



M.I.S.S.ing Angels

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A Sanctuary for Bereaved Families

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Grief is Love

By Nina Bennett

After a healthy, full term pregnancy and normal labor, my precious granddaughter, without any indication whatsoever, slid still from her mother's womb. My background is medical research, so I retreated to the safety and security of what I knew. I searched relentlessly for information not only on stillbirth, but on grief, specifically the grief of grandparents. I found a great deal of information on stillbirth. I found a great deal of information on parental bereavement, but minimal resources for grandparents. I ordered books constantly-some contained a page or two on grandparents. My grief was so insignificant that it didn't even rate an entire chapter. It certainly didn't feel insignificant. I couldn't sleep, I didn't eat, and I actually hurt physically. Life continued on around me in a blur, but nobody seemed to have any concept of the depth of my pain. As a way of honoring my granddaughter, and as a cathartic reaction to my devastation, I



wrote a book on the grief journey of grandparents.

I thought that writing a book about the impact of my granddaughter's stillbirth would exorcise my grief. Once my book was completed, my

mission would be fulfilled and I could retire my title of bereaved grandmother. My manuscript was finished, edited and re-edited. I was engaged in the process of publication while resisting the temptation to rewrite and add. Naively, I believed I had nothing more to say. Until, that is, I attended a conference on social work and HIV/AIDS.

On a brilliantly sunny morning in the late spring of 2005, I sat among an attentive audience listening to a plenary talk on the universal language of art and its role in expressing the difficult and conflicting emotions surrounding death. The speaker held me captive from the

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Take Note:

- See page 18 for details on... *National Children's Memorial Day on December 11th!*
- See page 20 for details on... *5th Annual Memorial Golf Tournament!*



What we bury deep, In the grave to sleep
Wrap of earth must be, What we love
Abides above, All through eternity.

~ Rudolf Steiner

The State of California's MISSING Angels Bill: Can There be Death if there was Never Life?

I'll never forget that day. The proudest day of my life...the saddest day of my life...the day my beautiful son, Joshua Scott, was born...sleeping. So peaceful, so perfect, so beautiful...but sleeping. What is sleeping? Well, in medical terms, my son was stillborn. That's when a baby is born without his life. He was born dead. In a matter of an instant, my whole world had changed forever. A day that should have been the happiest of my life, turned out to be the worst nightmare a person could ever imagine.

While in the hospital, everything seemed to be going so fast and in so many different directions. It seemed as though there was always someone coming in my room needing or offering something — my signature on various hospital forms, questionnaires to answer, literature to read, and even decisions regarding funeral arrangements and what to do with his body. I was so overwhelmed. I mean, under the circumstances, how is a person expected to make decisions like those? I remember wondering when I would wake up from this horrible nightmare and thinking, "This was a mistake. God has made a terrible mistake. Not my son. He didn't mean to take my son." That was 4 ½ years ago, and I sometimes still wonder if I'll ever wake up.

After such a heart-wrenching experience, one would imagine release from the hospital couldn't come fast enough. For me, though, that wasn't the case. To leave that hospital meant that I was leaving behind my son. Although my son had been dead for three days already, he was still there in the hospital.

For me to leave without him was the second hardest thing I've ever had to do in my life. The first was kissing his perfect little face, feeling his wonderfully soft skin on my lips, and then handing him back to a hospital staff member, knowing that that would be the last time I would ever get to see my beautiful sleeping angel again. Knowing that that was goodbye...forever. That was the hardest thing I have ever had to do.



After being home a week or so, my mother called and asked if I'd join her for dinner. At the restaurant, I remember her quietly leaning over and reaching into the purse sitting on the floor by her feet. She pulled out an envelope, and without a word, she solemnly handed it to me. When I asked her what it was, she softly said, "Just open it." I pulled the contents out of the envelope and almost immediately my eyes filled with tears. "Certificate of Fetal Death" it read.

My mother had just handed me my son's death certificate. Trying to maintain my composure, I was silent for a moment, doing whatever I could think of to hold back my tears. Once my eyes were able to focus, however, and I began to read again, my moment was rendered useless because on the line directly below the document's title, was my son's full name. All of a sudden, it became so final, so permanent, so real. Whether God had made a mistake or not, He wasn't giving Joshua back.

I went home that evening, and with such sorrow, I pulled out a box I had made for him that contained gifts and special memorabilia friends and family had given him both at the hospital and at his funeral. It was then that I realized he hadn't yet received his birth certificate. I called my mom, but when I asked her for it, I didn't get the answer I was expecting. Although I gave birth to my son and did everything right to have a healthy baby, and although up until time of delivery there was a heartbeat, my son would not be getting a birth certificate. Why not? Well, apparently, even though I had to sign a release so that his body could be delivered to the funeral home where they helped in planning his funeral and arranged for his cremation; even though the state issued him a certificate of death that included his first, middle and last name, the date, the hour, the city and state, and facility; even though it required his father and his mother's full names, along with the same details of the day we, too, were born; even though the names and signatures of his doctor, the funeral director, the registrar, and the embalmer are included to complete this California state-issued legal document;

The State of California's MISSING Angels Bill: Can There be Death if there was Never Life? *Continued*

even though all this is on his "State Of California - Certificate Of Vital Record - County Of Contra Costa - Martinez, California - Certificate Of Fetal Death"...this great state of ours, says...and I quote, "Your son never existed." To look up my son's name in the office of the state of California's Vital Records, however, his name will be listed under "fetal deaths" for the year of 2001, last name first, then first name, then middle name. Yet, according to the state, my son never existed. How, then, can his name be on file? How can the state recognize my son's death without ever giving recognition to his life? You have to have lived to have died...

Webster defines stillborn as "dead when born". Medically speaking, stillborn is when the baby dies in the mother's womb at or any time after 20 weeks gestation, which is when the fetus is considered to be a viable life. It is at that point when the mother is required to actually give birth to her baby, dead or alive. I endured the physical pain of childbirth for almost 24 hours and when it was all over, I endured, and still am enduring, the emotional pain of being handed my dead son. Since the beginning of time, women have gone through hours of agony during childbirth, some even days, with very few breaks between painful contractions. Yet afterwards, when asked, we all say we'd do it again – it was all worth it because of the reward. I got no reward. Throughout the U.S., every year 26,000 - 39,000 more mothers like me also receive no reward. In 2001, the year my son was born, our country averaged approximately 32,000 stillbirths. Of those, 2,952 were from right here in

California. We, the mothers of these tiny angels, endure the physical pain of childbirth, the emotional pain of losing our child, and an ongoing, overwhelming feeling of inadequacy and guilt. Then, to top it off, instead of allowing us an affirmation of our child's life by granting us a certificate of birth, we are instead given a painful reminder of our loss in the form of a death certificate. We are told that our child never existed, thus



confirming our feelings of failure in life as a woman and a mother.

On June 11, 2001 at 11:45 a.m., Arizona became the first state to sign The MISSING Angels Bill into law. This legislation would allow the issuance of a "Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth". To date, there are a total of thirteen states that recognize the birth of a stillborn. Texas was the most recent, signing the bill into law on June 9, 2005. However, inconsistency doesn't

generate answers. At present, there is no standard protocol for stillborn autopsies. If they are even performed, they are done in accordance with local practice that can and do vary by jurisdiction. It is with the highest of hopes that by 2007, every state in the Union will have passed this long overdue bill, therefore enabling uniformed autopsy guidelines between states and greatly bettering our chances of understanding and preventing this silent serial killer of our precious babies from ever striking again.

To deny an infant the right to a birth certificate is to deny him/her the respect they have earned in this world by paying the ultimate price in teaching us, the survivors, a lesson on the fragility of life. To deny a parent the right to their child's birth certificate is to deny them the validity of their child's life. To deny a birth certificate to any stillborn born in America is to deny the people of this country a better chance of ending this horrific tragedy, because with the absence of birth records comes the absence of consistency in research, and so continues the tragedy.

Let's hope that California is not the last state in the country to sign The MISSING Angels Bill. Let's hope that California is not the last state in the country to acknowledge what's right...

Kelly Gehris
Proud Mother of an Angel
Joshua Scott Burkart 1-9-01

For more information on the MISSING Angels Bill, please visit our web site at www.missingangelsbill.org.

Remembering Arthur

by Andrea Ruble

This is a poem that I wrote for him 5 years prior to his death, when he was on hospice the first time. He was sick most of his life of 11 years and when he died, he was on oxygen full time and fed with a g-tube. Unable to walk or speak "English" words, he had a language all of his own. A sparkle in his eye or a smile and laughter could light up our world in a tenth of a second. We love him and miss him more than we could have ever imagined. He was the absolute best gift of my life, and I was special because of him.

*My Arthur,
You were a ray of sunshine when you came
into my life.
You added so much joy,
So much love
So much happiness.
I never knew I was capable of such love
until I knew you.
Our bond is very strong.
You will always live in my heart.*

*When I was afraid of what was ahead in
the road,
I would watch you go through your hurdles
with grace.
You never complained or made a fuss.
You were always pleasant.
Everyone was drawn to your beauty.
They knew what was behind your beautiful
Blue eyes was peace and serenity.
We could see your spirit dance there.*

*When children would point or grownups
whispered,
You never seemed bothered.
You sat peaceful as a beautiful mountain.
Without care of what the outside world
thought or felt.
You only worried when I was in distress.*

*So many trips we've taken,
So many places we've seen.
So many family members have loved you,
So many friends have adored and admired.
I have loved you the most.
I have understood your beauty,
Only God could understand it more.*

*You will be missed as only a mother misses
her baby.
Parts will always be missing.
Part of my spirit will be with you forever.
Part of yours will remain on Earth with me.
I am grateful no longer will you be
confined.
You will no longer have fevers and seizures.
No longer on medications that make you
drowsy.*

*You will be able to fly.
Your spirit will soar.
We will always have an angel to look over
us.
People in the future will not understand the
magic that you held.
We will never be able to explain and do you
justice.
It will have to be our secret - for all that have
known you.*

*Please be happy and peaceful.
As your mama, I swear I will do my best to go on.
I love you just the way you are.*

Arthur's birthday
was October 5, 1993
He flew on
December 9, 2004



Remembering Arthur - Continued

by Andrea Ruble

Hello to all of our friends and family. Today is 9 months since our precious angel left his earthly body. Nine months since we've heard him giggle or turn towards a sound with his question mark eyebrows. Nine months since I've felt the warmth of his breath on my cheek. Or his leg on my leg next to me in bed. Nine months since I've heard "AAAHHHH", or touched his baby soft skin. Nine months since Samson had to bark or growl at Arthur having a seizure. Or since Arthur had gotten kisses all over. Nine months since Arthur had Samson lay on his legs, playing with his toys.

Although people say time heals all wounds, there will never be enough time to not miss our Arthur. We will miss him forever. He gave us all so much love and life. My motto used to be "today is a good day because I have Arthur with me". I am grateful for every single day of the 11 years that he spent with me. His beautiful blue eyes were and continue to be the light in my life.

I was remembering last night that it would take me over an hour to get ready for work because I would spend so much time talking to Arthur in the mornings. There is absolutely no sound in this world better than the sound of Arthur breathing. He would "talk" so much in the mornings. That was our special time, before the world was awake. Sometimes before I would

go into his bedroom, I would lie in bed and smile listening to him talk to the angels. I hope you all take time today to remember Arthur and how he may have touched your life. I truly believe he was a gift from God sent here to teach.

Arthur never complained through all he had been through, and he loved unconditionally. He was pure sweetness and goodness and he didn't sweat the small stuff. He taught me about what was important in life and what wasn't. Love and treating our fellow man/woman/child with the dignity and respect that they deserve is the most

important thing, and everything else falls short of that. I could go on forever with all of the gifts / lessons that Arthur has taught me and given me. Someday I may write them all down. For now, I want to remember him in my heart. He has touched my life forever and maybe someday, I can use this grief in a positive way. But for now, I would just like to share it.



Arthur approximately 2 weeks before he died, and one of his last really good days. It appears he is looking up towards "the light".

I hope all of you remember to kiss and hug the people you love today. Please tell them that you love them. That's one thing I'll never regret. Every day that Arthur was alive I kissed and hugged him and told him how much I loved him. I was never quite sure he could know the magnitude of my love, but I did my best to express it to him. All I can ask for now is that he knows how much I will always love him forever.

MISSing our precious angel, Arthur.
Love to all of you.

Dear Tyler...

We simply cannot believe that on October 3rd, it will be one year since we lost you; one year since the worst day of our lives. Mommy and Daddy can't help but think about that day all of the time, Ty. We remember the pain and the heartache so vividly. Sometimes it seems like we have come a long way since that day, and other times, it doesn't.

But one thing is for sure, Ty—how you have changed our lives, little guy—just by knowing you for our short 23 weeks together. You have made us stronger, kinder and more compassionate. We never knew we could love so deeply, so completely. Our hearts simply overflow with love for you. Some may feel that we have lived without you for the last year, but the way we see it, we have lived with you, as a tremendous part of our lives.

Our sweet boy—you are the greatest son anyone could ever ask for. You bring Mommy and Daddy happiness every day—just by thinking about you, looking at your picture, cuddling your stuffed animals, and knowing you are with us always,



watching over us. You're our best little buddy!

Ty, you have helped us through the hardest year of our lives. You have given us the strength to go on living. And you have given us the most wonderful surprise—another little baby—because you so wanted us to be happy again. Taylor is a special, precious gift from you, Ty, and on that amazing day when she enters this world and we hold her,

we know we'll be holding you too. You are a part of her, and always will be. What a lucky little girl she is to have such an amazing big brother who will watch over her from heaven for all of her life!

We love you so much, best buddy, and we miss you every minute of the day. We promise you we will be the best parents to Taylor we can be. We will love her immensely, and go to the ends of the earth for her. And on that day when Jesus calls us home, we will be with you again. We'll hug, kiss and hold you for all of eternity.

In Loving Memory of Tyler Christian Brunn
Happy First Birthday in heaven!

Always and Forever Our Love, Mommy and Daddy

Losing A Child

Weeks turned into months and months into years
Each day of our lives are now filled with sad tears
Our heart is broken the pain still remains
But others can't understand and don't feel the same

They ask the simple question, how are you today?
I'm fine is the answer, what else can we say?
They don't really want to know what is deep in our hearts
Life is so empty, our family torn apart

We want others to know that it wont go away
We have a hole in our heart that is dying to say
"The loss of a child, is more than you see
I not only lost my child, but a big part of me!"

Our days are not only filled with sadness and tears
The memories of our children will last through the years
The sound of their voice and smile on their face
Is something that pain and time can't erase

God chose our child early, we may never know why
Many times we've asked as we look to the sky

Gone from our arms, but not from our hearts
Not even death will keep us apart

*Written with love by:
Doris Hooker (Angel Andrew's Mom)*



Andrew Craig Hooker 12/10/96 - 01/09/01

Our Miracle, Our Angel

<http://home.comcast.net/~cdmaa/>

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Grief is Love

By Nina Bennett

moment of one of her earliest comments, "Grief is a form of love." Yes, I wanted to call out. Exactly so. The continued grief I feel for my granddaughter's death is a testament to the enduring love I have for her. By talking openly about my grief I am also expressing my love, not only for Maddy but also for my son and daughter-in-law. Later in her talk, the speaker said, "The two most spiritual moments in life are birth and death." Spiritual moments are transformative. I have experienced the spiritual moment of birth in several forms; as a mother, as a grandmother, and as a labor attendant. Although I would much prefer that the people whose deaths I have attended were still living, I consider it an honor to have been present for the spiritual moment of death.

However, with Maddy's stillbirth the absolute high of the fulfillment of dreams at the moment of birth occurred simultaneously with the absolute low of despair. Nearly two years later I still have frequent moments of disbelief. My soul continues to cry out for answers as to how this could have happened. My family will never have the answer to this question, and I am not certain that knowing how or why would lessen my grief. I will never know Maddy's sticky little toddler hand in mine as we walk in the park. I carry her memory in my heart and instead hold hands with grief. I realize that grief will never leave entirely; some days it will remain well hidden, others it will be right on the surface. When friends ask about how the passage of time affects my experience of grief, I respond that it does indeed get easier but it never gets better. Ocean tides are predictable; times for high and low tide are published. The high tide of my grief crashes over me without warning. The waves smash into me hard and fast, but they recede more quickly and instead of leaving me stunned and incapacitated, there is gentleness in the aftermath. I have accepted that this will be a part of me forever, and this acceptance brings with it an element of peace.

The abrupt cessation of life options for my beloved granddaughter forced me to examine my own life options. As the days since my granddaughter's stillbirth stretch into years, I am learning how to incorporate my grief journey into my life journey. I will not permit the anger and pain to fester into bitterness, but instead I will continue to speak out, to write and advocate, to acknowledge and remember Maddy. I think Maddy would be proud to call me Grammy.

*Nina Bennett is an active member of AGAST, and has written a book on grandparent grief titled *Forgotten Tears: A Grandmother's Journey Through Grief*.*

In Memory of Joshua...

On September 21st, 2002, my son, Joshua Randall, was stillborn. In my efforts to increase people's awareness of child/infant death, I have placed a display of the **In Mourning Bands** and the **One Who Soars Bands** at my salon station. In doing this, I can honor my son's life by helping to educate others on the important work the MISS Foundation is doing to assist families in surviving the unimaginable pain of their child's death, and I am also helping to raise much-needed funds for the MISS Foundation.

In Loving Memory of Joshua Randall,

Kharma Lindsey
Glendale, Arizona



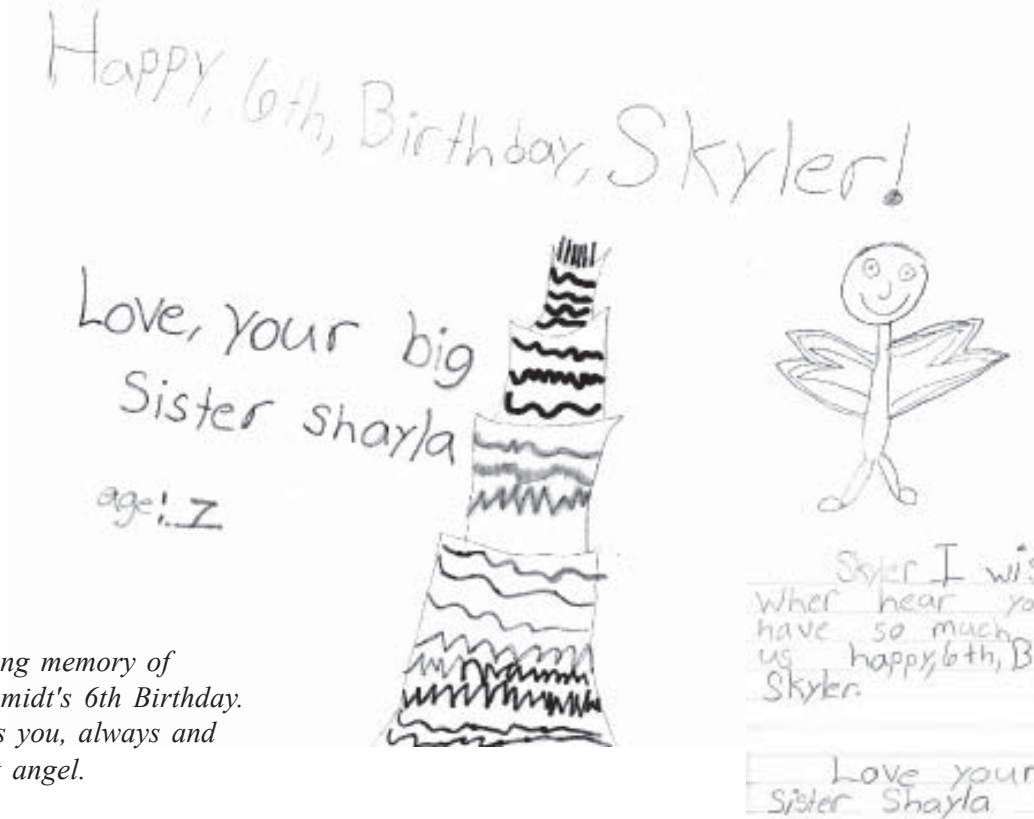
Kharma Lindsey proudly displays the MISS bands at her salon station in Glendale, AZ.



"In Mourning" and "One Who Soars" bands on display.



"The most honest, truth-telling in this world is done by children." Oliver Wendall Holmes



Submitted in loving memory of Skyler Kirby Schmidt's 6th Birthday. We love and miss you, always and forever my sweet angel.



Brian, age 12, holding & feeding Kylie.

God Saw You

God saw you getting tired,
 when cure was not to be.
 So He closed his arms around you,
 and whispered, "come to me".
 You didn't deserve what you went through,
 and so He gave you rest.
 God's garden must be beautiful,
 He only takes the best.
 And when I saw you sleeping,
 So peaceful and free from pain,
 I would not wish you back,
 To suffer that again.

Submitted in memory of Kylie Noelle Southworth by her friends Brian & Tricia Kerstan.



Tricia, age 10, holding Kylie.

Commitment

by Nancy Wood

Before we met, you and I were halves unjoined except in the dark rivers of our minds. We were each other's distant shore, the opposite wings of birds... We did not know each other then, did not know our determination to keep alive the cry of one riverbank to the other. We were apart, yet connected in our ignorance of each other... Remember?

I knew you existed long before you understood my desire to join my loneliness to yours. Our paths collided long enough for our indecision to be swallowed up by the greater needs of love. When you came to me, the sun surged toward the earth and the moon escaped the darkness to bless the union of two spirits so alike that your pain became my discomfort. In the hour when I stood naked, you were there to play the drum of life for us.

Beloved child, keeper of my heart's odd secrets, clothed in summer blossoms so the icy hand of winter never touches us, I thank your patience. Our joining is like a tree to earth, a cloud to the sky. We are the reason the world can laugh on its battlefields and rise from the ashes of its selfishness to hear me say,

In this time, this place, this way, I loved you best of all.

*adapted by Joanne Cacciatore
Submitted in memory of
Cheyenne Cacciatore
July 27, 1994*



Who You'd Be Today

by Kenny Chesney

Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
I feel you everywhere I go.
I see your smile, I see your face,
I hear you laughing in the rain.
I still can't believe you're gone.

It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
Death tore the pages all away.
God knows how I miss you,
All the hell that I've been through,
Just knowing that no one could take your place.
Sometimes I wonder... Who you'd be today.

Would you see the world? Would you chase your dreams?
....Settle down with a family,
I wonder what would you name your babies?
Some days the sky's so blue,
I feel like I can talk to you,
And I know it might sound crazy.

It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
But death tore the pages all away.
God knows how I miss you,
All the hell I've been through,
Just knowing that no one could take your place.
And sometimes I wonder... Who you'd be today.

Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
The only thing that gives me hope,
Is I know I'll see you again some day.
Some day...

*Submitted in memory of Skyley Kirby Schmidt
by family friend Tabetha Morton
October 25, 1999 to January 4, 2000*

Heartfelts & Gratitude

To the MISS Foundation from the family of Marissa Reyes:

We would like thank you all for your support, love and generosity. We will forever be grateful to our friends and family. Each day brings more acts of kindness that truly help us. Thank you for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers.

Special thank you to Jenny Giannopoulou for her generous contributions in raising funds for the MISS Foundation.

Thanks to Lupita Nandin, RN, at the Children's Rehabilitative Clinic in Phoenix. Lupita invited MISS Foundation in to present our programs to the medical staff. Helping to spread our mission in the community is of great benefit to us! Thank You!

Thank you to VaDonna Howell who has volunteered to keep the MISS Quilt project alive!



The Beauty of a Dove

by Tammy Gresham

On October 4th at 9:40AM, we will all gather around to celebrate a special day in history. While we are all holding balloons surrounded around the grave where you're shell is laid to rest, we will remember that God only takes the best. He sent you here on a mission and your mission was successfully completed. It was time for you to go

home because your soul was needed. We reversed the pain from you unto us. We learned the meaning of undying love and trust. Your life taught me the meaning of faith. I learned of a love that is worth falling to my knees and praying. As the minutes go by, I try not to cry. I continue to smile and hold my head high. Words cannot describe how I feel inside. I gave birth to a baby who was an Angel on the inside. Our bond is so strong, pure and true. Even in death, I still feel you. A Mother's love goes without saying. It's a feeling in your heart that is there right from the start. It's the greatest love that not even death can tear apart.



We look at our watch for one last time, its 9:44 and the time has arrived. I'll start the radio to play your birthday song. We each release our balloons in honor of your love. Happy 3rd Birthday Elijah Scottlee Grant!

Elijah entered this life on October 4, 2002 at 9:44AM with the beauty of a dove.

He departed this life on December 6, 2002 at 12:35AM with the beauty of a dove and the strength of a tiger.



Miss Foundation's
Sacred Hearts Logo Pendant



A beautiful gift representing the eternal love between Mother and Child. This exclusive pendant is custom made of sterling silver and hangs on your choice of a 20" or 24" chain. Now available with our without a birthstone. Orders for the Sacred Hearts Pendant can be placed on-line in our store at www.missfoundation.org. Be sure to indicate your options (i.e. birthstone month, chain size).

Pricing: Pendant w/20" chain \$60
Add birthstone add \$12
With 24" chain add \$5

MASSAGE REDUCES LEVELS OF STRESS HORMONES

A Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute and National Institute of Mental Health study concluded that body massage for pregnant women reduces levels of stress hormones in the mother, including cortisol and norepinephrine. It also increases the likelihood that the pregnancy will proceed to full term. The study focused on second trimester massage given by the pregnant women's partners. Massage



was also found to relieve normal discomforts and swelling common to pregnancy, improve sleep and ease depression; massage by the partner also contributed to a stronger bond between the parents-to-be.

~ Women's Health News, May 5, 2004.

SECONDHAND CIGARETTE SMOKE AS HARMFUL TO UNBORN CHILDREN AS INHALED SMOKE

Secondhand cigarette smoke exposure might be as harmful to an unborn child as a pregnant woman inhaling smoke directly from a cigarette, according to a study published in BMC Pediatrics on June 29, 2005.

According to the study, secondhand smoke can cause genetic mutations in the baby that can lead to leukemia and lymphoma. The study found that these mutations were the same in pregnant nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke as to those who smoked during pregnancy.

In a different study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association on March 9, 2005, it was found that babies of women who had smoked at least ten cigarettes per day were more than three times likely to have genetic abnormalities than babies of nonsmokers.

While numerous studies in the past have shown that cigarette smoking during pregnancy causes problems for developing babies such as low birth weight, for the first time there is direct evidence that exposure to cigarette smoke can cause genetic mutations.

Stephen Grant, an associate professor of environmental and occupational health at the University of Pittsburgh and the principal investigator of the study published in BMC Pediatrics, said in an interview with the Seattle Times that he hopes the study will motivate pregnant women to be more aware of the effects of secondhand smoke and encouraged smokers to be more conscientious of those around them.

MISS FOUNDATION OF ILLINOIS AND DR. PETER BARR PARTICIPATE IN CHICAGO CONFERENCE ON PERINATAL BEREAVEMENT

Dr. Peter Barr, Neonatologist and Sr. Staff Physician at Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children in Sydney, Australia and Chair of the Advisory Board for the MISS Foundation was the featured keynote speaker at The Chicago Alliance of Perinatal Bereavement 13th Annual Spotlight on Support in Chicago. The conference was held at Loyola Medical Center and co-sponsored by The MISS Foundation. Mary Geitz, Board Vice President, also presented at the conference. Nurses, social workers, chaplains and physicians from many Chicago-area hospitals attended the conference.

In his presentation, Dr. Barr emphasized the importance of "being present" with bereaved families and encouraged open dialogue between staff and parents to help them face the myriad of decisions that need to be made when a baby dies. Dr. Barr's award-winning 1985 documentary, "Some Babies Die" was shown at the beginning of the conference and provided insight into the extraordinary level of care that can be attained in the hospital setting when you walk the journey with the parents rather than simply following checklists and protocols.

In the afternoon session, Mary Geitz presented information on current clinical research on stillbirth and discussed some of the problems in collecting accurate data for research purposes. Dr. Barr's afternoon presentation focused on outcomes of various studies in psychosocial research including findings from his thesis, "Guilt, Shame and Grief: An Empirical Study of Perinatal Bereavement".

Janet George, a facilitator for The MISS Foundation of Illinois, also attended the conference and said, "Hearing Peter Barr speak really challenged me to think in new ways about supporting bereaved parents, especially in the hospital setting. Peter challenged everyone to move the focus away from protocols and checklists and on to being "in the moment" with each family by fostering a genuine compassionate relationship with each parent. His approach brings dignity back to both the bereaved parents and the child, something that often gets lost in clinical settings".

The MISS Foundation wishes to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Barr for participating in this conference, for the compassionate care he provides when a child dies, and for sharing his profound wisdom with the healthcare workers who take care of these families.



Remembering our September & October Birthdays...

September

Abbey Leigh Pawelkiewicz
 Adam Christopher Williamson
 Aidan Javier Balderas Briones
 Alec Ellison
 Alexander Kendall
 Alyssa Michelle Brown
 Andre John Kelly
 Angel Starre Crowkiller
 Ariel Jessica Tello
 Ariel Madden-Victoria Buchanan
 Ashley Karin Marie Allen
 Ashlyn Rebekkah Brooks
 Austin Earick
 Azaria Daniels
 Azucena Lydia Angel Padilla
 Baby Boy Lopez
 Bernice Celis
 Blake Cash
 Brandon David Lane-Mullenax
 Brian Edward Benton
 Brycen Randolph
 Carmen Andrea Cruz
 Carmen Jimenez
 Carol Michelle Mickelson
 Chadwick File
 Charlee Branch
 Charles "Nicky" Hall
 Cody Robert Windmiller
 Cody William Charles
 Corinna Martin
 Courtney Lynn Beisner
 Damiana Sabori
 Daniel Mark Schnitzer
 David Lawrence Baker
 Dianna Buckner
 Edgar Vargas-Hernandez
 Emily Amanda Dickerson
 Emily Ann Nolan
 Emily Caitlin Jared
 Emmanuel Ruiz
 Erika Xiona Fajardo Ledesma
 Faith Gregory
 Fallon Nicol Rhodes
 Gavin Horn
 Haley Marie Evans
 Ian Walter
 Iban Barrera
 Isaiah Anderson
 Isaiah Ben-Micah Ruttenberg

Jackson Paul Kelly
 Jacob Guerrero
 Jakob Bradley Detwiler
 Jase Allen Ambrose
 Jason Michael Collins
 Jessica Lee Soros
 Jessica Lynn Wilhelm
 John Edmund Sarna, Jr.
 John Noah Humphrey
 John Thomas Haney
 Joseph McAdoo Jones
 Joseph Robert Finnell-Glover
 Joshua Randall Robbins
 Kailey Rose Williamson
 Kamryn Marie Schiller
 Kazman Gajdecki
 Kierrar Nyborg
 Kyla Jean Potter
 Laura Autumn Bolton
 Logan Lillian Jepson
 Lyle Heinonen
 Macayla Johnne' Morris
 Malena Gallardo
 Marcos Daniel Martinez
 Matthew Dodge
 Matthew James Mowen
 Matthew Lester
 Morgan Gray Moss
 Nathan Keeler Harrington
 Nathan Travis Cunningham
 Nicholas David Dorsey
 Paul William Rao
 Payton King
 Rachel Elizabeth Hilburn
 Rebecca Marie Davi
 Regina Marie Munoz
 Richard Morgan
 Roberto Alfredo "Junie" Burke
 Ryan Spencer Dugan
 Sabrina Bahe
 Samantha Jo Shull
 Samuel Andrew Tajc
 Samuel Mendoza
 Samuel Plessset Tomlinson
 Sarah Elizabeth Reynolds
 Selina Burgueno
 Shane Austin Neicamp
 Stephanie Rangel
 Steven Bolton, Jr.
 Sweet Pea Jones
 Tatiana Rose Swanborn
 Tevita Siasau
 Tommy Byrnes

Treasure Isabella Escobar
 Trevor Allen Duckworth
 Veronica Burk
 Westin Letter
 William Cash Bagley
 William Cass

October

Aidan Christopher Golis
 Alejandro Ferrales
 Alex Robles Entz
 Alexis Marie Echols
 Alyssa Maria Victoria
 Andrew Moss
 Angel Wolfe
 Angelica Louise Ciddio
 Ariana Lee Rendon
 Arthur Alexander Ruble
 Bethany Hookom
 Brandon Alvarez
 Brandon Lee Fayer
 Brian Jilk
 Brianna Clark
 Brianna Oakleigh DeCarlo
 Cameron Riley Serna
 Cardon Johansson
 Cecelia Olson
 Cheyenne Autumn
 Christina Elizabeth Harley Llanes
 Christina Marie Aloi
 Christine Holland
 Citlalli Bejarano
 Cole Scott Embs
 Collette Chang
 Daniel Christopher Wolfe
 Daniel Rangel
 David Christopher Hryszko
 Derek Joseph Sundwall
 Diana Campos
 Dylan Wright
 Elijah Scottlee Grant
 Elizabeth Hall
 Emily Elizabeth Szidik
 Esmeralda Espinoza
 Fiona Elizabeth Skinner
 Gabriel Avant
 Genevieve Elizabeth Pond-Pope
 Gina D'Addieco
 Harley Jacobson
 Hayden Jacobson
 Henry Hall
 Jacob Johnson

Jacori Cobi Staten
 Jamie Pierce
 Jaxton Thomas Millar
 Jennica Mariah Jespersen
 Jennifer Marie Gonzalez
 Jerry Garland Millar
 Joey Elizabeth Messina
 Jose Garcia
 Joshua Robert Garza
 Julia Marie Cheney
 Julie Renee Sanchez
 Kailyn Ashley Noyes
 Kayla Anne Giles
 Kaylee Honey Dry
 Kevin Daniel Parker
 Kolton Siebert
 Levonte Malik
 Lili Claire Resnick
 Lily Rowan Ogburn
 Linda Sue Higgins
 Lisa Lee Billington
 Lola Serephina Sanchez
 Mackenzie Marie Ball
 Matthew Esau Rivas
 Matthew Joseph Pond-Pope
 McKaden Patrick Fowler
 McKenzie Nicolletta Brattlien
 Megan Lee Wondra
 Melanie Lopez
 Michael Martel
 Michelle Flowers
 Mikey Warschauer
 Moriah Lynne Sharp
 Nicholas Mosca
 Preston David Kluttz
 Quintasha Leesha Trotter
 Rebecca Christen (Becca)
 Ryan Parsa Yousefzadeh
 Shelby Zalanka
 Skyler Kirby Schmidt
 Steven Paul Figueira
 Sucele Jimenez-Perez
 Susan "Susie" Lynn White
 Timothy Dakota Hollon
 Trevor Hicks
 Trey Brayden Roper
 Tristan Andrew Castellanos
 Ty Iwamasa Matsushima
 Tyler Brunn
 Yapheth Ingram
 Zachary Taylor Jones
 Zoe Rayn Barrett