz. Two of their children, Jackie Renee and Anthony Dwayne died in a fire, 10-12-93.



Jackie's symbol is a pink beach ball and Anthony's symbol is a green frog.



Kellie Carpenter was killed in an automobile accident, 8-14-92. To observe the second anniversary of her death, Dennis and Judy invited many of Kellie's friends to their home for a barbecue. Since her friends will be going to college

and/or jobs in the fall, they felt it may be the last time they would all be together. They shared memories, pictures, and then wrote messages on pink balloons and released them.



Judy wrote that they shared food, fun and tears. Kellie's symbols are butterflies.

We are also going to release balloons after the dedication of the football stadium. It will be in celebration of all our children.



Donna Hemdon wrote the following letter about the week of the third anniversary of Roger's death (8-2-91): *This week has been painful but necessary to get me back on track. I had attempted to take a vacation from grief work. As you know, that is not possible, except for brief periods'--certainly not for the three months I've been practicing avoidance is not denial.*

*Spending this week going through Roger's things, re-reading all the cards and letters we received, and letting emotion back into my life has been difficult. But I am better now. I've wept for extended periods--those cleansing tears that I had kept bottled up have now been shed. I believe it's true that toxins dissolve in tears. I feel almost purified.*

Roger's symbol is a monarch butterfly.



Dennis and Linda Holbrook's 16-year-old son, Brandon, died in an automobile accident, 6-17-93. Linda described the first observance of Brandon's death: *We survived June 17th, we planned to leave town that day, but all our thoughts of Brandon went with us. I think the difference in that day and holidays is that holidays bring back so many wonderful memories, and the death date is nothing but one horrible memory that we would love to erase. Linda has formed a support group for*

bereaved parents in her area. If you live in the vicinity of Bypro, Ky., telephone her at 606-452-4506. Brandon's symbol is a rainbow.



Alesha, the 13-year-old daughter of Roger and Patty Hunter, died from an automobile accident, 8-19-93. Patty wrote: *Survive is what one first do no matter what. I read where it's easy to die but hard to live and go on and how true this is. It also said to have endured the pain of the loss of your child will be the utmost pain one must have to go through. In some ways I find comfort in that, knowing I'll never have to suffer this intense hurt.*

*I often think about the pain we have as a hook. You look inside and find all the sorrow, pain, and loss. You grieve awhile, then must close the book and go on. We have that choice whether to leave it open and remain consumed with that grief or closing it for a while to rest, heal and go on. To close that book does not mean you forget, for one can never do that. It just means go on, learn to live again and survive. May we all be able to progress along and survive. For this can either break us or make us. Which ever we chose.*

Alesha's symbol is a heart.



Patty also included the following poem:

### LETTING GO

*To "Let Go" does not mean to stop caring, it means I can't do it for someone else.*

*To "Let Go" is not to cut myself off, it's the realization I can't control another.*

*To "Let Go" is not to enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences.*

*To "Let Go" is to admit powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in my hands.*

*To "Let Go" is not to try to change or blame another, it's to make the most out of myself*

*To "Let Go" is not to care for but to care about.*

To "Let Go" is not to fix but to be supportive.  
 To "Let Go" is not to judge but to allow one another to be a human being.  
 To "Let Go" is to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes but to allow others to affect their own destinies.  
 To "Let Go" is not to be protective. It's to permit another to face reality.  
 To "Let Go" is not to deny but to accept.  
 To "Let Go" is not to nag, scold or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.  
 To "Let Go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it come, and cherish myself in it..  
 To "Let Go" is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.  
 To "Let Go" is to fear less and love more

Joe and Iris Mazakises from Toronto, Canada wrote to tell of their summer activities. Their son, Andrew (24), was killed in a motorcycle accident 8-19-89. In June the Mazakis cycled to Niagara Falls. Iris said cycling is like therapy for them (sometimes).

There is a tree in a park near their home where the three of them used to visit when Andrew was three years of age. It is now a memorial tree with a bench and a plaque beside it in memory of Andrew. At the dedication of the plaque, there was a tribute spoken and a dove was set free to symbolize Andrew's free spirit. They also had a Scottish piper because Andrew was born in Scotland. The ceremony ended with a balloon lift-off followed by a reception. Andrew's symbol is a musical note.



Joe and Susan Walters came by to visit and we had the most loving and sharing time together. Ralphie, their 4-year-old son, was killed in a truck accident 7-29-93. On the anniversary of Ralphie's death, Joe and Susan gave a "party" from

Ralphie for family and friends. Susan gave different items that had been Ralphie's, with explanations. What a wonderful way of sharing Ralphie with them and now they have something that was his and they will think of him each time they see that gift.

Ralphie's symbols are international children.

When we were going through Young Jim's "treasures" and many of his clothes, we decided to give many of them to his good friends. We still see others wearing his clothing and we know that they are remembering him. We hope they are now treasuring his "treasures."

Andy, the 24-year-old son of Helmut and Goodie Graetz, died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, 12-12-93. The Graetzes and other survivors of suicide have planned a conference entitled, "Pathways to Healing." It will be Saturday, September 24, 1994, at the Centenary United Methodist Church. It is sponsored by the Lexington Survivors of Suicide in cooperation with the American Association of Suicidology. For further information, you may contact:

Bonnie Detzel  
 3004 Waco Road  
 Lexington, KY 40503  
 606-277-7583, 281-2483



Andy's symbol Caduceus.

Goodie wrote the following poem:

**LAST NIGHT**

*Last night I heard the song of the nightingale  
 A sound so haunting and fair  
 So lovely yet sad, such a bittersweet wait  
 It was more than I could bear  
 He sang of old times long since past  
 Of yearning, love and farewell*

*Of happiness that could not last  
 Of joy that would not dwell*

*And as I listened to his tunes  
 I marveled at the bird  
 How could he know of by-gone moons  
 Of things that no one heard?*

*Oh, done and gone are youth's sweet dreams  
 Forever gone and done:  
 And though I know God has his schemes  
 My tears won't stop to run*

*Last night I heard the song of the nightingale  
 A sound so lovely and true  
 So sweet, yet blue, such a mournful wait  
 It tore my heart in two*

*He sang of old times long ago.  
 Of love and pain and good-bye  
 Of ecstasy in moon's pale glow  
 Our destiny to die*

*He sang of life's dark mystery  
 And I trembled in my soul  
 How could he know the history  
 Of things that once were whole?*

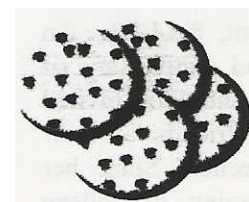
*Oh, dreams of youth they only teased  
 Why did they have to lie?  
 And even though the song long ceased  
 I cannot stop to cry.*

Goodie says that some day she hopes to be able to write a more cheerful ending to the poem.

A friend sent this encouraging statement:

Each day is a gift from God.  
 That's why it is called the "Present."  
 My gift to you is friendship and support.

I know I tell you all the time how much each of you mean to me . . . Let me express it another way. I rank your friendship right up there



with chocolate chip cookies. (Now do you understand how important you are to me?)