



LAMENTATIONS



Issue 71

Middle

August, 1998

August ... another month that reminds us that our children we have lost to death will not be proceeding or moving ahead with life. Young Jim was killed the night before his high school graduation. That August he would have entered college to begin an exciting time in the progression of life.

"Back to school" time is always such a sad time for each of us. We will not be preparing lunches, worrying about catching a school bus, or reminding them of their books and homework.

But there is another loss that parents need to remember. If you are fortunate enough to have surviving children, you need to recognize and understand their grief. Within your family unit, one person may be bitter and yelling, another may be quiet and isolated, and another may want to avoid everything and leave. If these siblings are going back to school, they need to be reminded that their grieving process has to be dealt with, "one step at a time."

In an article by Jackie Kettler and Art Krish, reprinted from *Linked Together*, the authors describe some of the problems they will have to face:

The good news about school is:

It keeps you busy, puts structure in your life, and keeps it normal.
It forces you to be with people, and among them are some healthy, happy ones. Find them.
It offers knowledge; in fact, it tries to push it into your head.

What's good about this is:

It helps you put other things in your head besides your grief, and
The knowledge you take in now becomes the building blocks you use to build a positive future.

The bad news about school is:

There are a ton of escapes and quick fixes: socializing, getting into trouble, drugs, etc.
It's noisy when you might want quiet.
It's a hassle and it's stressful: assignments, schedules, etc.

Your children may say they don't want to go to school because people will stare, will whisper about them, may avoid them, or may ask questions they don't want to answer. They may feel guilty that they are alive or that they may have prevented their sibling's death if they had done something. They may have a fear of dying. School may seem useless since they may die. They are "tired" of grieving and seeing the entire family sad and disjointed.

Encourage your children to:

Discuss their feelings such as loneliness, anger and sadness openly and honestly with other students, teachers and/or family members.
Maintain hope.
Join a support group for siblings.
Be patient with yourself and the family.
Hug them and tell them how much you love them and what they mean to you. They need to be reminded that you love them as much as the

child that has died. They often feel that you only love the sibling that has died.

Encourage them to eat properly, exercise, and get sufficient rest.
Be supportive in all they say and recognize their grief; it is probably different from yours.

Talk with them using a comforting voice.

Be patient with them.
Take an interest in what they are doing; support them at ball games, etc. They need to see you there.

Share your thoughts, feelings and frustrations with them, but don't try to make them the "parent."

If you suspect depression, or that your child is not able to cope with day to day activities, encourage them to get professional help. I truly believe that when we are grieving, we deplete many of the chemicals in the body that we need for daily "maintenance." It does not show weakness when you ask for help; rather, it shows that you recognize there is a problem and are trying to solve it.

Take time to listen. Often, they don't need any answers from you, they only need a listening ear. Do not "judge" what they say and how they react to their sibling's death. They feel as lost as you, but perhaps in different ways.

Remind your children that they cannot rush grief. It is a slow, arduous process we each have to "visit" over and over again.

Some times, all they need is a hug.



Grief Grafts

David and JoAnn Westerman's son, Michael (8-20-75), died in an auto accident 1-15-95. To celebrate Michael's birthday in 1997 they sent out the following invitation:

"It's a Cookout" You are invited to come and share a day of socializing and fun with us.

WHERE: David and Joann Westerman's home in Trenton, KY.

WHY: For the kindness given to us at the loss of our son, brother, husband and father, Michael David Westerman, and in memory of his birthday.

WHEN: August 23, 1997

TIME: 9:00 am -- Evening Saturday

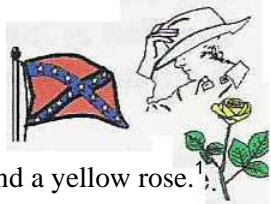
All of our events will be held outside along with the meal, so please dress in a very comfortable way so you can enjoy yourself. We will be furnishing the meat, bread, and some drinks. If at all possible, please bring a covered dish of your choice, chips, drink, or dessert for the cookout. This way we will be sure to have plenty of food.

We will have lunch at 12:00 noon. Later on in the afternoon we will have a hayride through the farm where I work. There will be a couple of horses for the kids to ride and anyone else that would like to. We will have a few go-carts if anyone would care to try their driving ability. As always there will be the ever popular games of HORSE-SHOES and VOLLEYBALL.

After their cookout I received the following letter:

I just wanted to write to let you know that our cookout went very well. We had about 102 guests. Everyone who attended made our day for Michael special.

Michael's symbols are a cowboy hat, confederate flag and a yellow rose.



Pat and Kathy Malone have suffered a double loss, Scott (3-17-71) who died 3-18-71 and Lance

(3-3-70), who was killed in a motorcycle accident 5-25-95.

Lance was our middle son of our living children (Scott also listed on the Memory Wall, died 1 day after his birth in 1971) Bryan is his older brother, by 17 months, and Sean his younger brother was born in 1973. Lance came into this world at a great rate of speed (just 4 minutes after arriving at the hospital, in Cleveland, Ohio) and from that point on he never slowed down.

Lance loved to do daring things. He loved to run. Most likely that inspired his love of soccer. He played 11 seasons for GSA in Lilburn. Lance's other loves while growing up were fishing and cooking. He loved to cook even as a very little guy always wanted to help mom.

Lance's true love was his bike. Even when he was little he always wanted the bike that was too big for him. The little ones just wouldn't do, from petal power to engine power. Lance's first ride was on his fourth birthday. He bought a bike instead of a car like most teenage boys. He kept that bike for a couple of years until he found that an enclosed vehicle was more practical during winter months. So he sold the bike and started driving a truck, but his love was still there and before long the itch came back.

On to his second bike, another Honda. In good weather he would ride it to work. In bad weather he drove his Hyundai Coupe. He kept this one until he blew up the engine. He then went for about a year without a bike. He bought his PRIDE AND JOY. It was purple, purple for freedom the freedom he felt while riding. It seemed like he was either washing his bike or his car every other day. He kept his bike at our house and would come to get it when weather permitted riding. But that was not to last. On May 29, 1995, Memorial Day, just two months after buying his bike and two days after picking it up from our house, it all came to an end. The bike and Lance were no more. In 3 short seconds it was over and the life of our 25-year-old son was lost due to the negligence of another driver.

What do I say now? The story's over, there is no more and never will be any more to tell. Lance was not the "perfect" child. He had his ups and

growing up, but he was our son and we loved him.... He never knew exactly what he wanted which gave him trouble, but he was our son, and we loved him..... When he was in his teens he got into trouble with the law and spent time in jail. But he was our son, and we loved him.... He was trying to pull his life together, and finally knew what he wanted out of life. He went to school, learned a trade and was starting to have fun, putting all the bad times behind him, learning to live as a productive adult, and teaching his younger brother the rights and wrongs of life. He is deeply missed by his family (which now includes two sisters-in-law, his brothers have married since his death.) Bryan and Rebecca, Sean, Jennifer and Devin (his new nephew) his grandparents, and Pat and I. For he was our son, a brother, and a grandson and we loved him.

LOOK TWICE - SAVE A LIFE

MOTORCYCLES ARE EVERYWHERE

The bumper sticker you see here has been printed in memory of Lance. It was printed with a purple background to symbolize the freedom Lance felt while riding (purple is the color for freedom, it was also the color of Lance's bike). So far there have been 46,250 distributed in and around the Atlanta area. Some have even gone to other states such as TN, FL, SC, NC, and AL, IL, CA, AZ, TX, and others. We hope it will help heighten the awareness of motorcycles on the road, so others will not have to suffer the loss of a loved one. The bumper stickers are FREE and if you would like one or would like to learn more about Lance and his bumper sticker, please E-mail us at: pkmalone@mindspring.com or visit his web page at geocities.com/Heartland/Acres/8152

LANCE

RIDE HIGH: as high as forever

RIDE FREE: as free as the wind

RIDE SAFE: for God protects you now

There is nothing harder than being a bereaved parent. In the time since

Lance's death we have learned how to survive, with the help of a great group called *The Compassionate Friends*. There are a few things I would like friends and family to know. Don't be afraid of us, we need you. We will not bite. Please talk about Lance, we need to hear his name, and know that you have not forgotten him. Yes we may cry, but those tears are healing. We are different people now. We will never be who we were before Lance's death tore our hearts and lives apart. What we really need is someone who will.

LISTEN. .. JUST LISTEN

If I ask you to listen, will you

Listen with your heart, not with logic;
Listen with your soul, not with
indifference;

Listen with your feelings, not with a
story.

If I need hope, don't give me facts.
If I need encouragement, don't give me
advice.

If I need solace, don't give me
platitudes.

If I need to let it out, don't turn me out.

If I ask you to listen, will you
Listen with compassion, not with
condemnation;

Listen with understanding, not with an
argument;

Listen with love, not with a clock.
If I ask you to listen, will you make me
matter - not invisible;

Caress my loneliness and comfort my
pain;

Keep my trust and not dishonor it.
I don't need to be right, but don't
make me wrong,

I don't need a teacher, a critic or a
judge;

I need freedom to say how I feel
And a friend who will listen ...just
listen.

And above all remember Lance, and
when you do remember him remember
him like this:

Remember me in quiet days
when raindrops whisper on your pane,
but in your memories have not grief
just let the joy we knew remain.

Remember me when evening stars look
down on you with steadfast eyes,
Remember me if once you wake
to catch a glimpse of a red sunrise

And when your thoughts do turn to me
know that I would not have you cry.

But live for me and laugh for me.
For when you are happy so am I.

Remember an old joke we shared.
Remember me when spring walks by.

Think of me when you are glad, and
while you live, I shall not die.

LANCE ROBERT MALONE
1970-1995

Lance, when I remember you, I remember the little boy with the infectious smile. The pre-teen with the zest for life. The teenager with questions on which roads to take in life, and the young man trying to make up for the wrong roads taken earlier. The young man that would do anything to help family and friends. Most of all I remember the most beautiful blue eyes that sparkled when you laughed. If only I could hear that laugh and see those eyes sparkle one more time. You have my heart and my love for they went with you that day in May.

Mom.



Lance's symbols
are a motorcycle and a Leprechaun (for
Notre Dame football).

Scott's symbol is a butterfly.



Maria-Victoria (4-30), daughter of
Tom and Lynda Boucugnani-
Whitehead, died in an automobile
accident, 9-13-96. Lynda shares:

Here is Maria Victoria's story. I'm so
happy you will get to know her.

"Angel of Earth"

"We were together before either of us
were born on this Earth. We were the
closest of friends, soulmates who loved
one another and had a very special bond.
We chose to be born in the circumstances
we needed, you chose me to be your
mother. I chose you to be my daughter.
We had different purposes for being here
on Earth. Your spiritual growth was
almost complete, you didn't need a lot of
time here. Although I'm not sure what
your growth mission was, I believe it
involved the true understanding of
unconditional love, the free giving of love
and learning to value yourself. You were
also here to help with the growth of
many, many other souls including mine.
You have completed your mission and
your growth and are waiting for me to
finish mine."

You came to this Earth on April 30,
1983 and what a delight, a beautiful
bald little girl, with the sweetest face.
Your brother David was 5 and
bursting with pride that he had a
little sister. Your name was chosen
by your greatgrandmother, "Maria"
in honor of Mary and the love of
God, and "Victoria" for victory. Such
a beautiful name and so fitting for
you.

You were the sweetest of babies
and full of love from the very
beginning. That was your
personality, pure love. But you also
had your independent side, and
expressed it sometimes with your
"temper tamps." Whenever you had
a temper tamp I would hold you out
in front of me and you would kick
your legs. Then all of us around you
would laugh and say how cute you
were and soon you'd be laughing too.
Worked every time.

As you grew, your loving
personality just became so apparent
to everyone around you. Around
others you were a little shy,
especially at first and everyone said
you were quiet. But at home you
were so much fun and definitely a
budding actress. You did voices and
were especially good at "the little old
lady". When you were six you started
tap and would practice out on the
driveway. Your first performance I
was bursting with pride and knew
there would be many more
"performances" in the future.

In school you were such a
wonderful student, you loved
learning, you loved reading. School
was as natural to you as love, to do
well and to do your best was just part
of your being. You fell in love with
your third grade teacher, Mrs.
Carter, and she fell in love with you.
People started referring to you as an
angel very early on, they must have
been on to something.

You loved being in the gifted and
talented program (most of the time),
because of the different things you
got to do. Most special was being
involved in *Odyssey of the Mind* for
three years. It was a lot of work for
you but also a lot of fun. You got to
perform!! And sing!! I was always
amazed at your talent. It was so
much fun to watch your excitement
and the fun you had

.....In the group. I remember the elation and screaming when you won the district and went to the State Finals, twice. It was like the Olympics. You had the sweetest nature and for some reason needed to tell me how much you loved me all the time. What special music to a mother's ears. "I love you so much Mommy, " you would say over and over. Sometimes you'd say "Do you ever get tired of me telling you I love you so much?" And I would say, "never." When we were separated and talked on the phone, we'd send hugs over the phone, saying you ever get tired of me telling you I love you so much?" and I get my answer too.

It is the everyday times that are so precious and tell so much about you and your nature. Remember laying in your bed and singing Christmas carols together, eating your favorite chicken chips at Chic-Fil-A, having a beauty v together and shopping together, we holding hands sometimes when u were 13. Bologna and mayonnaise at Subway. Going to Phantom of Opera and Beauty and the Beast. The first time you would sing to me you made me put my head in theso I couldn't see you. When you ...dress up with Mommy's clothes put on a fashion show. Mashed potatoes. Dancing together in the living room. Constant kisses. Holding... each other in the pool. Playing the ducks and geese at vacation. . on the bed and listening to the ... Garden CD together all the way laugh. So much more.

U want me to be your mother, I want you to be my daughter. I want to ence tenderness and caring, mothers unconditional love, the..... of something from myself. You ... experience the reflection of theld acceptance from a mother's love so you canpeaceful acceptance of yourself because we know we are eternally together, we delight in this But part of our mission is experience eternal love from a different perspective. To learn to trust in love, even when outside the full knowingness.....

experience this by being separated in dimensions after we had fully realized our love. You lovingly gave me the gift of the deeper knowing, by suggesting that I be the mother and you be the child. Upon my return to you, I pledged to tell you all about how I learned to believe in eternal love and to trust in our oneness."

Seventh grade was so special for you. You so loved your teachers, Mr. Bruton. Mrs. Dennard and Mrs. Heath. And they loved you right back. They knew there was something very, very special about you. What a year!! At the your beautiful white outfit that we had bought together when we went shopping. You received awards for all A's, for the Academic Bowl, for Beta Club, for Ensemble in Chorus, for the Outstanding Soprano and then the most coveted "Superstar Student of the Year." And you had such grace. It was apparent that you had grown from a little girl to a beautiful young lady. Then you were elected President of the Beta Club and looked forward to your responsibilities during the eighth grade and representing your school at the State convention.

Remember when you and Mommy storied the "Happy Book?" We would each write something that made us happy and alternate back and forth until we had a lot of different things. It was always a special time together when we worked on our happy book Some of the things that made you happy were "neosporin" when you were hurt, soft, down pillows, Mommy's smile, sausage, my big bed, all the wrinkles in bassett hounds, sitting outside in the morning reading with Mommy. Happiness came from sun beaming in the window in the morning, arguing with Tom, waking up in my flowery room, seeing that my brother looks so funny when he sleeps, playing UNO and winning against David and the look of defeat on David's face. Happy is polar bears, soft, cold comforting sheets. Christmas time, comfy socks, watching Mommy being happy, the Barney song, coming home on Friday and not having to do anything, being around enthusiastic people, hearing the laughter of David, Mommy and me all together and doing...

At the start of your last summer you heard about auditions

Clayton County Summer The ance production of the Secre Your teachers encouraged you to audition and you decided to though you had never done something like this before. You put on ~

sume" your three performances, Odyssey of the Mind. When.....

the audition there were so many People there, many who had lots of ence from all over Atlanta. practiced together some of the...

ing parts and some of the so. ...neither of us thought there was much of a chance for the first time, it would be good experience.

went through the 120 or so p....

cast members and we waited for ...

to come out and do the first cal..

Well, there you were on the first

back in for more auditioning,

waiting. You made the second

back!! Then the third!! Now they....

going to let parents and friends

the final auditioning. As I wa.... you

I was so truly amazed and proud.

Such bravery, such composure.

Never knew you could sing like like

an angel. This is my little girl. This

is really my little girl? The..._ wait

and then you are chosen. You.....to

play a "spirit," a friend of M.... who

died, and you are to be the un.....

for the main role of Mary. It was a

wonderful summer of practice after

practice, hearing your singing and

rehearsing was delightful. And then

.....nally the performances with a

.....orchestra. I was enthralled, so

proud moved. The story and songs

of The Secret Garden became a part

of our and represent so very

much more. I was so proud giving

you your bouquet of roses after

your performance and you sure

were delighted when the little girls

came up and asked for you

autograph.

Shortly after you started school in

the fall, you conducted your first

meeting as President of the Beta

Club. Your teacher thought you did a

fantastic job and called Mrs. Carter

to tell her how her favorite third

grade student have grown up.

You had given so much love.....

peers. You "told off" a boy who was disparaging another student, to everyone's surprise, and it worked! You were always kind and just didn't say negative things about others~ it was a part of your being. You fought with your brother and he teased you a lot, but you loved him so. You loved animals and especially your basset hounds and their puppies.

"Maria Victoria was killed on September 13, 1996, when coming home with her brother on Friday after school. A speeding truck ran a red light, hitting David's car and killing Maria Victoria instantly. It was and is devastating for her family, her friends, her school and her teachers. Maria Victoria had accomplished her mission and the world is a kinder, more compassionate, and loving place for her being a part of it. A "Secret Garden" was built at Lovejoy Middle School in her honor and the plaque outside under her picture includes these words to encourage her friends and students who come to the school:

Remember Be

Kind

Try not to hurt other people's feelings

Always do your best

Don't be afraid to love and show your feelings

Value friendship

Have confidence in yourself

Be true to your dreams

And above all

"Smile"

and delight in laughing, sharing
and just being together.

Students from her school wrote letters and poems to the family after her death to express their love and to help them in their own grief. A few of them follow:

"She was the nicest person I've ever met. She never said anything bad about anybody. She didn't deserve to die. I wonder why God took her. Everybody around me is crying. But she didn't deserve it. It wasn't fair. I don't think there will ever be somebody so nice and as considerate as her. This is the perfect role model for everyone.

She was smart, nice and full of love. Never said anything bad about anyone. It's not fair. I and others will miss her truly."

Blake Fullerton
8th grade

"I remember that Maria was wonderful. You could be spreading gossip and rumors and when you came to Maria, you would get a disapproving look from her and you would know it wasn't right. I just got to know her well this year, and she was so smart. She was going to be able to hand pick her future. She was the best person you could know. She was a beautiful person in both mental and spiritual and physical aspects. Maria wasn't the most popular person at Lovejoy Middle, but I think she was certainly the most admired."

Rich Manross
8th grade

"Maria was my best friend. So it's hard to write only one thing that I remember her by. But I do remember how I was able to talk to her so easily. In fact, I'm kind of scared because I really don't have anyone to talk to. I could tell her everything and she wouldn't make a smart comment or even laugh. She would just try to understand to the best of her knowledge. It's amazing, when I think back how many things I told her and no one else. To think she left knowing so much more about me than any other person I know. I love her. And I know it will be hard accepting the fact that it will be a while before I see her again."

Chrissy Heath
8th grade

Maria

Maria, Maria, we hold you dear
Maria, Maria, we'll still shed a tear.
We know you have gone to a better place

Still we miss your tender face.

We manage okay, from day to day
We go on with our lives with little delay.

Life without you is not the same
I'll always feel joy, each time I hear
your name.

Maria, Maria, we hold you in our heart.

Still we're saddened that we had to part.

Maria, Maria your time here was short

But your boat has sailed to a heavenly port.

Maria, Maria, we bid you farewell
Maria, Maria, your story we'll tell.

Adam Di Giovanni
8th grade

LISTEN

Her liquid brown eyes drank in every detail

As she absorbed information
Her gaze serious as we read, discussed, or investigated.

Always on alert, always paying attention.

With a crinkle of a smile and a flash of light in those bright eyes

Came the quick responses, the quiet laugh, or the knowing look

Grasping a situation, solving a problem, or writing a story,

She appreciated the world around her.

As a doe knows her way through the pines.

She knew where and how to find answers.

Never did she demand attention, but often did she deserve it.

Her winsome, porcelain beauty held a keen, kind mind

And a maturity that is rare.

As a flower's life is fleeting, so was hers;

Framed with a lovely grace and voice, she left her mark

We treasure our memories of Maria Victoria.



Libby Torbush
Teacher

Maria Victoria's symbols are a green and blue butterfly, Still, moon, stars & a special puppy she drew and used as her signature.



Jim and Grace Hawkins' son, Tim Stevens (6-3-53), died from pancreatitis 1-17-98. Grace wrote:

Well another god-awful day is over (Father's day). Tim always loved to go with dad and his brothers and enter our father son golf tournament on this special day.

There was a real void yesterday. I never thought I'd hate the holidays when we all gal together and this year I'd love to just go to bed, but go on try-

spend half of the night crying, when they all go home.

I found out how few of our pictures, Tim isn't in and right now I couldn't have enough!

Better days ahead. I think this first year will be the hardest.



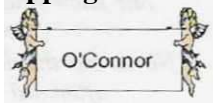
Tim's symbols are a heart with Love in the middle and a sun.

Joe and Elaine Stillwell suffered a double loss, Peggy (8-23-66) and Denis O'Connor (2-4-65), died in an auto accident 8-2-86 and 8-6-86.

Elaine's book, *Sweet Memories*, is now available. To purchase a copy contact:

Centering Corporation
1531 N. Saddle Creek Road
Omaha, NE 68104
Fax: 402-553-0507
E-mail: jl200@aol.com
\$4.95, plus shipping

Peggy and Denis' symbols are angels.



John and Lynn Clarke's daughter, Lynn Griffiths (8-9-52), died as a result of acute leukemia 6-9-97. Sunday, May 3, 1998 an article entitled, *Hospitals & Health Care* was in the local newspaper in Murray, Ky:

From a life suddenly taken springs a cause urgently needed

Nearly a year ago, Lynne Clarke Griffiths wasn't feeling well. She thought it was a nasty cold or flu

The "bug" hit her on Wednesday, May 14, 1997, and when she wasn't feeling much better after two days, she was admitted to Murray-Calloway County Hospital, said her husband, Bill Griffiths. Her temperature had not broken and she had a splitting headache.

Tests confirmed she was suffering from leukemia. She was transferred to Vanderbilt University Hospital in Nashville.

By that Sunday, she was on a respirator and had used more than 100 units of blood and platelets. She died three weeks later.

"It was just so intense that she finally succumbed to kidney failure," Griffiths said. "It was the leukemia that got her. There were no signals that we could tell. She just thought she had the flu."

Bill Griffiths talked to Karen Isaacs at J.J. Churchill Funeral Home about memorials for his wife. Isaacs gave him an idea about getting an apheresis machine at the Murray hospital to help leukemia and cancer victims as well as other blood diseases. Chemotherapy and radiation treatment often destroy cancerous and healthy cells alike and can cause patients to bleed excessively or have infections.

Apheresis is a special type of blood donation that allows whole blood donation, more than one donor's platelets would be needed, which could lead to adverse reactions.

"There were people going to Nashville every day to give blood and platelets," Griffiths recalled. "We designated that the memorials be given to Murray-Calloway County Hospital and, of course, donations have come in from all over the US., wherever we had lived. Lynne touched a lot of people. She was a caregiver, and now people are giving back to her."

A healthy person has from 150,000 to 400,000 platelets, and platelets are replaced in the body every 48 hours. A platelet donation may be done twice a week, but no more than 24 times a year. Whole blood donation may happen only once every 56 days or six times a year.

Griffiths said his three daughters want to be the first ones to donate platelets at Murray's Lynn Clarke Griffiths Apheresis Donor Center.

The proposed center is set to open later this year and will be located at the hospital. The hospital will work with the American Red Cross, Nashville region, to operate the center. The hospital will provide the facility and equipment, and the Red Cross will provide the personnel and supplies, and will seek federal certification.

Other apheresis centers are in Paducah and Nashville. Griffiths' memorial fund contributed \$5,000 to the center, and the Murray Woman's Club and Murray are helping raise money. The minimum amount needed to begin is \$30,000; the fund contained \$20,133 as of last Monday.

Lynn Griffiths, who was a substitute teacher in Murray and Paris, Tenn., schools, was a member of the Murray Woman's Club and participated in many club projects.

"She ran the music scholarship at the university for Woman's Club," her husband said. "She was co-director of the Murray-Calloway County Girl Scouts and built that from 150 to 200 kids to about 400."

Dr. Bill Hart, a Murray physician, said, "Having an apheresis center in Murray will vastly improve the quality of life for many patients with chronic illnesses. Through the exhaustive efforts of Jim Taylor, the senior vice president of professional services at MCCH, the Murray Lions Club and the Murray Woman's Club, the apheresis center in Murray will become a reality."

Hospital President Stuart Poston said the service will complement the hospital's blood bank. "The center will be unique since no other hospital of our size, that we are aware of, has an apheresis center," Poston said. "The availability of this service will be a tremendous asset to this region and to the many patients we serve."

Lynn's symbol is a rainbow.

Jerry Jonas Mudge's two sons, Leon Jr. (2-17-6J), and Wayne (8-19-62), were killed in an automobile accident, 10-26-90. Jerry's husband, Skip, lost his son, Jeff (1-7-6J), to suicide, 11-4-87. Skip's daughter, Jenny, shared:



My first indication that there was a problem, was a telephone call from my youngest brother Scott, "Jeff is dead. He has committed suicide. His girlfriend just found him." With those words, our whole family changed. First, I had to go break the news to my parents and sister. And then we had to prepare for Jeff's funeral.

Until my brother Jeff died, I'm not sure I had really experienced fear or sorrow. There had been times in my past that I had experienced a mild form of each of these. However when

these two emotions became something that I had dealt with for a long time.

The sorrow which comes when you lose someone you love is, of course, normal. But in the 29 years that I had lived before Jeff died, that emotion was not overwhelming. I had lost various relatives and even a few friends, but Jeff was my brother. Someone that I had shared over 20 years of my life. We lived in different states, but we had corresponded and spoke on the telephone frequently. But somehow in our communications, I missed the feelings of despair that had become a part of his life. After someone commits suicide, one of the main questions is "why?", "Why did he do this, why didn't he tell us, why didn't I do more to help, etc." One of the few good pieces of advice that I received after Jeff died was that even if we knew the exact reasons why Jeff chose to end his life, those reasons would not be good enough reason for him to be gone. So I had to quit asking the question why, and deal with how I would respond to his choice and how it affected our family and friends.

The fear that I began to experience the night Jeff died, took much longer to overcome. The fear mostly took the form of not wanting to answer the telephone when I was home alone at night. I guess I thought if I don't answer the telephone, I couldn't be hurt by that type of bad news again. I feared that other members of my family would be hurt or die suddenly (not by suicide but just die), and I wasn't sure that I could deal with that again. Like many things, these fears lessened with time and experience. I had to learn again to trust in the Lord to deal with each emotion and remember that God was in complete control.

I was fortunate to find a local support group called "Survivors of Suicide." They get together on a regular basis to discuss how to deal with all the issues that come up in the aftermath of losing someone you love to suicide. Most of the time it was just people sharing how they dealt with issues, but we also had professional people from the coroner, police, doctors, counselors, etc. to speak with our group. I have found that discussing with and listening to

people who have a common experience does make things easier to work through. There are many good books that deal with grief and how to work through the issues.

It is important, as we deal with the trials in our life, that we take things slowly and try not to be overwhelmed by all the details which must be handled and the emotions that must be dealt with.

I still miss Jeff when I hear certain songs or see someone who looks like him, it reminds me again of how important family relationships are. When he was young, he used to sign autograph "Jeff the Great" because he thought that he would be famous someday. Jeff might never have become famous and although he did have his fair share of foibles, I do consider him great, a great son, brother, and friend.

Jenny (Mudge) Sewrey

Christopher Faller (5-7-90), the son of Ron and Maria, died from viral complications from a piggyback heart transplant, 3-24-98. The following article, written by Anita Srikameswaran, was in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on Christopher's 8th birthday. Ms. Srikameswaran's article told Christopher's story:

When Christopher was born, the new parents noticed that their baby's hands and feet were grayish and were told his blood sugar was low. At home two days later, the baby screamed all night. The next morning, Christopher wouldn't wake up.

They rushed him to a pediatrician.

"I don't think he is going to make it" the doctor said. "Make what?" Ron Faller asked, not comprehending.

The pediatrician said Christopher might not live another half hour. He called an ambulance. With emergency treatment at Children's Hospital, her ears perked up.

Doctor's suspected that the baby, while still in the womb, caught a viral injection that was severe enough to damage his heart. Because his heart pumped poorly, fluid built up in his chest, just as with older people who get congestive heart failure.

The family went through nightmares and loss of sleep. There were several problems, but Christopher seemed healthy.

The beautiful blonde, brown-eyed boy lifted his head, crawled and walked on time.

His first word? "Dada." Ron and Christopher were extraordinarily close. "He would get up in the morning, and if I wasn't the one to come get him, he'd scream, 'I want Daddy.' No matter what I did, he was with me."

Christopher never complained or felt sorry for himself. He loved putting together Legos and taking apart pretty much everything else. His father called him "a boy, through and through," who once wanted to be a pharmacist like Dad and later a transplant surgeon.

He had developed a cough by Christmas, 1996, that kept him from sleeping, even from lying down. Christopher had bronchitis, made worse by his poor heart and lung function. He spent several weeks in the hospital and returned to school full time in March. He no longer had the stamina for gym class.

Just before second grade began, Christopher was accumulating fluid, so his parents and doctors decided there was no longer any option: He needed a transplant. But a conventional heart transplant wouldn't do; his poorly pumping heart had caused a pressure buildup in his lungs. While his heart had adapted to squeeze hard to force blood into his lungs, a new heart on its own would not be able to do that much work immediately.

Surgeons decided to try a heterotopic transplant. About 20 American children have had the procedure, but Christopher would be only the second at Children's. Doctors left his heart in place and added the donor heart to make it easier to pump out blood.

For a short time after the surgery, they found out how much energy a 7-year-old can have. Last Christmas, he was flying up and down the stairs with his cousins and making plans for the future.

"We thought he'd lead a normal life," Faller said.

Post-transplant lymphoproliferative disease occurs in only a small number of transplant recipients.

The donated heart carried a virus; Chris never did develop tumors, which

is a sign that the heart is carrying the virus. Chris had no pre-existing antibodies to fight off the virus. By mid-January, he was back in the hospital for treatment of the viral disease.

The anti-rejection drugs were halted. But soon he was breathing too quickly—a heart biopsy showed he was rejecting the donated organ. He had to take steroids if he was to fight off both the rejection and the viral disease.

On Feb. 3, Christopher was resuscitated—both of his hearts stopped beating.

He was given a course of chemotherapy to kill the large tumors growing in his chest and he seemed to get better. Then one night, in a panic, he told his father he couldn't breathe.

The next night, Maria listened to Christopher plead not to be put on a ventilator. She could see he was struggling for air and persuaded the frightened boy that he needed help.

He said, "OK, Mummy." Those were his last clear words. The breathing tube made talking impossible. The night before, he told Ron he loved him very much. On March 10, Christopher's hearts stopped again; he fought back. More chemotherapy followed.

On March 24, Christopher's hearts beat out their unique rhythm for the last time, falling silent at 12:03 a.m.

Ron was by Christopher's side. Maria said, "I told him I was very proud of him and that I loved him very much and I wanted him to come home and play with his Legos."

Maria Faller wishes all of May would disappear, the month in which her son would have turned 8, would have received his first Communion, would have given her a Mother's Day gift.

His room is still littered with pieces of Legos and toys, and is still invaded by his sister, Rachel, when she wants a stuffed animal of his to sleep with.

Christopher always said the only thing he wanted was to be able to run really fast. He got that wish just once—He raced his sister up the driveway, blonde hair flying, short legs pumping, hearts pounding. And after so many years of trying, Christopher won.

If you are interested in reading more about Christopher, the family

has a web page in memory of him: execulink.com/~bapar/memorial/member/maria.

Christopher's symbols are Legos, beavers, butterflies and 2 linked hearts because he had 2 heart transplants.



Terry and Kelly Alexander's son, Cole (10-11-92), died as a result of SIDS, 2-9-93. Terry's 17-year-old son, Jason, died in his sleep, 5-26-98. Kelly shares:

Even with the tragic news of Jason's totally unexpected death, I feel someone was watching over us. Terry, my husband, was packed and ready to leave for a 6 day fishing trip. His plan was to rush home from work and leave as soon as possible.

If we had received the news even a half hour later than we did, he could have been on the road and unreachable.

We didn't get to share a lot of Jason's life. Living in Texas, with us in Indiana, we got summer visits with Jason and Kelly, (my 15-year-old stepdaughter) and not a whole lot more. Add in the fact that there was not a really good relationship with my husband's ex-wife, and we ended up feeling lucky we at least got the little time we did get with the kids.

We saw Jason grow up in yearly installments. It was so hard for us, sending them home and knowing how long it would be before we saw them again. But one thing Jason said many times he was moving up here to be with his dad when he turned 18. Even if that wouldn't have worked out, we were anxious to be able to have a relationship with the kids that did not have to depend on their mom's permission. Jason had suffered from seizures for years, but was able to control them with medication. But lately they had been getting worse, and his doctors were trying to adjust his medication. In spite of that, he led a normal teenage life. On Jason's last day he went 4-wheeling with his buddies, played football for a few hours, then went to bed and never woke up. His sister Kelly found him the next afternoon.

We were told it was an aneurysm that happened an hour or so after he

went to bed. Kelly and Jason were so close, I don't know how she will do without him.

And with us being so far away, we are worried that it will be hard to tell how she is really getting along. The minister shared a story about the love between these two kids: Jason ran in the house one day and yelled out to Kelly to watch his truck.

When he came back outside he found her WASHING his truck, having misunderstood him! Not too many little sisters would do that!

Jason was both an artist and a sportsman, working in wire sculptures, as well as winning a major hunting award a few years ago in a competition that Men from all over the country competed in. When he went up to accept his trophy, his step-grandpa went with him to pose for pictures. The crowd was amazed when the 'kid' got the trophy and the 'man' was just there to pose with the winner. The minister at his service also shared this story, which was So Jason, my husband and I looked at each other and smiled, remembering all the summers we had Jason with us: Jason was told to mow the lawn, and when his grandparents got home the lawn was not touched. They found him in the garage, trying to get a perfect sharp edge on the lawn mower blades so the grass would be perfectly even! I can remember lawn mowing days with Jason here, and the grass did look great. And since we always had the kids during the Fourth of July, I remember how Jason and his dad would make the trip to buy way too many fireworks. I can't bear to see all the fireworks displays out now. Terry had never gone back to Texas, the kids always came to us. So there he was, at his son's funeral and meeting all of Jason's friends for the first time. I am so glad that the kids made a point of coming over to meet Terry.

That proved to me just how much Jason loved his dad, - otherwise his buddies wouldn't have bothered. I am so angry that Terry has lost two sons, that Nicholas has lost two brothers. I am angry at the unfairness of having to "start all over" again with grief I am

also angry that we had looked forward to being able to have a relationship with Jason without his moms interference (for lack of a better word) and now that will never happen.

I guess I am just plain angry. Still.

Jason was a good kid. I hope that he & Cole are together, as that is the only thing that gives us some peace.

Jason was a HUGE Notre Dame fan. His pallbearers even wore Notre Dame hats.

So we have decided that Jason's symbol is a Notre Dame ball cap.



Cole's symbol is a cherub.

Chester Meyer's son, Clayton (11-8-73), died from Marfan's Syndrome, 4-5-95. Chester shares his great sorrow:

I wanted you to know that tragedy has struck again. My darling wife, Geneva, died July 7th. She was only 44.

It has been just a little over 3 years since we lost Clayton. I don't understand this at all.

We were married a little over 26 years.

I hope you will contact Chester, he needs our support and prayers.

Chester's address is:

620 E 18th Street

Covington, KY 41014

Clayton's symbol is a stethoscope.



Woody and Donna Herndon's son, Roger (6-25-70), was killed in a plane crash, 8-2-91. Donna wrote:

I am glad you are doing a sibling viewpoint newsletter. Our daughter has never really worked through her grief. The most therapeutic thing for Melissa has seemed to be naming their youngest son, Roger Allan Graves, in honor of his Uncle Roger Allan Herndon. Melissa's oldest (four years old at the time) Aimee, announced to a little friend that she was going to have a little brother to be named after Uncle Roger "so we will always remember him." (It is amazing how much the cherub painting by Wayne Taylor looks like little Roger. The painting in the dome bears remarkable resemblance to my father at a young age.)

Melissa has also returned to college and become a photographer for the Murray State yearbook. Her brother, Roger, was a photographer for the West Point yearbook, The Howitzer. Siblings seem often, to deal with guilt about being alive, a feeling we've also encountered in war veterans who survived their buddies. This seems to complete the resolution of grief for some siblings.

Roger's symbol is a monarch butterfly.



Howard and Sandy Graham's son, Scott (10-24-77), took his own life 4-28-95. Sandy wrote:

If you need an idea for one of your newsletters I would like to hear how siblings have handled the death of their brother or sister.

Our son Shane hasn't done well after his brother's death. I haven't talked to anyone else that has gone through what we have. Shane was 14 when his brother died. Fourteen is a hard age, but to add to the death of your brother on top of it, not a good combination.

Shane ran away a year ago. Before that we had him in a therapeutic home which he was asked to leave as the person in charge couldn't get a handle on Shane. He dropped out of school, lost his job, etc., etc.

We saw a friendly, outgoing, bright teenager turn into a depressed, impulsive, out of control person.

If you would like to reach the Gramms, their address is:

Howard and Sandy Graham 8800

Fremont Ave. Littleton, CO

80128 303-979-0826

Scott's symbols are an F-16 fighter plane and a dolphin.



Michael (1-25-71), son of Dick and Jean Sand, was killed in an automobile accident 6-18-94. Jean shares:

We all have a valley of dreams. We all long to experience the giving and receiving of unconditional love, but many of us find that we are disappointed, and bear the hurt of that disappointment all of our lives.

Life itself can hurt us in so many ways, and most of us are in need of the healing of these hurts. Sometimes we need to find a peaceful place to make peace within ourselves. We need to find forgiveness, wholeness, and healing within ourselves.

Today we live in an age when individuals have to take more responsibility for their own journey. However, we all need help, encouragement, support, and direction. Hopefully, in our own search, we will be able to reach out to others with more understanding too. I feel God is always with me, and at my side, but he is always beyond me.

Michael's symbols are a star, an angel, a Stetson hat and boots.



If any of you are interested in receiving a copy of the video taken of J.I.M's picnic this year, the price is \$15.00 The video includes the dedication by Chuck Dupier of Rosemary Smith's book and the drawings and comments by Wayne Taylor (the artist of the drawings and the dome); Rosemary's speech and the balloon lift-off in memory of our children. It will be a tax deduction:

Mail your request to:

Dinah Taylor

804 Main Street

Williamsburg, KY 40769

I have saved this announcement until the end of the newsletter because I have had to make a very difficult decision. Much time in prayer and anguish have been spent in this decision. Since Regina has moved to Florida, I have found that I can no longer do the newsletter. Regina was doing all the typing and much of the "leg work." I have spent the

past week typing, and have only completed 3 pages and that is the reason this newsletter is so late in getting out. "The mind is willing, but the body is weak" I have found that I am not spending enough time on restoring my physical health, and because of that, I am not progressing as I should. It has taken me a year to realize and accept that I can no longer do the things that I want to do, and was able to do in the past. (Getting old is tough!*)

It seems there is a time when we have to give up the people or things we hold so dear; Young Jim has been the hardest. While making this decision, I realized that I must now go through another "round" of grief; that of losing my ability to do what I have felt was my mission since Young Jim's death. In a way, I feel that I am letting Young Jim down, and also you. This decision was not made at the spur of the moment. I have found that I must "let go" of another vital aspect in my life. Acceptance is the last step in the grieving process, but I think the most difficult. It has been six years since I began *LAMENTATIONS*, and you, fellow travelers, have given me strength and purpose by your support. I have "felt" your prayers and am so appreciative of your many cards and letters of encouragement.

I promise that I will stay in touch, and will send out an abbreviated newsletter at different times of the year. **J.I.M.**'s picnic will be scheduled for some time in June of 1999 and I will notify you in advance of the date.

When Rosemary Smith's book, *Children of the Dome*, is published (and it is very close to completion) I will let you know all about it. Please continue to visit Drew and Jeremiah's webpage where

Rosemary will keep us updated. (www.childrenofdome.com). She is constantly adding new things.

Please continue to E-mail or "snail mail me" My E-mail address is: dinah@cc.cumber.edu

Until the next correspondence, please stay in contact ... you are my lifeline and we all need the support of each other. I hope you will continue to support newly bereaved families and you may send me their names and addresses, and I will send them all the past newsletters. When I read through all the newsletters, it shows the progression I have made in my grief, and thanks to my nephew, Wayne Perkins, I only have to reach the middle, not the end; that is such a comfort. I encourage you to keep a journal, it will be concrete evidence of the way you are working through your grief. On those days when you have taken two steps backward, read your first journals and you will realize that you have progress. Continue to mention your child's name every chance you get. The only way our children will stay alive in other people's hearts is by making sure they are not forgotten. If some of you haven't sent pictures of your child, please do so. It means so much to have a "face" to go with the names of your children. They have become part of my family, too.

If you need a fellow traveler's address, just let me know. Those of you who were at the picnic received the names and addresses of those who attended. I hope **J.I.M.**'s picnic next year will be a reunion for us. The first picnic was in 1993 and the attendance has been larger each year. I'm sure Rosemary's book will be for sale at that time.

If you have not visited the Cumberland Inn which houses the dome

in memory of our children, I encourage you to do so. There are still so many of you that I have not met face to face, but will hopefully be able to in the future. If you plan to visit, be sure to let me know a head of time so I may meet you and hear more about your child, but, you must also permit me to tell you more about Young Jim. Hopefully, in the near future, I will be able to hug and be hugged, how I miss the physically touch of those who understand my grief.

Whenever you eat chocolate, see sprinkles, or a Pegasus, angel or horses, I hope you will remember Young Jim, Jim and me. And may you remember each of us with a smile. We need your prayers and we need your moral support. I am not saying good-bye .. only "until I see you again," and may the latest day be at the **J.I.M.**'s picnic next year.



I want to "temporarily" leave you with this poem Donna Herndon sent. The author is unknown:

*Let me come in where you are
weeping friend,
And let me take your hand.
I, who have known sorrow such as
yours can understand.*

*Let me come in ... I would be very
still
Beside you in your grief,
I would not bid you cease your
weeping, friend,
Since our tears bring relief*

*Let me come in... I would only
breathe a prayer,
And hold your hand,
For I have known a sorrow such
as yours, and understand.*

