

LAMENTATIONS

Issue 8

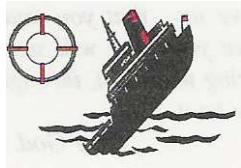
S.U.C.C.E.S.S

October 1992

Mayday!! or May Day

Which day are you having, and which day will you have when you are S.U.C.C.E.S.S.ful in working through your grief?

Mayday! is an international call for help. It is used by a ship or aircraft when in distress. Don't you feel as if you are a sinking ship in a sea of grief? There are so many times we send out a "Mayday" to others, but they don't hear our call. This is where we can help each other. Don't be afraid to send out the "call" and let others throw you a life line.



May Day is the first day of May and is celebrated as a spring festival in many countries. It represents the beginning of new life after the death of winter. It is celebrated with dancing and singing, and the giving of flowers. Many dance around a Maypole, holding the ends of ribbons that are fastened at the top. These ribbons are wound around the Maypole until it is filled with bright colors. As we "wind" our way around our "Maypole" (our loss) may we be "wound" with bright ribbons (our memories), until we are tilled with bright colors (our S.U.C.C.E.S.S.)



May 9 is Mother's Day. It will be a very difficult day for me as it will be for you. When they give roses to the mothers in church on Mother's Day, do I take one? How do I answer when people ask me if I am a mother? Do I say "I was a mother, but am no longer," or do I just say "I am?" Since Young Jim was our only child, I am technically, no longer a mother, but I still feel like a mother. I did not resign or retire from motherhood. Young Jim's death retired me, stripped me of that title. But I refuse to relinquish that title. How do I know I am a Mother? I had pain and a scar from his birth and I have pain and scars from his death. For 18 years I

"mothered," and I have pictures and wonderful memories that prove it. No one can take that away.

May 20 will be a very difficult day for my husband and me. It will be the second anniversary of Young Jim's accident. Last year we spent the day out of town with planned activities. Young Jim was never far from our thoughts and words, and it was a better day than I thought it would be. It is so good to be able to talk about Jim and remember the great times we had together as a family. The following day, the first James H. Taylor Scholarship was presented at the high school where he would have graduated. It was a very emotional time for each of us since Young Jim's cousin was the first recipient. Out of tragedy comes hope. I have enclosed a copy of the presentation.

May 24th is our 25th wedding anniversary.

May 30 is Memorial Day. This is a patriotic holiday that honors Americans who gave their lives for their country. In a way we are veterans; veterans of a war of which we are survivors, but our loved ones are the fatalities; a wm. that was lost, but we are alive to fight again, and fight we must. We have "earned" our stripes and now must go out and serve others. The "tour of duty" is our grief period. Let us "arm" ourselves with the "charge" that we will honor our loved one's name by working through our grief and finding ways our loved ones will be remembered. As you place flowers on the grave, make this pledge to yourself and your loved one.



May 31 will be my Mother's 81st birthday. She is in very poor health, but is coherent and that is a comfort to our family. As you can see, May is a month of happiness and sadness, but doesn't life have this same mixture? We know the sadness - can you find the happiness?

Grief Grafts

Ron and Louise Barger erected a cross at the sight of their daughter Rhonda's accident for Easter and also placed balloons there on her birthday and Easter. They also placed a bunny tree with eggs, birds and bunnies in the kindergarten class at Oneida Baptist Institute in remembrance of Rhonda because she always did one for her home. They placed a fresh arrangement of roses on her grave because roses were her favorite flower. They use white roses as her symbol because of her purity, and balloons because of her difficulty in breathing.

Jerry and Carol Mann, whose son Shane was killed in an automobile accident January 12, 1993, were given a beautiful poem and a vase in Shane's memory. The following letter was sent to them by Nicolette Mallory, an art teacher at Nicholas County Elementary School:

*Dear Mr. And Mrs. Mann, and Josh,
This is very difficult to write in good part because of the time that has lapsed since Shane's death. However, I must. The vase was made by Lisa Payne Austin, who was our visiting artist last year. It was one of several that she left for me to trim, decorate and use to best advantage. When I poured the red and white clay slips over the form, I was concentrating on the interaction, the tension, between the two colors. In the disbelieving grief that swept over all of us in January I searched for an appropriate memorial.. Flowers are too temporary, and money is fleeting. The vase seemed right, but it was unfinished the day of Shane's funeral, I glazed and fired it, and contemplated its form. This vase has come to symbolize so much: it's form shows the beauty and strength of Shane's young life, which you were absolutely responsible for. . . the red slips represent his liveliness, his youth. . . and the white slip washing over all of that is the grief absolute and powerful and unending, shared by so many at his sudden death. I apologize for being so late in communicating these thoughts to you, but I sincerely hope that this small gesture may take a step in your "healing." I have great respect for your family.*



The girls' team at Shane's high school won the state basketball tournament and the game was dedicated to Shane. It is obvious that his fellow students loved him very much. Jerry and Carol have selected a Rottweiler as the symbol to remind us of Shane because he had an 8-month-old puppy.



Doyt and Mary Hoffman's son Ty was shot and killed August 15, 1991 by two men at a McDonald's restaurant in Gastonia, North Carolina. Shortly after his death, a friend of theirs sent them this prayer:

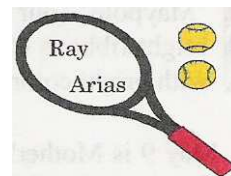
Dear God,

whose other name is Love, it's hard, through tears, to see that you are Love. Right now I'm conscious only of 'the overwhelmingness of my grief and the emptiness of today and tomorrow. And I beat against heaven's doors and say it cannot be that this has happened- not to us, not to me, not to mine. It cannot be that God Almighty, whom I have worshipped since my youth, would allow it to happen. And I know with a detached clarity that it has . . . that there is something very final about death, something irrevocable, that my beating on heaven's doors shall not alter that which is. But even in my anguish there comes a measure of understanding, of acceptance. It's all right, Lord. I know that you love him and that you care for him now in his death as you cared for him yesterday in his life. I know that you love us- that you understand our lack of understanding that your love will sustain us, teach us, strengthen us, and bring us at last, through our love for him, closer to thee- if we let it.

*Dear God. In those other name is love.
Amen*

Several of Ty's friends wrote letters to their local newspaper expressing their love for him and their heart broken expressions of his death.

Sally Arias' 16-year-old son Ray Arias, IV died as a result of complications from a bone marrow transplant February 26, 1993. Sally has organized a tennis tournament in Ray's memory that take place May 14-16, 1993 at the Lexington Tennis Club. If you would like to participate in the tournament, or help defray expenses, you may send a tax deductible donation to:



*The Leukemia Society of America, Inc.
c/o Ms. Sally Arias
246 Quebec Way
Lexington, KY 40515*

Please indicate "The Ray Arias Tennis Tourney." I guess it goes without saying that Sally has chosen a tennis racket to represent Ray.

Harold and Reva Conyers' son Kevin was killed in an automobile accident February 21, 1993. They have selected a soccer ball to symbolize Kevin



Bob and Jackie Geier whose 7 year old daughter Gretchen died as a result of cancer, selected a red heart as their symbol.



Frank and Sharon Smith's 16-year old daughter Frannie was killed February 7, 1993, in a snow skiing accident in Indiana. The Smiths have chosen an angel as the symbol for Frannie. Raymond and Wanda UMBER have also selected a guardian angel to represent their son Jeff who died in an automobile accident August 15, 1992.



Scott Rose, son of Jim and Judy Rose, was killed in an automobile accident July 4, 1983. They have formed the Scott Rose Foundation, which is held in London, KY over two weekends. The events include a golf tournament, races, high school track meet, and a softball tournament. The proceeds go for the mentally and physically handicapped to purchase needed equipment which is not covered by their insurance. These purchases include items such as lifts for vans, wheel chairs, therapeutic tricycles, and touch talkers, and for people of all ages. The Roses' symbols are a rose for obvious reasons, and a clown.



Randy and Eula Floyd's son Adam died of leukemia January 19, 1993, at the age of 12. He was such a fighter and enjoyed his' cowboy boots (of course that automatically endears him to me) and listening to 50's music and the "LaBamba."

Bruce and Teresa Mason have selected an eagle to represent their son Steve, who' was killed in an automobile accident February 8, 1993.



James and Ann Clay's son Randy was killed in an automobile accident April 21, 1988. Randy's symbol is a rainbow



Frank and Gail Noble's son Chad and Chad's friend were killed in an automobile accident March 9, 1991. Gail says that it really does help her to be able to talk to others about Chad. Don't we all feel that way? The greatest gift people can give us is a listening ear. They don't need to talk, just give us permission to do so. There is so much we want to tell others about our loved one. I hope that we also realize that when we are talking to others that have lost a loved one, they too need to talk and share.

As you read this newsletter, I hope you will remember each person's symbol, and when you see these symbols during the course of your day, you will remember these families and the loved ones they have lost to death (and hopefully say a prayer.) It is of great comfort to me to know that Young Jim will be remembered each day by others, in addition to his family and the people who knew him personally.

I read a challenging statement the other day:

Each day is a new beginning. . . Another chance to learn more about ourselves, to care more about others, to laugh more than we did to accomplish more than we thought we could, to be more than I've thought I've could, to be more than we were before. Can you accept this challenge? I am enclosing a flag which is to represent the many days of this month. Place it somewhere where you can see it each day and it will challenge you to "take up the charge" and go forward with your grief. Don't forget, we are striving for S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Since you know me so well by now, you know I can't end this newsletter without mentioning **food** at least once. I would like to give you a recipe for grief from "Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah:"

Combine the following ingredients:

I grieving person

I friend (at least) who will listen 1 cup of conversation

2 teaspoons of courage sprinkle with tears and laughter.

results, mix frequently

This recipe serves enough to feed and satisfy a grieving person until they reach their "fighting weight" (your goal) of **S.U.C.C.E.S.S.**

Lose that excess weight of grief!

