
LAMENTATIONS

Issue 98

middle

February, 2006

INSTALLING LOVE

Tech Support: Yes, ... how can I help you?

Customer: Well, after much consideration, I've decided to install Love. Can you guide me through the process?

Tech Support: Yes. I can help you. Are you ready to proceed?

Customer: Well, I'm not very technical, but I think I'm ready. What do I do first?

Tech Support: The first step is to open your Heart. Have you located your Heart?

Customer: Yes, but there are several other programs running now. Is it okay to install Love while they are running?

Tech Support: What programs are running?

Customer: Let's see, I have Past Hurt, Low Self-Esteem, Grudge and Resentment, running right now.

Tech Support: No problem, Love will gradually erase Past Hurt from your current operating system. It may remain in your permanent memory but it will no longer disrupt other programs. Love will eventually override Low Self-esteem with a module of its own called High Self-Esteem. However, you have to completely turn off Grudge and Resentment. Those programs prevent Love from being properly installed. Can you turn those off?

Customer: I don't know how to turn them off. Can you tell me how?

Tech Support: With pleasure. Go to your start menu and invoke Forgiveness. Do this as many times as necessary until Grudge and Resentment have been completely erased.

Customer: Okay, done! Love has started installing itself. Is that normal?

Tech Support: Yes, but remember that you have only the base program. You need to begin connecting to other Hearts in order to get the upgrades.

Customer: Oops! I have an error message already. It says, "Error - Program not run on external components "What should I do?"

Tech Support: Don't worry. It means that the Love program is set up to run on Internal Hearts, but has not yet been run on your Heart. In non-technical terms, it simply means you have to Love yourself before you can Love others.

Customer: So, what should I do?

Tech Support: Pull down Self-Acceptance; then click on the following files: Forgive-Self; Realize Your Worth; and Acknowledge your Limitations.

Customer: Okay, done.

Tech Support: Now, copy them to the "My Heart" directory. The system will overwrite any conflicting files and begin patching faulty programming. Also, you need to delete Verbose Self-Criticism from all directories and empty your Recycle Bin to make sure it is completely gone and never comes back.

Customer: Got it. Hey! My heart is filling up with new files. Smile is playing on my monitor and Peace and Contentment are copying themselves all over My Heart. Is this normal?

Tech Support: Sometimes. For others it takes awhile, but eventually everything gets it at the proper time. So Love is installed and running. One more thing before we hang up. Love is Freeware. Be sure to give it and its various modules to everyone you meet. They will, in turn, share it with others and return some cool modules back to you.

Customer: Thank you, God.

Grief Grafts

Operation Love our Troops is a free service allowing military families and the general public to send heartfelt messages of love and support to our heroes this Valentine's Day.

I would like to invite you to send your own voice or written message and be part of a Guinness Book of Records attempt to be the world's largest digital Valentine's card.

To take part, go to www.operationloveourtroops.org.

Help us honor our troops and show how proud we are of them! Send a message and pass this on to someone else, let's make this a BIG Valentine's Day card for them!

Sending love and prayers from our loving home to you and yours!

Jan Ulrich's son, Nathan Eisert (5-27-82), completed suicide, 6-8-02.

The following article was written by Bob Hill and he mentions Jan Ulrich and the work she is doing in memory of Nathan:

Suicide by son of coach opens door to dialogue

Even as the loud, self-important sports world pauses, however briefly, to share in the terrible sorrow of Tony Dungy -- the Indianapolis Colts football coach who lost a son to suicide -- Jan Ulrich understands that for Dungy's family and friends, the pain will never go away.

Ulrich lost her 20-year-old son, Nathan Eisert, a former basketball player at Western Kentucky University, to suicide four years ago. As with James Dungy -- who was found dead in his Florida apartment at 18 after an overdose of painkillers -- Eisert had been dealing with depression. Florida authorities, in fact, said James Dungy previously overdosed on prescription drugs.

"If you become aware of the signs of depression, you will start seeing what you missed," Ulrich said.

"It will torment you. ... Perhaps you could have saved his life. ... I could have done this and should have done that ... and why didn't I?"

Ulrich and her husband, Stephen, found their way through the grief and guilt by working to make people more aware of the grim statistics of suicide -- the deaths nobody wants to talk about.

Among them: About 500 Kentucky residents die every year by suicide --more than double the homicide rate.

Kentucky has the 19th highest suicide rate in the nation; suicide is the second-leading cause of death among Kentuckians 15 to 34 years old, and the fourth-leading cause of death for 35- to 54-year-olds.

The Ulrichs' mission -- along with many volunteers -- was to lobby Frankfort to make sure there would always be a statewide suicide-prevention program.

"Our beginning goal was to make sure government officials at the top knew there was a problem, and then try to seed local efforts in individual communities," Jan Ulrich said.

State steps in the result: Gov. Ernie Fletcher unveiled a statewide campaign on Sept. 1 to "help educate and inform Kentuckians about how suicide affects our state." It began a "Suicide Prevention: It's Everybody's Business" campaign featuring radio and television public service announcements.

It has been a slow process. Ulrich has learned that few people, law-enforcement officers or even health professionals have learned to read the signs of clinical depression.

She would like to see the education process expanded into Kentucky schools but understands that's a very delicate task; any information given out must include "a next step solution" for students at risk, and few schools have the trained professionals to deal with those students.

What she has found -- and James Dungy's suicide, however tragic, has prompted more discussion on the subject -- is that more people within the college athletic community have been looking at the problem as it pertains to pressures on student-athletes such as her son.

The Ulrichs have released a personal video on their experience. A paper written by sports psychologists from Ohio State University, Brigham Young University and the University of Oklahoma titled "Suicide risk is real for student athletes" recently was released on NCAA News Online.

It said, in part, that student-athletes might be even more at risk than other students because of sports and academic pressures. They suffer depression at a similar rate as other students but may be even less willing to seek help because of the athletic image.

We don't yet know -- and may never fully know -- what led to James Dungy's suicide.

The best that can come out of his death is more awareness of the problems. Jan Ulrich can tell you more about that -- and where to get help - - at www.tellthemomma.com

Bob Hill's column runs Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. You can reach

him at (502) 582-4646 or e-mail him at bhill@courier-journal.com
You can also read his columns at <http://www.courier-journal.com>
Copyright
2005 The Courier-Journal.

Diane Craddock's son, JJ Wade (9-22-72), died from carbon monoxide, 1-26-04, and her daughter, Michele Wade (12-31-76), died in an auto accident, 5-20-04.

Diane tells us about the Celebration of Life ceremony:

Thank you to the families that participated in my first annual Celebration of Life on December 31, 2005. There were 150+ beloved angels represented at the ceremony, some from as far away as England and Sweden. The event was blessed with guest speakers, songs, poetry read, sharing of precious memories, lighting of candles, releasing balloons, fellowship, and refreshments. During the entire ceremony, an overhead projection slide show continuously showed the loved ones.

Dr. Patsy Joyner and Chris Smith, from Paul D. Camp Community College, talked about keeping our loved ones' memories alive. My beloved daughter, Michele Wade, attended this college and maintained a 4.0 GPA, while juggling three children and a job. We introduced scholarships established in honor and in memory of my two children, Michele and JJ Wade.

The names and pictures sent to me for the event are posted on the www.angels-arms.celebration-of.com website. Two of the poems read at the ceremony were written specifically for the event. I wrote "Faith, Family, and Friends" (posted below) and Michele's oldest son, Jeremy--13, read the poem he wrote "In Remembrance of You." Jeremy & his sister, Morgan--8, created www.diane-wade.memory-of.com website in memory of their Mom...his poem is posted there, if anyone would like to visit...

Pictures were taken at the ceremony, when they are returned, I will share the pictures with everyone that sends their private email address to me at angelsarms2004@verizon.net I'm trying to get a CD made for families that are interested and the CD will be offered at cost. Thanks again to all the families that sent your beloved angels' cherished memories.

Faith, Family, and Friends
Dedicated to beloved angels around the world

*Always remember to extend a caring hand
To the grieving loved ones around our land
Take time to cry, laugh, or reminisce with them
And realize they will forever need a true friend*

*Angels' time on earth, whether short or long
Yesterday's treasured memories to us belong
After they have gone to their heavenly homes
Our hearts beat as one, until our time comes*

*God will continuously provide for you
Spiritual, physical, and emotional too
Strength from faith, family, and friends
Provides peace and comfort until the end*

*The wonderful gifts the good Lord gives
Sharing the lives our beloved angels lived
Counting our precious blessings is easy to do
When prayers to God, end with "Thank You"*

Copyright ©2005 Diane Craddock
Angels Arms poem presented at the 2005 Celebration of Life

Any parent who wants their child added to her Angel Arms website can email the information to her and she will add your child to the site. She will send an email back to the person involved once it has been added.

I asked Diane about her grandchildren that she is raising:

I have custody of Brandon--13 and Jamie--12 (JJ's two sons)...they went into a long term treatment facility (behavioral hospital) in March 2005. Brandon came home the middle of October, after 6 1/2 months and Jamie is still in the hospital. Jamie is really struggling emotionally since the sudden deaths of JJ and Michele (plus their Mom basically abandoning them for the last ten years).

I also have custody of Michael--4 (Michele's youngest son), he has a traumatic brain injury from the car crash that killed Michele. He has 95% recovered but has to be careful of further head injuries. I get Michele's other three children (Jeremy--13, Trent--10, and Morgan--8) together on the last Saturday of each month (I had to fight in court for the right to have the four siblings spend time together).

I picked up Morgan last night and she will stay until Sunday night; Jeremy and Trent come in the morning. Jeremy will stay thru Sunday night as he has school on Monday morning but he will come back on Tuesday morning to stay thru Wednesday afternoon (he is out of school those two days). Trent will stay Saturday thru Tuesday evening as he has school on Wednesday morning.

I spent some quality one-on-one time with Morgan today and will get all day Wednesday with Jeremy and this is the first time for one-on-one contact with them. Thank the Lord for small blessings....Jeremy and Trent hurt so because they tell me they don't have anyone they can talk to about their Mom. Their Dad and step mom don't want any caring and concerned grandparent trying to make suggestions, I suggested to Jeremy and Trent talk to counselor at school or someone at their church. I pray the Lord will put someone in their life to allow the grieving that needs to come out through healthy channels.

Diane Craddock, Loving Mom of Angels JJ and Michele Wade
"Death leaves a heartache time can not heal...
...Love leaves a memory no one can steal."
757-562-7727
757-562-1476
757-438-7812 cell

www.geocities.com/pammispages5/dianemain.html
www.geocities.com/pammispages6/michele.html
www.geocities.com/pammispages6/jj.html
www.angels-arms.celebration-of.com
www.michele-wade.memory-of.com
www.jj-wade.memory-of.com

www.diane-wade.memory-of.com (site made by two of Michele's children)

JJ's symbols are a Harley and a male angel. Michele's symbols are a Harley and a female angel.

Marge Nunn's son, Kenny Lutz (2-1-80), completed suicide, 8-19-04.

Marge had a wish to add to last month's Wish List:

Thanks for another touching newsletter. I look forward to reading them every month.

I have a 'Wish' for your list...

I wish that I could hold my son just one more time--and I would never let him go.

I still write to Ken every day and I tell him a lot how I wish I could hold him, so this was easy for me. And one day again, I will write a poem or letter for him that I will send to you. I feel it.

Thank you too for your dedication to all of us who have lost children. I can tell through all I have read from other parents that you are greatly appreciated by many of us.

*Sincerely,
Marge Nunn*

Kenny's symbols are rainbow, baseball glove, fishing pole and a golf club.

Eddie & Sue Tutt's daughter, Julie Howell (3-3-64), died from a cerebral hemorrhage, 1-9-03.

Sue sends her wishes:

I often wish I had more children. Maybe a dozen and I wouldn't feel so alone. We have four. Three live on this earth and one lives in heaven. The one in heaven doesn't get to visit anymore and there is such emptiness when we are all together. It's hard to imagine that the loss of one out of four would leave such a hole. But it has. Maybe more children around would soften the pain of loss. I really don't know.

I wish I could talk to my friends about how much I still grieve for my child who has died. It's been 3 years and they expect me to be over it.

I wish I had taken more pictures of my child as an adult. I wish had a recent portrait of her just before she died.

A later note:

Thank you for your sweet note. I used it at Julie's grave site on Sunday when her friends from Cincinnati came to remember her on the 3rd anniversary which is actually today. You are so special to remember each of our children. Thank you so very much.

Sue

Julie's symbols are a rainbow and a rooster.

Janet Padalino's son, Glen Roseneau (7-18-74), died in a work-related accident, 1-8-02.

Janet sent this note:

Dinah

Thanks for remembering my son Glen Roseneau, on his birthday and death day. Seems as though this void in my heart will be with me for a lifetime. The pain is not as bad, but as you know we never stop missing our children.

Your caring and heartfelt note really speaks to my heart. Thanks for your love and caring.

Janet Padalino

Glen's symbol is a frog.

Doreen Kempinger-Tremper's son, Tyler Tscheschlog (10-7-88), died in a bike accident, 6-16-03.

Doreen wants you to know Tyler and view his website. She would also like for you to look at the website about :

I so believe in Tyler and the fact he has not left our side. I think that has gotten me through more than anything. My faith in God was shattered but is coming back little by little. Maybe shattered is the wrong word. I was VERY ANGRY! I still get angry but I know He doesn't hold it against me.

He understands. I also know that it was not God that killed Tyler, but I wonder why some get miracles and some don't. Sorry so many questions so little answers. Sorry to go on here. I have changed my faith for the better. The religion I was brought up in I never felt comfortable

As for my symbol, hum, I have not given it much thought. If anything it would be, I guess, a turtle.

Thank you for going to Tyler's sight it means the world to me. I also read Young Jim's story. So very sad {{{Dinah}}}. Please forgive me if I am not with it. My comprehension some days is like a gnat. Jim sounds like a LOVELY young man and I know you are VERY proud of him.

Jim sounds a lot like Tyler in ways. Loving, caring, putting others first.

Tyler is an ANIMAL lover. I believe that is what he is doing in Heaven taking care of all the animals. He was such a free spirit. This boy was up every morning early and was outside when he was little. He would rather be outside than in the house any day. He loved being outside in a pond somewhere getting crayfish digging up worms, bringing home turtles, frogs or whatever he could find. He LOVED animals and loved people. He was shy at first, until he got to know you, then he was your best friend. He was always trying to put a smile on your face. Acting goofy and being silly. Loved to play practical jokes, harmless ones. Lived every moment to the fullest. He had a hard life for only 14 years.

Tyler loved to ride his bike. Unfortunately, that is how he was killed. Tyler was riding his bike home from his friend's house next door. The car that was coming up on him, speeding, hit and killed him. I found out a lot about our Judicial system at that point in time. The ironic thing is I was working for a credit union as a paralegal. I saw things go on in court and just shook my head. Then when Tyler was killed, I knew then the little respect I had gone out the door. I had gone to MADD and because this man was never tested, we will never know if he was on alcohol or drugs. There was not much they could do to help me. I was kind of hurt that they didn't want to help me. So I moved forward and kept looking, and that is when I found "crash prevention." PLEASE do not get me wrong, I think MADD is a wonderful organization, but where are parents supposed to turn when their child has been killed by someone that was speeding or running a red light? It was sad to think that even though 30% of people were killed by a drunk driver, 70% were killed by other factors.

Doreen is involved in an organization called Crash Prevention. I hope you will look at Tyler's webpage and the Crash Prevention webpage:

I want to say HOW VERY sorry I am for not getting back in touch with you between the holidays and then being tied up with the organization I have been so crazy. I think running away from the grief too. Seems the more I run the less I think. BUT then BAM it hits.

So no matter how far we run it's right there!

How are you doing? How were your holidays? Not very happy here. Seemed all of us just were blah. Except my granddaughter she keeps me going. I guess something has to!

I hope this finds you well.

Doreen

Tyler's Mom

[Tyler's Photo Album, Page Two](#)

<http://www.crashprevention.org/>

I would LOVE it if you would send the Crash prevention page through too. Ok before I get ahead of myself here. {I always tend to do that} The crash prevention is a group for everyone and anyone. It deals with people who either have had enough with speeding cars, reckless, Negligent drivers, DUI, falling asleep at the wheel, crashes because of the above. Lisa (Lewis) is head of the organization and a very sweet woman. She just wrote a book called It's no Accident She hopes to wake up our Government!

I just wanted to send this to you to read. If you know anyone that would like to sponsor us that would be wonderful. Just wanted to give you a little insight on what this organization is trying to do.

Thanks for your time,

Love

Doreen

Tylersmom4ever

I can look into the world and see you in every act of love. Where once you were one, you are now many.

Although you are no longer here to safeguard them, the things that you brought into the world - integrity and gladness and your capacity for love - can never be driven out. I will make sure of that.

[**PARTNERSHIP FOR SAVE DRIVING**](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION

Run & Walk for Road Safety

Glad that I picked the right symbol. Actually a few weeks after Tyler passed over, I BEGGED him for a sign that he was still with me. I was

going out to the mail box and as I walked back, there by my downspout was a turtle. I picked it up and it was the most docile turtle I have ever seen. It was looking right at me. I knew that Tyler sent it to me. Making a very long story short my Husband had said that the turtle would not live if I didn't let it go. I told him I was not letting it go; it was from Tyler and not only that, with this road I live on it would get killed. Well he did let it go over the weekend and on that Monday (same day Tyler was killed) I came home from work and there was the turtle dead in the road, in the same place Tyler was killed. I BEGGED Tyler to send me another one and I would not let Bob NEAR it. I came home from the lawyer's office and I heard this banging in my tub... I was scared as I drew back the curtain I saw a turtle!! I Thought WOW Tyler, that was amazing. Not only did you send me another turtle but it came up through the tub pipes! Well later on I was talking to my daughter and I told her what I found... She said MOM it was in the driveway I put it in there for you to keep. Again this turtle is the most loving turtle, she lays on my belly and sleeps. After almost three years I still have the turtle.

Tyler's symbol is a turtle.

Dolores Tucker's son, Dennis (6-11-60), died, 9-16-86.

Dolores reminds us to pray for each other:

Happy New Year to you and to your wonderful works that you do. My son, Dennis Christopher, is always in my heart and my prayers go to all who have lost their sons and daughters. Dennis passed on from an accident while at college. He was studying to be a doctor and was an accomplished trumpet player.

*God bless,
Dolores Tucker*

Dennis' symbol is a trumpet with a music symbol.

Eddie & Brenda Harvey's daughter, Shay (11-7-69) died in an auto accident, 1-4-93.

Brenda wrote this poem:

MY CHILD

*The winter sky, the snowflakes fall
And somewhere near, a Mother's call
Come here my child, it's getting cold,
I need you here for me to hold.*

*Or lightening flashed, a stormy night
My child is safe, and the world is right
Here by my side, I have no fear
My loving child, I can hold near.*

*But in a flash, the wind turns wild
Where is she now, where is my child?
An empty space here next to me
No child to hold upon my knee.*

*Was my child two or twenty-three?
Time has stood still, at least for me
The winter's past, the chill has gone
It's spring at last, but my child is gone.*

*A Mother's call can bring me tears
But in my heart, I have no fear.
I've memories now of those winter nights
When I held my child and the world was right.*

Shay's symbols are Rx mortar and pestle.

Leann Butler's son, Scott (3-10-78) died of AT, 7-16-04.

Leann gives her thoughts on the Christmas Box Angel Remembrance Service:

Dinah, thanks for the newsletter, and thank you for the pictures of the Christmas Box Angel Remembrance Service. Being with all of you made the holiday better. Thank you so very much for opening your home and heart, the time together with other parents, the session we had together just talking about and remembering our children (it is still very hard for me to talk about Scott without getting terribly emotional), and thank you most of all for the wonderful food and the laughter. Where there is laughter, there is love, and when there is laughter there is healing. These past two years have been terrible. I try to smile and laugh and remember what my mom told me - "hold your head up and always have a smile on your face." I have tried, sometimes it hasn't been easy to smile but I have tried. I try to remember Scott's smile and his laughter and retain that in my mind and be more like him. I hope someday to get to the point where you said you had absorbed Jim in your body and you are trying to do what he would do and be the kind of person he was. I am remembering that more than anything. I would love to be the person Scott was and have his faith in God, his courage and his smile - maybe, just maybe, I could live what is left of my life and regain my strength and faith in the Lord. Again, you have helped more than you know by just "being there." I know that someone is out there, someone knows my pain, and someone cares.

Scott's symbol is an eagle.

Jerry & Sherry Sharp's daughter, Whitney (6-8-82) died from Lymphocytic Myocarditis, 8-4-99.

Jerry & Sherry also expressed their thoughts about the service:

Dear Jim and Dinah,

Thank you so much for including us in the ceremony at your home. We loved the fellowship and sharing stories about Whitney.

Whitney's symbol is.

**Kent & Corry Ford's daughter, Krystle Hourigan (5-17-85),
died from a drug overdose, 8-28-05.**

I just wanted to say thank you for putting Krystle's name on the website. I went to it today and got to see it there, I must say it was sad for me and as I sit here writing you I am crying my heart out for the loss and sadness this all has brought us. I miss her so much, and yes, I get to finally see the grandbabies as I went and got my grandparents rights and I get them every other weekend and this weekend is the weekend I have them. I sit here writing you and watching them sleep. I'm in my bedroom and it hurts even more. I sometimes wonder why or how come me. I would do anything for anyone so why me, but I am sure all that have lost a child feel the same as I. I do not have many to share my feelings with, so from time to time may I keep in contact with you?? I really do need someone to share all this with.

I miss my baby so much that I will never feel the same again. I read a poem at her funeral that I wrote to my husband while he was at FT.Knox. He has been in the army 28 years.

*Your friend,
Corry Ford*

IF I KNEW

*If I knew it would be the last time
That I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly
And pray the Lord your soul to keep.*

*If I knew it would be the last time
That I see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss
And call you back for one more.*

*If I knew it would be the last time
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would video tape each action and word,
so I could play them back day after day.*

If I knew it would be the last time,

*I could spare an extra minute
To stop and say "I love you,"
Instead of assuming you would know I do.*

*If I knew it would be the last time
I would be there to share your day,
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,
So I can let just this one slip away.*

*For surely there's always tomorrow
To make up for an oversight,
And we always get a second chance
To make everything just right.*

*There will always be another day
To say "I love you,"
And certainly there's another chance
To say "anything I can do?"*

*But just in case I might be wrong
And today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you
And I hope we never forget.*

*Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,
Young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance
You get to hold your loved one tight.*

*So if you're waiting for tomorrow,
Why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes,
You'll surely regret the day.*

*That you didn't take the extra time
For a smile, a hug or kiss
And you were too busy to grant someone
What turned out to be their one last wish.*

So hold your loved ones close today,

*And whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them
And that you will always hold them dear.*

*Take time to say "I'm Sorry,
Please forgive me, thank you, it's okay."
And if tomorrow never comes,
You'll have no regrets about today.*

Krystle's symbol is a sunflower.

**Kathleen Hendrickson's sister, Karen (11-3-62), lost her battle
with cancer, 8-23-99.**

Since Karen's death, Kathleen has been very involved with Sibling Grief. She sent this article from her sister's pastor, Mark Daniels, in Cincinnati. He has a Blog on the web where he writes different articles and discusses community, religious, and world events. This article is about his frustration with a radio talk show host, Mr. Cowherd, who was putting down Peace Corp Volunteers. Mark refers to her sister, Karen in the article. And Kathleen plans to give Mr. Cowherd a piece of her mind and I hope you will too.

**Wednesday, January 25, 2006
*You're Wrong, Mr. Cowherd!***

*I rarely do this. But I'm going to vent. You see, right now, I'm furious!
Most radio talk show hosts are provocateurs who follow a simple
formula: Say something outrageous, inciting incensed people to call in,
causing others to listen, and do it all so that the station can sell advertising.
I get it.*

*Because of my unwillingness to be "played" by these folks, I rarely
listen to conventional talk radio of any kind. These days, that includes sports
radio, to which I once listened with fair regularity.*

*But today, following a meeting and an appointment, I decided to tune
into the show of ESPN Radio personality, Colin Cowherd. Cowherd is
smart, quick, and often funny. Not this day. This day, he was disgusting.*

Cowherd was addressing the return of thirty-two year old Theo Epstein to the general managership of the Boston Red Sox. This baseball wunderkind who reconstructed the long-suffering BoSox franchise, turning it into a World Series winner in 2004, left the team about eighty days ago. But the Red Sox have lured him back.

Apparently, at the time of his previous departure from Boston, there was talk that Epstein might join the Peace Corps. The remembrance of this uncorked a scurrilous rant from Cowherd who proclaimed that Epstein was too smart and too much of a winner to ever be bothered with something like the Peace Corps.

The Peace Corps, Cowherd said, was a place for thirty-nine year olds who just got axed from their jobs. It's an organization, he expanded, for people "We don't need here." Life, he said, is about "a good steak and a good laugh," not being a do-gooder digging ditches in Borneo.

Theo Epstein, Cowherd said, can take any co-ed in Boston home with him any night of the week. He can go to any bar in the area and get his drinks for free. The notion that Epstein would give up the good life to do something as useless as volunteer in the Peace Corps was, Cowherd exclaimed, "AB---SURD."

Apparently, Cowherd has never met anybody who's been in the Peace Corps.

I think of Karen, late member of the congregation I serve as pastor. Right after college, she joined the Corps and went to Sub-Saharan Africa. Why did she do it? Karen was a deeply committed follower of Jesus Christ and believed in service as a way of gratefully responding to God's love, forgiveness, and life.

Even after she came home, settled into her career as a manager with an environmental engineering firm, married, and had a family, she saw service as an important element in her life. She was active in our congregation and volunteered as a tutor with a local Laubach literacy group, teaching illiterate adults how to read.

On her thirty-fifth birthday, Karen learned that she suffered from two rare strains of cancer. The prognosis wasn't good. Yet, as her health deteriorated, she continued to play guitar in our church musical ensemble, helped us serve dinners to the poor in Cincinnati's inner-city, and when an opening appeared on our Church Council, volunteered to serve as vice president. When she volunteered, I asked her, "Karen, are you sure that you want to do that?" "Mark," she told me, "I've decided that I want to give whatever time I have left to Jesus Christ."

Maybe your words were mere bombast for effect, Mr. Cowherd. But you sure got it wrong! I love baseball and I respect Theo Epstein for what

he's accomplished in Boston. But I can't say that his achievements are of greater value than those of a faithful, world-wise, funny, intelligent servant of Jesus Christ named Karen. She was in the Peace Corps and she wasn't a loser.

Jesus once said that the first will be last and the last will be first. Maybe from the short-term perspective of free drinks and one-night stands, there are people deemed to be winners. But in the longer view of eternity, the real winners are people like Karen. Grateful for God's service to us in Christ, they serve others. Because they do, they enrich and ennoble the whole human race one person at a time.

By the way, if you'd like to tell Mr. Cowherd what you think of his rant, you can email him at theherd@espnradio.com.

Kathleen Hendrickson

Member of:

Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Honor Society <http://www.csi-net.org/>

Association for Play Therapy <http://www.a4pt.org>

Karen's symbol is a hummingbird.

Peggy Miller's son, Tommy (4-27-74), completed suicide, 9-10-95.

Peggy writes and also shares a letter she sent to special friends on Tommy's angel date:

Dear Dinah,

Thank you for always remembering Tommy on his birthday and the anniversary of his death. It's been a long, hard 10 years, but we have made progress. I know you understand.

I just wanted to share with you the note I sent our family and friends this year.

September 11, 2005

Dear Family and Friends,

Yesterday, September 10, marked the 10 year anniversary of Tommy's (Thomas L. Miller, III) death. I had contemplated putting his picture and the verse I wrote in the paper. However, after finding out how much it

would cost and thinking about what I believe Tommy would want me to do, I decided to donate the money to charity, buy books in his memory for the public library, and send this verse to people, I believe, cared about Tom and/or me.

Despite the tone of the poem, I have moved on despite the loss (as has Keith{her son} and his dad). I no longer drug myself to get through his death date, but instead took my little sister to the mall. That's progress.

*Ten years ago today
Time stopped-you went away
And nothing has been the same.*

*Some said our shattered hearts would mend
But the pain has never seen an end
Nothing has been the same.*

*We've shed many anguished tears;
Some hard, some silent thru the years,
And wondered who you would have been.
Nothing has been the same.*

*They say "God always has a reason,
And things happen in their season."
But this I'll never understand
For nothing will ever be the same
Except the pain.*

Peggy L. Miller

Tommy's symbols are a cross, dove and a deer.

Guy & Debbie Jackson's son, Michael (2-12-82), died in an auto accident, 12-15-02.

Debbie wrote this note:

Dear Dinah,

Thanks so much for thinking about us on December 15th. I can't believe Michael's been gone 3 years. We miss him terribly. We will miss seeing you this June. Thank you so much for reaching out to us and other parents after losing our precious children. Your dedication is truly an inspiration.

We think of you often!

Love,

Guy and Debbie

(You can see Michael's stain glass window in the Window of Hope on the website)

Michael's symbol is a shining star.

Angela Fagan's son, Chris (5-22-84), died in an auto accident, 12-22-01.

Angela shares a great thought:

Dear Dinah,

I am so touched by your card and sentiments. Thank you for remembering my beloved son's anniversary in heaven and his birthday on earth.

I wish I could say time heals, but you know it just gets older, not better. People like you help with bearing the pain.

A friend of mine recently shared this and it helped me get through the moment:

Yesterday's influences

Today's memories

Tomorrow's reunion

Love,

Angela

Chris' symbol is half of Angela's soul.

**Alesa Gill's son, Richard 3-11-92), died in an auto accident,
12-31-01.**

Alesa expresses her thanks:

Dinah,

Thank you for your kind note. I appreciate you remembering my son, Richard. With the love of God and family and my Compassionate Friends Group, I am doing better. I look forward to eternity with my son.

Keep up your wonderful work.

Love,

Alesa

Richard's symbol is a basketball jersey with the #5.

**Tammie Spence's son, Shannon Mason (11-18-75), completed
suicide, 1-4-01.**

Tammie shares her "sign" from Shannon:

*Today I came in from work to find your beautiful card and my little angels that you sent to me. Each year you never fail to remember Shannon and me, for this, I wish to say "Thank You." Each passing year gets somewhat easier for me but that pain will never truly heal. Just the other night as I thought of Shannon, I wondered if he would give me a sign, I wondered if I would hear the "Angel" song by Sara McGoughlin. Sure enough, the very next day I heard it on the radio. That was the song that was played at his funeral. Before his death, it was one of my favorite songs, today it **IS** my favorite. Every time I hear it, I think of my own angel. Not a day goes by that I don't think of my Shannon, first thing in the morning and the last thing before I close my eyes.*

Shannon's daughter, Brittany will turn 8 on January 26th. She turned 3 just after he died. We still get to see her and I will never let her forget him.

For all you have done, may you be blessed. You are truly an Angel yourself.

Sincerely,
Tammie Spence

Shannon's symbol is an angel.

Marcia Carson's son, Dell (12-22-69), was murdered 12-15-91.

Marcia wrote:

Hi, not much has changed for me, I tell myself that I am coping, but I only fool myself because after 14 years I'm still hoping by some miracle that my son will walk in the house and say "Mama I'm home, I was just kidding." Your work has been a sanity saver for me, even more than my church, but God is good (all the time). Thank you and keep up the work you do that gives us a sounding board to other parents who understand. Be Blessed. Dell's little girl is now 17. I would love to know how Dell would act with a 17 year old daughter. She is a blessing.

Dell's symbols are boxing gloves and rabbits.

Robert & Janet Smith's daughter, Kristi Wainscott (8-18-74), completed suicide, 10-19-05.

Dinah,

I'm sorry not to be returning messages but I have had computer/monitor problems that are hopefully fixed now. Thanks you for your concern and notes. It helps to know that others are thinking about you and have the same sorrows that you have. Robert and I attended the Compassionate Friends meeting on Dec. 21. They had a candlelight ceremony that was very pretty, but difficult. Christmas was very hard, but we spent it with family. My Dad is 92 years old and all the family gathered at his house. Donnie, Kristi's husband, spent the day with his family.

December 28th was the worst day for me. Kristi would have been married 2 years, and I remember how beautiful and happy she was that day. I still keep asking myself why and what I could have done differently for her, even though I know I will never have the answers.

Kristi was born on August 18, 1974. She was always an excellent child, never in any trouble, very self motivated. She graduated from Estill

County High and was the Valedictorian of her class. She went on to Centre College and graduated there Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa. She always wanted to be a lawyer so she went on to the University of Cincinnati Law School and graduated in 1999. She worked for what is now Frost, Brown, Todd, all through law school and accepted a position with them after graduation. She practiced for about 2 years, but was never really happy, so she returned to school at Eastern Kentucky University for a Masters degree in English. She thought she would teach, but instead went back into law practice. She was never really happy with practicing law. She worked long hours and said she was on deadlines constantly. She also wanted to start a family and felt like work would interfere with her being a good mother. On the message from the answering machine, the day she completed suicide, she said she was not happy with work, and did not feel she was doing a good job- even though she had excellent evaluations. She also said she wanted children but did not see how she could be a good mother and still continue to work.

She was her worst critic. I always thought we could talk about anything, but her depression was one thing she never confided in me. This was the greatest shock to all our family, that she was so depressed.

I'm sorry for such a long e-mail, but I wanted you to know just a little about Krisi. I miss her terribly and wish I could turn back the clock to before her death and know what I know now. Thank you for listening. I really appreciate you and Rosemary Smith.

I hope you have a good 2006, Thanks again, and keep in touch.

Janet

Kristi's symbol is a parrot.

**Tom & Sissie Levi's son, Patrick (12-6-75), died,
3-6-96.**

The Levi's have great news to share:

Hi Dinah,

You really were on my mind today and I thought I'd write and let you know that!

As a pleasant surprise, we have a new granddaughter from Guatemala. Her name is "Journee Grace." Her Mom went on a "journey" to get her and she's full of God's "Grace!"

She has filled an empty spot left by our Patrick; not to ever take his place, but a real joy!

*Pray for our daughter, Amy, as she is a single mom with a big job!
Journee!*

Take care – God be with you!

*Love,
Sissie*

Patrick's symbol is an angel carrying a star.

Frank & Dawn Glowatz's son, Tommy, was stillborn 12-27-01.

Dinah,

Words cannot express my gratitude for the wonderful note you sent us on Thomas's birthday! When it felt as though the whole world had forgotten about him, your note arrived!

I will never forget the experience that we had when we came to JIM's conference in May of 2002. I did not know that such an event existed where we could share our precious son and his memories with others! I learned so much that weekend and I am continuing to learn even more! I was pregnant at that time and went on to have a beautiful baby girl, Erin, in November of 2002. We have also added another beautiful little girl, Olivia, in July of 2004. We now have five beautiful healthy daughters and we are finished adding to our family. The thing that hurts so much is the fact others always ask if we are going to try for a boy! Most of the time we just reply, no, knowing that we already have a son that will remain in our hearts forever!!

I feel both privileged and blessed to have attended JIM's conference and to have gotten to know you. I wish in the future to see you again! Thank you for allowing both your husband and yourself to be used by God to help others who are hurting!!

I am attaching a Christmas picture of Thomas's two younger sisters. I hope it comes through and you enjoy it!!

Love, Dawn (a fellow traveler on this journey)

Tommy's symbol is a lamb.

Colleen Baber's son, Andrew (11-15-81), choked on a gummy bear, 1-1-01.

Dinah,

Thank you so much for sending me a card for Andrew's death anniversary. It has been so hard this year. I don't know if it is because five years have passed and it still seems like yesterday, or if I am just cracking up a little bit more each year. I haven't cried this much in a long time. I am getting through my school day all right, but I cry every night. That terrible longing to have my "real life" back just seems to overwhelm me. Of course added to everything else one of the boys that Andrew knew his whole life was playing with a gun and shot himself in the head the week before Christmas. That really got me. I haven't been able to help my friend Annie as much as I would like to because I a mess myself. Hopefully I will be able to pull myself together soon, so I can at least make an attempt to support her.

It is strange how I feel support coming through the air from you, a wonderful woman that I have never had the honor to meet, and then in my own church I had gorgeous flowers in the sanctuary last Sunday for the fifth anniversary of Andrew's death - and people would say something about the flowers, but not about Andrew. I just want to leave there and never go back.

Colleen Baber

Andrew's symbol is a frog.

Mitch & Patricia Bird's son, Michael Spooner (9-23-80), died from cancer, 9-17-01.

I can tell that Patricia is finding joy again in her life:

Just wanted to share with you all, Saturday, December 8th, I started drawing again. I have now drawn 6 portraits, 2 Sat, 3 Sunday and 1 today. They just started coming out... it was great!

I am just so excited to get some kind of personal normality back to my life.

It's been four to five years since actually being able to really draw... I was told it would take around 5 years, but still not up to my old standards

*Thank you Dinah,
Love, Patricia*



The three below are my two littlest and my youngest grandchild.

Kitty



Christian



Jordan



Maybe soon I will be good enough to start doing this again for a living.

<http://www.birdco.net>

<http://woundedhearts.net>

Michael's symbol is a Christian fish with a red Nike hat.

Ron & Maria Faller's son, Christopher (5-7-90), died from viral complications from piggyback heart transplants, 3-24-98.

Maria would like for you to see Christopher's Valentine Page:

I know it is early for this page, but I have such a problem with Valentine's Day because it was the last holiday that my little boy was awake and alert for to even try to celebrate, so I wanted to share this page for My Little Valentine ---

<http://www.angelfire.com/amiga/ourangelboy/valentine2.html>

Christopher's symbols are Legos, beavers and 2 hearts.



No matter how much chocolate you eat, no one will ever criticize your technique.

My new email address is: dinah@ucumberlands.edu

The website's new address is <http://www.ucumberlands.edu/lamentations/>