There is a peculiar passage of scripture found in the book of Joel that says, “I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten” (2:25). There are a couple of years of my life that I do feel I allowed locusts (Satan) to eat. The first couple of years following the stillbirth of my baby, Jonathan, were filled with immense sorrow - so much sorrow that I had a hard time focusing on the good things that I did have, such as my preschool-aged son, Byron, Jr., and my wonderful loving family.

For example, Byron, Jr. was a talented soccer player at age 4, and he scored many goals for his little team. Yes, I cheered like crazy when he made a good play, but I was assaulted to silence as the reminder that I would never see Jonathan score a goal crossed my mind. I then found myself too choked up to focus in on the next several minutes of the game. I had to make myself block Jonathan out of my mind and concentrate on where I was and why I was there. Certainly, no one knew of my mental battles.

I am one of six children in my family, and the only one with only one living child. The rest of my siblings had all the kids they wanted. Not one of my four sisters was told she could not have any more children, and none of them had endured losses. When our kids were young and regularly played together, it used to grip my heart that mine was the only one without a sibling. I could not relate to dealing with sibling rivalry in the home or balancing schedules to get all the kids where they needed to be. It sounds trivial to me now, and I know I should have just been grateful for the one I did have, but as a young grieving mom, it hurt and sometimes I felt left out of their motherhood sagas. Again, none of my siblings knew my inner turmoil.

Two years ago, Byron, Jr. graduated from high school and went away to college. Though my husband, Byron, and I were very happy and excited for our son’s new phase of life, it was very difficult for me to be empty nesting when technically, we shouldn’t have been - we still should have had kids at home. When Byron, Jr. first left, I had to remind myself to be grateful we had a son who was enjoying his new venture in life, instead of feeling sorry for myself that I was now home alone a lot more during the day, and our house seemed so empty.

Let me clarify that my life has been richly blessed and full since Jonathan died 17 years ago, but there are events and seasons that cause me to struggle at times. I had to make a decision in 1995 that I was either going to be miserable the rest of my life, or I was going to seek the Lord and ask Him what I could do with my experience of losing Jonathan. Could my sorrow be used by Him for something good? And yes, I have most assuredly seen the good, but often I had to work hard to see it. I spent plenty of hours in bed wallowing in my sorrow the first several months after Jonathan’s stillbirth, but eventually I had to decide this was not how I was going to spend the rest of my life. I did not want to be sad forever. I did not want to feel sorry for myself forever, and I definitely did not want to miss out on the life of my living son. I had to learn to balance being a mom to a living child and a dead child. I discovered I could sweetly remember Jonathan without dwelling on the circumstances of his death. In other words, I learned to separate my feelings of loving him from the hard circumstantial memories of losing him.

We as bereaved parents have all experienced a very tragic and traumatic event in our lives - some of us more than once. However, it is up to us to decide how we are going to spend the rest of our lives. As the old clichés go: are we going to become bitter or better? Are we going to go through grief or grow through grief? I earnestly pray you will choose to become better and to grow. Do not allow the enemy to steal good years of your life by continuing to drown in misery. After a season of intense grieving has passed, will yourself to rise up, take on the day, and thank God for what you do have.

♥ Rebekah Mitchell, M.E.N.D President/Founder
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell

Nota Español: El artículo de Rebekah Mitchell aparece en cada emisión de nuestro boletín para la audiencia latina. Para ver el artículo de este mes en español, por favor vea la página número 12.
The Heart of the Leader

Becky Anderson

My name is Becky Anderson, and I am the director of the M.E.N.D.—Amarillo chapter. On January 31, 2008, my husband and I were headed in for a routine ultrasound to find out if our then 3½-year-old daughter and 1½-year-old son were going to have another brother or sister. After we were called back to the exam room, the sweet sonographer prepped me for the sonogram. As soon as she put the wand on my tummy, we could see our precious child. In my mind, though, I quickly realized I did not see a heartbeat. She continued to scan and take measurements, then stopped and gently told us that our baby had passed away. Immediately we were sent to see my doctor and began the journey we never thought we would travel. I was induced three days later, and we buried our baby that following Wednesday. There is no way to explain the feeling of losing a child, but I will say I could feel God’s amazing arms wrapped around me. He carried me each day!

About a year after the loss of our third child, my heart desired to find a support system for infant loss. A dear friend came to me with the information on M.E.N.D. and encouraged me to check into it. I researched and prayed for God’s guidance on what to do. We applied to open a chapter in Amarillo and were approved. From such a tragic event, we have had so many blessings. We hope the Lord uses us to help other families heal during such a tragic time.

♥ Becky Anderson,
Mommy to Malen Huck
M.E.N.D.—Amarillo

Book Reviews

Baby, Baby, Where Did You Go

By Julie Ann Smith

Inspired by the loss of her grandbaby, author and publisher Julie Ann Smith created a beautifully written and illustrated book of a mother “looking” for her baby. The baby replies to his mother that he is safe in heaven, where he will someday see her again. This small book is for adults as well as children who have been affected by the loss of a baby. There is a surprise remembrance gift attached to the inside back cover for the reader that you won’t want to miss!

Baby, Baby, Where Did You Go can be ordered by emailing babybabywheredidyougo@yahoo.com.

♥ Reviewed by Rebekah Mitchell, M.E.N.D. President/Founder
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell

M.E.N.D. has a complete list of books, websites, organizations and music resources available online at www.mend.org.

If you would like to submit a review of books, music, Web sites or other resources dealing with infant loss, please email them to our newsletter editor, Jennifer Harrison, at jennifer@mend.org.
Choosing Friendship

I had pretty well finished grieving for my daughter Katie Beth, or so I thought. It has been five years since being pregnant with our twins, Ellie and Katie Beth (our 6th and 7th children). We delivered them at 29 weeks and then lost Katie only 27 hours later. It was a hard transition, going from thinking you are having twins to not even being sure if one would make it. Ellie spent three months in the NICU, but then, praise the Lord, made a full recovery.

We were also very thankful to be blessed with another daughter, Sarah, only 18 months after losing Katie. It was almost as if in a small way God was filling the void of our not getting to truly experience twins. Now Sarah and Ellie are two peas in a pod who share a room, clothes and many laughs! Having Sarah truly did help bring healing, and we felt very blessed.

I had a real fascination with twins, though. It was still painful to see twins and wonder what it would be like to have our Katie looking exactly like Ellie (they were identical). If I saw twins, it always brought me to that quiet, sad place of reflection, but it was under control. Then the rug was pulled out from under me. My good friend was quite surprised to find out at the age of 43 that she was pregnant with twins! Now, this was up close and personal - not just a lady at the grocery store pushing twins in her cart, but a dear friend whom I interact with on a weekly basis. Oh, how much more it hurt! Yes, I was happy for her, but why was she going to get twins and didn’t?

Finding out about her being pregnant with twins was hard. Watching her respond to other people’s comments was hard. Watching her belly grow was hard. Being a hostess for her twin girls’ baby shower was hard. Watching her open cute matching outfits was hard. Seeing two babies in her hospital room was hard. The most difficult was seeing two babies come home with her. That meant they were here to stay, a constant reminder that she had twins, and I didn’t. Why, Lord, did this have to happen right when I was doing okay with the grief thing? It snuck up on me and took me for a loop. I had some good cries throughout all of this and really tried to get over it, the whole time not wanting her to know I was struggling and not wanting to take any of her joy away. Finally, the second time I came to see her at home, as I was holding one of the girls, I told her how hard it had been on me throughout her pregnancy and the girls’ birth. I think she had known all along.

I am sad to say that almost three months have gone by, and I haven’t been able to go back. We’ve talked a couple of times, and I saw her once at church for the twins’ big debut on Easter Sunday. I’m scared of how I will react when I am at her house; the tears still flow so easily. Watching someone so close to me get to experience the joy of twins has been more painful than I ever dreamed, but I know I must find a way to go on, and I have to say that I miss my friend. I don’t want to lose her friendship just because I couldn’t handle her having twins. I will pray to God for the strength to continue my friendship with her as well as for these painful feelings to subside. I have been blessed with so much and will choose to focus on that. God is good, and He is faithful to help me get through this, yet again. I don’t want to let my grief steal the blessing of a precious friendship that I so desperately need and desire.

♥ Meredith Skrabanek, Mommy to Katie Beth

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:13
Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} Birthday, Lydia!

Sweet Lydia, every day we miss you, precious daughter. We find comfort that you are in the arms of God, and we will see you again one day. We have been telling your little brother all about his very special sister in heaven.

Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} birthday, Lydia! We will be honoring you here on earth as you celebrate with our Father in heaven.

With all the love in our hearts,
Momma, Daddy and Little Brother Isaiah

Lydia Grace Curtis
August 1, 2010
Unknown cause
Parents: Drew and Rachel Curtis
Little Brother: Isaiah Drew

Happy 5\textsuperscript{th} Birthday, Marchant and Carlea!

After all this time, we still mourn you daily, not just on special days or anniversaries. You are truly and deeply missed! Take care of one another until we one day meet again!

All our love!
Daddy, Mommy and your little sister

Marchant Pienaar
July 8 - 9, 2007
Carlea Pienaar
July 8 - 10, 2007
Premature
Parents: Willie and Annerie Pienaar
Little Sister: Dianca

Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} Birthday, Trinity!

A rose was planted and it grew and grew, and then, one day the rose stopped growing. We were very sad because we knew we would never see the rose bloom. Trinity MarLynn, you are our rose that never bloomed here on earth, but in our hearts, Trinity, we know you bloomed in heaven, so on August 10, 2012, have a very Happy second birthday, our little Mona Lisa. We love you today, tomorrow, next month, next year and next lifetime.

Trinity MarLynn King
Stillborn August 10, 2010
Unknown cause
Parents: Marlin and Lavonda King
Little Brother: Marlin II

Happy 6\textsuperscript{th} Birthday, Micah!

We think of you every day and wish you were here to celebrate your special day. We love you!

Hugs and kisses,
Momma, Daddy and your sisters

Micah Joel Fibiger
August 29 - 30, 2006
Trisomy 18
Parents: Brian and Mary Fibiger
Sisters: Ainsley and Aubrey

Happy 1\textsuperscript{st} Birthday, Camdyn!

To our little angel that we will meet another time...

Camdyn Joy Kircher
July 18, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Brent and Laura Kircher
Siblings: Matthew and Aidyn

Happy 1\textsuperscript{st} Birthday, Braden!

Our Baby Boy Braden, I cannot believe that you are turning 1 year old already! To think that this time last year we were bringing you home for the first time and getting to experience the greatest joy in our life. It’s not fair, and we will never know why you were taken from us only six short weeks later, but those six weeks were the happiest times in our life. We miss your smiling face, your adorable cry and even the diaper changes, but we know that you are in the best place possible right now watching over us. We feel so lucky knowing our baby angel is always keeping an eye out for us, and whenever we think we can’t take one more step, you are the extra push that always helps us through. We love you, Braden, more than you will ever know. You have changed us in so many ways and showed us how precious life really is. It hurts knowing we won’t get to spend your birthday with you, but we know you will have the best first birthday you could ever have in heaven. We miss you more than words can explain, and you will always be with us, wherever we go.

With all of our love,
Mommy and Daddy

Braden Alexander Martinez
June 26 - August 8, 2011
Infection
Parent: Kyle Martinez and Missy Babyar
Happy 5th Birthday, Twynki!

Our dearest Twynki, we cannot believe you are 5! Has it been that long since we’ve seen you? Not a day goes by that we do not think about the ways you have blessed us, even though we feel like failures because you are not here. How our hearts ache because we want you here. How we want to be a mommy and daddy, but you are not here. Thanks to you, though, we are complete. Thanks to you, we are a family and proud parents to an angel. You made it possible, even though you are not here.

Love you always,
Your mommy and daddy

PS: Your pets wish you a gnarly birthday with the surprise of six soon-to-be-bird eggs!

Emily Urbina
August 3, 2007
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Alberto Urbina and Lydia Rodriguez
Your Pets: The Teenage Mutant Ninja Clan and your parakeets Rito and Algodon

Happy 2nd Birthday, Elliana!

Can’t wait to meet you in heaven! I love you so much!

Elliana Grace Kundomal
Miscarried July 2010
Mommy: Kali Kundomal

Happy 7th Birthday, Ryland!

You are never forgotten.
Until we see you again,
Daddy, Mommy, Sissy and Conor

Ryland Michael Dixon
Stillborn August 12, 2005
Parents: Bryan and Kelly Dixon
Siblings: Leighanne and Conor

Happy 1st Birthday, Aubree Faith!

Happy 1st birthday to our beautiful Aubree Faith. Not a day goes by that we don’t wish you were here. You are always in our thoughts and forever in our hearts. We can’t wait for the day that the Lord calls us home so we can spend eternity with you. On this day we celebrate your precious spirit and all the joy you brought to our lives. We love you to heaven and back!

Love,
Mommy and Daddy

Aubree Faith Carmichall
August 18, 2011
Uterine rupture
Parents: Jeremy and Kelly Carmichall
Siblings: Ryan and Breean

Happy 12th Birthday, Colten!

We love you and miss you so much. You are always in our hearts, little one.

Love,
Daddy, Mommy and Logan,
plus all the rest of your loving family!

Colten Benjamin Ballmer
Stillborn May 28, 2000
Umbilical Cord Stenosis-Congenital
Parents: Jamieson and Regan Ballmer
Little brother: Logan

Happy 1st Birthday, Caitlyn!

We miss you more than words can say!

Caitlyn Behne Alcuri
May 7, 2011
Cord accident
Parents: Joe and Michelle Alcuri
Brother: Andrew

Happy 5th Birthday, Gabby!

What a big girl you are now! We love you very much and think about you all the time. We set up your garden at our new house and it looks amazing - all for you! Daddy wrote a special poem just for you:

Time has passed and never the day goes by,
That you’re not in my dreams and heart.
I shall always remember the way it feels,
Not being able to hold you in my arms.
But the day will come when dreams are gone,
And the wind I feel as your face is seen.
My pain and sorrows gone away forever,
As I touch your precious skin for the first time.

We love you Gabby!
Daddy, Mama, Kylie, Adayna and Aj

Gabriella Grace Garcia
Miscarried July 3, 2007
Also remembering:
Abby Garcia
Miscarried June 17, 2011
Parents: Adam and Alex Garcia
Siblings: Kylie, Adayna and Aj

Happy 4th Birthday, Caleb!

We miss you each and every day!

Caleb Yancey
July 18, 2008
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Michael and Melynda Yancey
Siblings: David, Katie and Micah
Happy 4th Birthday, CJ!
Happy 3rd Birthday, Marina!

You came into our lives for such a short time, but your impact on our lives is everlasting. We still think of you every day and miss you so much. Your big sister wishes you were here to play with. We love you both and are glad you have each other in heaven.

CJ Gold
Miscarried August 13, 2008
Marina Gold
Miscarried July 14, 2009
Parents: Greg and Kathryn Gold
Sister: Emily

Happy 8th Birthday, August!

Sweet Baby August, I can’t believe it’s been eight years since we saw your little heart beat, and then quickly learned it wouldn’t beat for long. We miss you and your big brother, Caleb, very much. We love you both and know our family won’t be complete until we meet in heaven some day.

Happy 8th heavenly birthday!
Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Maddie

Baby August Fann
Miscarried August 13, 2004
Also remembering
Caleb Scott Fann
December 1, 2003
PROM
Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann
Sister: Madison Grace

Happy 8th Birthday, Noah!

My dearest Noah, it’s hard to believe that it has been eight years since I held you in my arms. I miss you so much. Not a day goes by that I don’t think of you! I know that you are having the most glorious eighth birthday in heaven!

Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday, my dearest Noah,
Happy birthday to you!

You will never be forgotten,
for you have been imprinted in our hearts forever!

Noah Adam Barron
July 5 - 19, 2004
Hypo-Plastic Lung Syndrome
Parents: Clem and Lupe Barron
Siblings: AJ, Damien, Naomi and Nicholas

Happy 1st Birthday, Jordan!

We dream of heaven because it is where you are. What must it be like in a place
So perfect and peaceful, so full of love and grace?
We know heaven is where you are.
Heaven is always close when we believe,
but heaven can feel so very far when we grieve.
We know in our hearts Heaven is where you are.

You are our most precious gift, our beautiful baby girl.
We love and miss you every minute, every day, and we know you are watching over us. We know you get to spend time with Jesus because in heaven, is where you are.

Jordan Anne Haney
May 23, 2011
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Joe and Julie Haney

Happy 1st Birthday, Jordan!

Not a day goes by we don’t think about you, sweet angel. You are loved and missed dearly. I know you are having a wonderful angel birthday in heaven. We love you, Jordan, and we will see you soon.

Love,
Mommy and Daddy

I know I’ll see the sun shine bright
upon my baby’s face....
When I finally get to heaven,
all my pain will be erased.

We’ll soar the skies together,
as angels two by two.
We’ll have a sweet reunion,
this mother’s dream come true!
~Unknown

Jordan Taylor Fugitt
Miscarried July 2011
Also remembering
Riley Peyton Fugitt
Miscarried November 2011
Parents: Justin and Barbie Fugitt

Happy 12th Birthday, Andrew!

In loving memory of my precious son, Andrew, you are gone, but never forgotten. Happy 12th birthday in heaven. We love you!

Andrew Solorio
Stillborn May 20, 2000
Unknown cause
Mommy: Jennifer Solorio
Siblings: Eric, Sarah and Timothy
Happy 1st Birthday, Natalia!
Our pride and joy!
Our sweet baby girl!
Hugs and kisses sent your way.

Natalia Canales
May 14, 2011
Ruptured membranes
Parents: Jose and Perla Canales

Happy 6th Birthday, Livi!
Livi, we can’t believe this is your sixth heavenly birthday! Around the different holidays when there are such pretty little dresses at the store we think, what would you wear? Oh, how Mommy wishes to dress you up, and Daddy wishes to hold you on his knee. God chose a different route for us, and we are waiting for the day when we will be able to be together in His kingdom, and you can show us around.

We love you, baby girl!
Mommy, Daddy, Jaylynn and Jaxson

Alivia Elizabeth-Grace Walker
July 24, 2006
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Robert and Liz Walker
Siblings: Jaxson and Jaylynn

Happy 2nd Birthday, Londyn!
Londyn, Mommy and Daddy want to wish you a happy second birthday! We miss you so much and talk about you every day to your sister. We were so happy we got to spend a short couple of hours with you. You are always with us, and we can’t wait to hold you again. A lifetime is only a small period when are get to spend an eternity together as a family. We love you and miss you. You will always be our angel.

We love you always,
Mommy, Daddy and Ashtyn

Londyn Isabelle Schmitter
August 24, 2010
Unknown cause
Parents: Aric and Amber Schmitter
Baby Sister: Ashtyn Isabelle

Happy 1st Birthday, Jocelyn!
My sweet little girl, I can’t believe that it’s been a year already since I saw your sweet, perfect little face and held your tiny little body in my hand. It’s been a long journey without you here, but I know you are watching over us. You blessed us with your little brother, who just so happens to be due on your first birthday. To me, that was no coincidence, especially when you came to me in my dream before we found out I was expecting. You will always be my little girl, my special little angel watching over me day by day. You will forever live in my heart. Happy first birthday, Jocelyn! I love you and miss you so much!

Jocelyn Rose Lahr
July 29, 2011
Fetal demise at 18 weeks, 5 days
Also remembering
Baby Bartsch I
Miscarried February 2009 at 6 weeks,
Baby Bartsch II
Miscarried January 2010 at 6 weeks
Parents: Eric and Lisa Lahr
Siblings: Presley Farber and Levi Lahr (due July 29, 2012)

Happy 2nd Birthday, Casey Dean!
Casey Dean, another year has gone by! We cannot believe it! You would be 2 years old now and running all over the house. We want you to know we miss you and think of you every day! We hope you have a wonderful birthday in heaven with your sister Rachel and all the other angels in the Lord’s gardens. Until we see each other again, we love you today and always.

Mommy, Daddy, Jacob and Riley

Casey Dean Boche
August 7, 2010
Incompetent cervix
Also remembering
Rachel Ann Boche
October 29, 2009
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Shirley Starr and Gary Boche
Siblings: Jacob and Riley Boche

Happy 8th Birthday, Jordyn!
We love you and miss you so much. We thank God for the time we were able to spend with you.
You are forever in our hearts,
Mommy, Daddy, Jada and Bruce Jr.

Jordyn Lynae Johnson
Cord problems
July 13 - 16, 2004
Parents: Bruce and Debra Johnson
Siblings: Jada and Bruce Jr.

Even though a flower may not bloom,
In our hearts we still know
The wonder of it's blossom.
So it is with this tiny someone.
Happy 4th Birthday, Daniel!

It has been four years since our hearts were forever shattered with the words “He didn’t make it.” You are forever in our hearts and on our minds. While each day brings healing, we know that we will never again be complete. We love and miss you so much, baby boy. Happy fourth birthday, Daniel. Until we see you again, we are sending tons of love, hugs and kisses to heaven.

xoxoxoxoxoxoxo

Daniel Nicholas Woodard
August 31, 2008
Complications due to premature birth
Parents: Joe and Danette Woodard
Siblings: Kristina Vice and
David, Douglas and Nicole Woodard

Happy 2nd Birthday, Henry and Sam!

Our sweet Henry and sweet Sam, happy second birthday! We can’t believe it has been two years since the day you were born. We miss you so much and think of you all the time. We see both of you through your baby brother’s smiles, and we know he has two very special guardian angels in heaven. How wonderful it would be to give you the biggest hugs! We know that one day we will give you those hugs and celebrate all of the special days we weren’t together. We love you so much!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Jack

Henry Franklin Forrest
July 24 - 25, 2010
Samuel Michael Forrest
July 24 - August 8, 2010
Preterm labor - unknown cause
Parents: Peter and Julie Forrest
Brother: Jack

Happy 2nd Birthday, Christian!

Sweet baby boy, we miss you more than words can say. Your brief earthly life had eternal significance, and many blessings have revealed themselves over the past two years. We wish you were here for your “terrific two’s” but God had other plans. We are grateful to Jesus for dying on the cross so we can spend eternity with you! We miss you and look forward to holding you again!

Love always,
Mommy, Daddy and big brother Michael

Christian Graham Wells
July 11, 2010
Blood clot
Parents: Glen and Mitzi Wells
Big Brother: Michael

Happy 1st Birthday, Nolan!

Empty hearts
Broken souls
Saddened eyes
Spirits cold

Precious hands
Tiny feet
the sweetest boy
to ever meet

There’s a place
In all our hearts
For you my love
From the start

Here you lay
Safe in a dream
Though you’re at peace
My soul screams

Looking up
Sadness ruling
You send the signs
Not too fooling

Rainbows sketched
Across the sky
Reminding us all
It’s not goodbye.

~Aunt T
(Tisha Crewse)

Nolan, you are always in our minds and in our hearts. There isn’t a day or minute that goes by that we don’t think of you! It is so hard to believe that you are already turning 1. We would have never thought that we wouldn’t get to spend your 1st birthday with you, but know we will be looking up and celebrating it with you! We often sit and talk about how you would be if you were with us here today. We cannot wait until that day comes where we can be with you forever and be able to hold you in our arms again! Words cannot describe how badly we miss you, but we couldn’t have asked for a better guardian angel! Mommy and Daddy love you, little man! XOXO

Love and miss you always,
Mommy, Daddy and family

Nolan Rylee Dame
August 9, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Matt Dame and Britney Crewse
**Happy 1st Birthday, Baby Chesnut A!**

Our little angel, we love and miss you so much. Though we never saw your sweet face, you will always be in our hearts.

*Baby Chesnut A*
Miscarried June 13, 2011
*Heart stopped beating*
*Also remembering*
Michael Dean Chesnut
January 7, 2010
Placental abruption,
Mayson James and Mark Anthony Chesnut
August 18, 2010
*Infection,*
*Baby Chesnut B*
Miscarried December 8, 2012
*Early miscarriage due to clotting*
*Parents: James and Brittany Chesnut*

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**Happy 1st Birthday, Averie!**

To our sweet baby Averie, we can’t believe it has been a whole year since you were born. You were taken away to heaven nine days later. At least we got nine days with you here on earth. We will never forget them and will always cherish them. There is not a day that passes that we don’t think of you, miss you, or wish you were here with us. We think of all the milestones and steps you would be taking. You would be walking now and chasing your big sister around. We know that Jesus is taking good care of you, along with your grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family. Nothing gives us more joy than knowing that we will be with you again one day. We love you very much, baby girl! There is no one who could ever take your place in our hearts.

An angel in the Book of Life wrote down baby Averie’s birth. Then whispered as she closed the book, “too beautiful for earth.”
~Anonymous

*Happy birthday, baby Averie!

We love you and miss you very much.

With all the love in our hearts,
Mommy, Daddy and Kynlee*

*Averie Jane Fant*
*July 20, 2011*
*Complications from Arteriovenous Malformation of Vein of Galen*
*Parents: Kevin and Nicole Fant*
*Sibling: Kynlee*

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**Happy 1st Birthday, Murdock!**

In Memory of Murdock McCoy Schmier

I never got to hold your hand,  
Or see your little feet play in the sand.  
I never got to see you smile,  
Or hold you close just for a little while.  
I never got to see you giggle,  
Lay on the floor and watch you wiggle.  
I never will understand why,  
You were taken so young, so I sit here and cry.  
I never will forget you dear,  
You’re in my heart, so have no fear.  
I never will let you go,  
I love you more than you’ll ever know.

written by John Miller

*Murdock McCoy Schmier*
Stillborn May 31, 2011
*Unknown cause*
*Parents: Jaime Schmier and April Miller*
*Siblings: Jozelynn and Joseph Miller*

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**Happy 2nd Birthday, Emmie!**

You would be running and talking now. I can only imagine all the trouble you would be getting into with your sisters. I often wonder if your hair would be the same honey color and if you would have blue eyes like McKinley or brown like Maddie. Mommy and Daddy miss you every day. Please keep your heavenly siblings close to you and watch over your new baby brother—he is almost here!

*Emmaline Ila Legg*
*July 29, 2010*
*Full term placental abruption*
*Also remembering*
*Baby Legg*
*Miscarried 1999, Baby Legg Miscarried 2009, Baby Boy Legg Miscarried 2011*
*Parents: Jimmy and Ami Legg*
*Siblings: McKinley, Madeline and Maxton (due August 2012)*

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**Happy 2nd Birthday, Jason!**

You’re 2 years old today! We’re always thinking of you and miss you so much. Happy birthday! We love you.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and your little brother Trevor

*Jason Michael Murphy*
*July 29, 2010*
*Unknown cause*
*Parents: Michael and Diana Murphy*
*Little brother: Trevor*
Happy 2nd Birthday, Luke!

My beautiful Luke, my heart aches daily because you are not here with us. Every day I think of you and miss you a lot, but I understand that you are doing great things next to our Creator. I still do not fully understand God’s plan. I wonder why He chose you to fulfill your purpose here on earth in just 23 weeks and two days, but I know God is perfect and in control.

I struggle to imagine what you would be doing and the things you would be saying at the age of two. If I had one wish, it would be to see your precious face one more time.

Luke, I want you to know that you have completely changed my life, and as a result, I am a stronger person. I cherish all the memories I have of you, and I can’t wait to meet you in heaven one day, along with Hope and Faith.

Happy second heavenly birthday, my little man!!

Love always,
Mommy

Luke Noe Johnson
July 26, 2010
Pre-term labor
Also remembering
Hope Johnson
Miscarried October 30, 2009,
Faith Johnson
Miscarried September 2, 2011
Parents: James and Merle Johnson
Siblings: Emma Grace

Happy 2nd Birthday, Caelan!

Our sweet, sweet Caelan, we wish you a happy second heavenly birthday. You are dearly missed, and we remember you every day. We will honor you by speaking of the hope we have of a future in heaven together every time we share of the love we have for you.

We love you with all our hearts,
Mom and Dad

Happy 1st Birthday, Wyatt!

Mommy and Daddy miss you so very much! We are so proud of you and think of you every day, wishing that you were here with us. We find comfort knowing that the Lord is holding you and that we will hold you once again. I bet you’re a beautiful angel. We are planning a special day here on your birthday to celebrate you. Please know, little one, that you are deeply loved, greatly missed and will never be forgotten.

Love forever,
Mommy and Daddy

Wyatt Lane Vowell
July 25 - 31, 2011
Infection in the NICU
Parents: Lancer and Lavane Vowell
Siblings: Nik and Nataly

Happy 1st Birthday, Brand and Colt!

Dear Brand and Colt, happy first heavenly birthday to my Little Butterball and my Little Sweet Pea! There is not a day that goes by I don’t think of you both, my precious twin angels. I am so thankful I have you two boys in my life and in my heart. I praise God for my sons who made me a mother and who have changed my life forever. Although one year has passed since I held you both in my hands, I don’t view it as a year of loss (because you are always with me) but as one year closer to the day I will be with you both again in heaven!

Mommy and Daddy love you, Brand and Colt, with our whole hearts and miss you more than words can say.

Always in our hearts,
Mommy and Daddy

“I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.” - Psalm 27:13-14

Brand and Colt Whigham
August 4, 2011
Umbilical cords knotted together
Parents: Chris and Beverlyann Whigham

Happy 15th Birthday, Erika!

You are so loved, missed and remembered daily.

Your Family

Erika B. Grau
July 9 - August 3, 1997
Anoxic brain injury due to ruptured uterus
Parents: Ray and Yvette Grau
Siblings: Nik and Nataly
Happy 6\textsuperscript{th} Birthday, Theo!

As the seasons change and the years march on, our love for you remains and does not diminish. On this, your sixth heavenly birthday, you are still on our minds and always in our hearts.

Bisous,
Mommy, Daddy, little sister Ysabel and the Family

\textit{Theo Fleurima Shannon}
\textit{August 10, 2006}
\textit{Neonatal stroke}
\textit{Parents: Ted and Geraldie Shannon}
\textit{Little Sister: Ysabel}

Happy 9\textsuperscript{th} Birthday, Abby!

We love you and miss you.

\textit{Abigail Grace Crump}
\textit{July 1, 2003}
\textit{Trisomy 18}
\textit{Parents: Gerald and Jaimie Crump}
\textit{Siblings: Cami and Karli}

Happy 1\textsuperscript{st} Birthday, Desi!

To my sweet Desi - I cannot believe it has already been one year since we had to say goodbye. I miss you every single day and cannot wait until I can hold you again. You will always be my sweet baby girl and will always have a special place in my heart. I love you so very much!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Davin

\textit{Desi Elise Rodgers}
\textit{August 2, 2011}
\textit{Umbilical cord accident}
\textit{Parents: Derrick and Meagan Rodgers}
\textit{Siblings: Davin}

Happy 1\textsuperscript{st} Birthday, Eli and MeiLi!

Both of you continue to cross our minds daily as we imagine what you would be doing with your big brother, Maximus. We will forever tell him about you guys. Daddy and Mommy miss and love you dearly. We look forward to the day we meet again.

\textit{Eli Payton}
\textit{July 25, 2011}
\textit{MeiLi Payton}
\textit{July 28, 2011}
\textit{Unknown cause}
\textit{Parents: Ryan and Ashley Payton}
\textit{Sibling: Maximus}

Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} Birthday, Alethia Joy!

It’s hard to believe it’s been three years since we held you in our arms and said goodbye. We miss you so much and wonder every day what our lives would be like with our beautiful 3-year-old daughter running around the house. I know you and your little sister, Hannah Beth, would have so much fun together, and we wish so much that the two of you could grow up together. When we ask her where her big sister, Alethia, is, she points up to heaven. We thank the Lord Jesus for the hope that we will see you again one day and the peace and comfort in knowing that He is holding you in His arms.

With all of our love,
Daddy, Mommy, Hannah Beth and Anthony Jr.

\textit{Alethia Joy Myers}
\textit{Stillborn February 3, 2009 at 39 weeks}
\textit{Unknown cause}
\textit{Parents: Tony and Charity Myers}
\textit{Siblings: Hannah Beth and Anthony, Jr.}

Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} Birthday, Mayson and Mark!

I love you so much. The day we will meet will be beautiful. I miss all my babies very much.

- Mommy

\textit{Mayson James and Mark Anthony Chesnut}
\textit{August 18, 2010}
\textit{Infection}
\textit{Also remembering}
\textit{Micheal Dean Chesnut}
\textit{January 7, 2010}
\textit{Placental abruption,}
\textit{Baby Chesnut A}
\textit{Miscarried June 13, 2011}
\textit{Heart stopped beating,}
\textit{Baby Chesnut B}
\textit{Miscarried December 8, 2012}
\textit{Early miscarriage due to clotting}
\textit{Parents: James and Brittany Chesnut}

Happy 2\textsuperscript{nd} Birthday, Madison!

Happy second birthday in heaven, baby girl. We can’t believe it’s been that long ago! Not a day goes by that we don’t think of you and miss you! You are such a blessing to us, and we are so thankful you blessed us with your baby sister. She reminds us so much of you, and we would have loved to have had this experience with you and watching you be a big sister. Instead, we will feel you in our hearts being a big sister to Merritt until we are all together. Love you forever and always!

\textit{Madison Rose Balliette}
\textit{Stillborn July 14, 2010}
\textit{Parents: Michael and Megan Balliette}
\textit{Sister: Merritt Rae}
When our daughter Lily was born at 11 weeks, we spent a little extra money on her memorial celebration, believing it would be the only “party” we would have for her. But as her first birthday approached, I began to consider having a party anyway. My definition of “birth” had definitely changed in the last year, so why not my definition of “birthday party” as well? Planning a party gave me a project to work on and a reason to look forward to an otherwise sad day. If it was not Lily’s birthday and the day we celebrate her, then it was just the day she died and the day we mourn her.

Once I decided on a theme, I got busy making invitations, planning special food and party favors, and even a couple of games to play. Of course there were times when I wondered why I was doing all of this and worried what others would think, but I knew if I did not do something special I would regret it.

Instead of gifts, we thought guests could bring age-appropriate gifts to be donated to a charity. Though birthday parties in subsequent years might be different, I knew this year it would be emotionally difficult to receive diapers and sweet little clothes and toys, so we decided to ask for money to purchase books for our M.E.N.D. lending library. An avid reader, I greatly benefited from this resource and wanted to add to it.

Our 5-year-old son, Isaac, told me he was not sure what he wanted to get Lily for her birthday. He was considering a baby doll or a doll stroller. He knew Lily could not play with it, so we decided to donate her gift to the local crisis nursery for lots of little girls to enjoy. I called ahead, and they assured me they would be happy to accept our donation.

The day on the calendar finally read March 2. After a quiet morning, my son and I went to the crisis nursery to deliver the baby doll and stroller. We took a picture of us with Lily’s gift to keep as a memento. For lunch, we picked up food from the restaurant we associate with Lily. It was the one place that tasted great when I was pregnant with her.

With friends and family joining us to celebrate, the party was a great time. It was like any other first birthday party, except that when we sang “Happy Birthday” there was no birthday girl to blow out the candle. It was bittersweet, to say the least. With the money we received, we were able to purchase quite a few books for the lending library, which we donated in Lily’s honor. As our guests left, we gave each one a lily bulb and asked them to send us a picture when it bloomed.

Lily’s 1st birthday was a day marked with grief and joy. How deeply we wanted to be celebrating with her, but even still we had a reason to celebrate.

♥ written by Kathleen Moore, Mommy to Lily Joy

Isaac Moore outside of Isabel’s House.

Vive tu Vida! No dejes que el dolor te robe tu bendición

Hay un pasaje peculiar en las escrituras encontradas en el libro de Joel que dicen: “Yo les compensare a ustedes los años que perdieron a causa de la plaga de la langosta” (2:25). Hay un par de años de mi vida que siento que permití que las langostas (Satán) se los comieran. Los primeros años después de la muerte fetal de mi bebé, Jonathan, se llenaron de inmensa tristeza - tanta tristeza que tenía mucha dificultad en concentrarme en las cosas buenas que sí tenía, como mi hijo pre-escolar, Byron Jr. y mi maravillosa amada familia.

Por ejemplo, Byron Jr. fue un talentoso futbolista a la edad de 4 años y logró muchos goles para su equipo. Sí, ovacione como loca cuando hacía una buena jugada, pero luego me invadía el silencio en el momento que atravesaba por mi mente que yo nunca vería a Jonathan meter un gol. Me encontraba demasiada ahogada para poder concentrarme en los próximos minutos del juego. Tuve que bloquearme, para sacar a Jonathan de mi mente y concentrarme en donde estaba y el porqué estaba allí. Ciertamente, nadie sabía de mis batallas mentales.

Yo soy una de seis hijos en mi familia y la única con un único hijo vivo. El resto de mis hermanos y hermanas tuvieron todos los hijos que deseaban. A ninguna de mis cuatro hermanas se les dijo que no podrían tener más hijos, y yo soy la única de ellos que ha sufrido pérdidas. Cuando nuestros hijos eran pequeños y jugaban juntos regularmente, solía desgarrarse mi corazón al ver que el
Mama, I remember the beating of your heart.
I feel your love around me, even though we are apart.
I remember when you sang to me in a voice so sweet,
I would fall asleep and dream of the day that we would meet.
I remember when you laughed when I would kick around,
And when my Daddy talked, I really loved the sound,
I remember when he’d give me kisses and whisper of his love,
And even now I hear it in the heavens far above.
I remember feeling safe and knowing you were mine,
Dreaming of your smile and how your love would shine.
I grew and grew inside of you, filling every space,
Happy and content to stay in this cozy place.
But then one night a voice did say, “Come with Me, my little one.”
I told Him how you needed me, that our life had just begun.
His voice was soft and tender as He said it wasn’t time,
I moved a little to let you know that you would always be mine,
He told me that you knew my love and in time we’d be together,
That this life is short and when we’d meet you could hold on to me forever,
As my spirit lifted, I saw my Daddy sleeping,
I cuddled him on the cheek and asked the voice for his safe keeping.
I cuddled close, for just a second, onto his warm chest,
The beating of his heart was perfect, the safest place for rest.
And then I turned and I saw you, my sweet mama’s face,
I knew I couldn’t leave you here in this lonely place.
I told the voice you needed me, again He softly spoke,
“You’re always with her dearest one, and in her heart she’ll know.”
I kissed you on the cheeks and stroked your soft dark hair,
Placed my hand above your heart, whispering, “I am there.”
And then the voice took me, shooting fast beyond the stars,
Promising that you and Daddy would be safe in each others arms.
I wish I didn’t have to go, but know that I am safe,
Waiting for the day that we can be in the same place.
Till then don’t cry because I’m gone, be happy I was there,
That you and Daddy made me, someone that you can share.

written by Andrea Gimlin
Mommy to Gabriel

Some miracles arrive so tiny that we cannot feel the weight of them,
and yet we are still changed, and we are blessed, none the less...
~Anonymous
**M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates**

**Houston**

M.E.N.D.—Houston is anxiously awaiting our seventh annual Walk to Remember, which will take place on October 6 at a new venue, Bammel Road Church of Christ. We are excited to have our ceremony outdoors again and are blessed that Bammel has let us use their beautiful facility. If you are in the Houston area (or in another part of Texas drivable to Houston) and would like to receive an invitation to our Walk, please email your physical address to jaimie@mend.org.

*Jaimie Crump*

**Texarkana**

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana recently celebrated our sixth year this June. We continue to grow and minister to families throughout the Texarkana area through email, phone calls and monthly meetings. We have also had a growing number of families become more involved and offer encouragement via Facebook.

*Monica Davis*

**Tulsa**

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa continues to grow with new grieving families. Additionally, we are in the process of preparing for our fundraiser letter campaign. We hope God continues to bless this ministry with a successful campaign.

*Lisa Daily*

**SW Missouri**

M.E.N.D.—Southwest Missouri is learning some tough lessons about God’s will. After the excitement of a potential memorial garden for our members, we have prayerfully and sadly come to the realization that THIS garden may not be right at this time. We are simply too small of a chapter for a project this big—one that is more than three times our annual operating budget. However, not all was in vain as we have formed a great relationship with local gardeners, and, when the funds are available, we will have the resources in place to pursue OUR garden. We were also introduced to a great place in our community to have our balloon release and will look to secure another spot at the Nathaniel-Close Memorial Gardens for our October event. Thank you for your prayers on all these matters as we continue to strive to serve our members well and be good stewards of our resources.

*Heather Fann*

**NW Washington**

M.E.N.D.—NW Washington continues to thrive. We enjoyed our second Ladies’ Day Out when a group gathered at The Dancing Brush and made ceramic mementoes in honor of their angel babies. There is a family barbeque planned on August 4. We recently established a spin-off Facebook page entitled “Somewhere Over The Rainbow” for those who are subsequently pregnant or trying to conceive.

*Susan Crow*

**Bryan/College Station**

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station had a great time at our BUNCO bash! Thank you to VIP Bridal for hosting our event. We are also looking forward to our Christmas Ceremony in December.

*Jennie Drude*
M.E.N.D. — Hot Springs
Hot Springs has been so blessed with the support of our local hospital, National Park Medical Center, in our start-up year and would like to thank them for that support. We are continuing to reach out to our families and are looking forward to see what God will do in our second year as a chapter.

Amy Humphries

M.E.N.D. — Wichita Falls
Wichita Falls held our second general meeting last month, and our Facebook page is up and running! We are continuing to spread the word about our new M.E.N.D. chapter and we are looking forward to the months ahead.

Sarah Fukasawa

M.E.N.D. — Amarillo
Amarillo is gearing up for our 2nd annual Bunco for Babies fundraiser in September. Join us on Facebook or contact Becky at becky@mend.org to get more details. We just celebrated our second anniversary as a M.E.N.D. chapter. God has truly blessed us here in the Texas panhandle.

Becky Anderson

Looking Ahead

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — Houston</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — Dallas</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
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<td>M.E.N.D. — SW Missouri</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — Hot Springs</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
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<tr>
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<td>December 1</td>
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Christmas Candlelight Ceremonies

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — SW Missouri</td>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — Bryan/College Station</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.E.N.D. — SW Missouri</td>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room 1910 Malvern Avenue Hot Springs, AR Director: Susan Crow <a href="mailto:Susan@mend.org">Susan@mend.org</a>, (360) 516-8617</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please contact your chapter for more details on the events.

M.E.N.D. — Support Group Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Daddies group meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

A time for dads to meet together and discuss topics relevant to them as fathers. Our moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion.

Food and Fellowship are held the 4th Thursday of every month at 8:00 p.m. at the Corner Bakery in Southlake Town Center

A time to relax and meet with other M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting.

Contact Brittney Fish: brittney@mend.org

Subsequent pregnancy group meets the 4th Tuesday from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Led by Liz Walker: liz@mend.org

For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

MENDING Mommies
Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Marilyn Brown: Marilyn@mend.org

MENDING Mommies is a group of M.E.N.D. moms (and grandmothers) who create and sew tiny gowns, caps, and blankets that are donated to area hospitals for new heavenly babies.

Parenting After Loss Playgroup
Meets monthly at various locations in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex.

Contact Magen Kaye: Magen@mend.org or call (214) 435-3870

Infertility group meets the 3rd Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Cheryl Davis for meeting location and information at Cheryl@mend.org

For families experiencing infertility after a loss.

Mommies AND daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. meetings.

Unless otherwise noted, all support group meetings are held at:
Wells Fargo Bank 800 W. Airport Freeway Irving, TX 75062

(Located in the Crystals Pizza parking lot, between MacArthur and O’Connor) Meetings will be in the bank board room, located on the first floor. For more information, call (972) 506-9000.)
In Loving Memory

Caitlyn Behne Alcuri
May 7, 2011
Cord accident
Given by Mommy Michelle Alcuri

Malen Anderson
February 4, 2008
Possible heart attack
Given by parents Wes and Becky Anderson

Emma Bailey
April 23, 2008
Incompetent cervix

Brooklyn, Jillian and Sydney Bailey
January 1 and January 2, 2010
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Chad and Melissa Bailey

Jackson Dean Cochran
April 24 - May 19, 2004
Premature
Given by parents Stacey and DeAnna Cochran
and sibling Christian

Abigail Grace Crump
July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Brooke Sophia Daily
Stillborn March 11, 2010
Vasa Previa
Gifts given by parents Jeremy and Lisa Daily
and big sister Sarah
and Patrick O‘Reilly

Riley and Parker Davis
November 14, 2006
Prematurity
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis
and little sister Annalise

Lyle Donald Dagget
Stillborn September 18, 2002
Unknown cause
Given by parents Brad and Lisa Dagget

Carson Lewis Humphrys
March 23, 2009
Trisomy 9
Parents: Amy and J.I. Humphrys
Big sister: Sarah Jessica
Gifts given by Kellie Glisson
Grandparents Joe and Donna Yancey
Uncle and Aunt Jeff and Kris Newcomb
Un cousins Travis and Sara Biggs
and cousin Avery Jo McDonald

Olivia Grace Hunt
February 8 - 9, 2000
Possibly LQTS
Given by parents Richard and Stacy Hunt
and siblings Mason, Cameron and Addison

Baby Ilgenfritz
Miscarried August 30, 2007

Henry Ian Ilgenfritz
May 30, 2000
Cord accident
Given by parents Jody and Rhonda Ilgenfritz
and siblings Kate and Benjamin

Ross Donoho Kennedy, III
Stillborn October 29, 2000
Cord accident
Given by parents Ross and Nicole Kennedy

Sarah Ann King
Stillborn June 22, 1995
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Richard and Barb Forrest

Amanda Morgan Gallegger
January 7, 1997
Given by parents Diane and Steve Gallegger
and siblings Sydney and Jack

Erika Brianne Grau
July 9 - August 3, 1997
Anoxic brain injury due to VBAC
Given by parents Yvette and Ray Grau
and siblings Nikryan and Nataly

Jordan Ashley Heffley
July 5, 1999
Trisomy 13
Given by parents John and Jan Heffley

Samuel Mark Hintz
Stillborn October 29, 2008
Parents: Gregory and Sara Hintz
Siblings: Louis, Caleb, Anna, Elijah,
Hope and Levi
Given by grandparents
Gary and Beverly Hintz

Baby Malone I
Miscarried December 2003

Baby Malone II
Miscarried May 2004
Parents: Robbie and Heather Malone
Siblings: Kaid and Brie
Given by Phyllis McClemore

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend, or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue our mission by providing this newsletter and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. Please refer to page 2 of this newsletter for more information regarding where to send your donations and what information to include.

Thank you so much!
Life threw me for a loop on July 24, 2006, when we lost our daughter, Alivia. Our make-shift perfect world was completely shattered. Alivia brought a journey of grief that was hard to swallow and kept rearing its little head. I was asking God day-in and day-out why I was chosen to have this as part of my life, why He didn’t choose someone else who was stronger. “I am weak and cannot do this grief thing,” I told myself. Actually, I was telling God, “I know You made me fearfully and wonderfully, but I have a flaw in me that can’t take this. You have made a mistake and I want out.”

I thought, “I will sleep this life away and wake up to my new life with my baby girl in my arms.” When that didn’t work, I decided to take medication so I didn’t feel the pain. That did not work, either. Everything I tried to make the pain go away caused the grief to seep back in and grab hold of me again. It would not let go, so I created a new me and made it through about a year and half. Around the summer of 2008, our prayers had been answered with the birth of our subsequent baby, Jaxson, and life was good on the outside, but the new me I had created was crumbling. Grief again, when I was supposed to be happy!

The person I had created was not who God created. We are fearfully and wonderfully made by God, and He is the only one that can change our mourning into gladness. Until I realized who He really was to me, my blessings were being stolen. Blessings in my life—my husband, my son, my job, my body, my mind and my Livi—all being stolen from me. I asked God what could I do to get my blessings back, and all I heard was “Serve me! Serve me, and I will give you all those blessings and many more and some peace to go with it.” At that time in my life I was only looking at my situation, no one else’s, but then I realized I am still standing because God gave me the strength to stand, and I need to help others to “get back up again.”

It started with taking over the M.E.N.D subsequent pregnancy group in 2008, and then a journey I have been on since the fall of 2010: school. I am pursuing a degree in counseling, a degree which will focus mostly on grief, because that is the way God has shown me how I can help people “get back up again” for the remainder of my days. God never said life would be easy, but He chose weak ones like us to fulfill His purposes. Relax in His presence and trust in His strength. Live for life, not grief, because we are only here for a season.

♥ Liz Walker, M.E.N.D — Dallas Subsequent Pregnancy Group Director Mommy to Alivia Elizabeth-Grace


Geoff and Rachel Tidman of Fort Worth, Texas, along with big brother Caleb, joyfully announce the arrival of Kyle Eugene, born April 17, 2012, measuring 7 lb., 11 oz., and 19.75 inches long. The Tidmans lovingly remember Connor Eugene, stillborn April 21, 2010, unknown cause.


Jennifer and Todd Dickerson of Dallas, Texas, joyfully announce the arrival of Jackson Chase, born May 1, 2012, measuring 7 lb., 10 oz., and 20.5 inches long. The Dickersons lovingly remember Ava Elaine, October 22 - December 7, 2010, congenital diaphragmatic hernia.


Justin and Ashlea Schroeder of College Station, TX, along with big brother Jacob, joyfully announce the arrival of Ella Rylee, born October 14, 2010, measuring 6 lb., 6 oz., and 18 inches long. The Schroeders lovingly remember Wyatt Paul, October 14, 2010, Placental abruption.
mio era el único sin un hermano. No podía entender el tratar la rivalidad entre hermanos en el hogar, ni el tratar de balancear horas de varios hijos en múltiples actividades. Suena trivial ahora y sé que debo estar agradecida por el único hijo que tengo, pero como una mamá joven condolida, esto me lastimaba. Una vez más, ninguno de ellos sabía de mi confusión interna.

Hace dos años, Byron Jr. se graduó de la escuela secundaria y se fue a la Universidad. Aunque mi esposo, Byron y yo estábamos muy contentos y emocionados por la nueva etapa de la vida de nuestro hijo, se me hacía muy difícil estar con la casa vacía cuando técnicamente, no debería de ser así, ya que aún deberíamos de tener hijos en casa. Cuando se fue por primera vez, tuve que recordarme de estar agradecida de que tenía un hijo que estaba disfrutando de su nueva aventura en la vida, en lugar de sentirme triste por mí misma, ya que ahora estaba sola en mi casa más tiempo durante el día y nuestro hogar parecía tan vacío.

Permitanme aclarar que mi vida ha sido ricamente bendecida y completa desde que Jonathan murió hace 17 años, pero hay eventos y temporadas que me hacen luchar a veces. Tuve que tomar una decisión en 1995… que iba a ser miserable el resto de mi vida o que iba a buscar al Señor para preguntarle qué puedo hacer con mi experiencia de perder Jonathan. ¿Podría mi tristeza ser usada por él para algo bueno? Y sí, tuve que asegurarme viendo lo bueno, pero tuve que hacerlo realidad. Pasé muchas horas en la cama revolcándome en mi tristeza los primeros meses después de la muerte de Jonathan, pero eventualmente tuve que decidir que esto no era cómo iba a pasar el resto de mi vida. No quería estar triste para siempre. No quería sentir lástima de mí misma para siempre, y definitivamente, no quería perderme la oportunidad de disfrutar de la vida de mi único hijo. Tuve que aprender a equilibrar ser mamá de un niño vivo y de un niño muerto. Descubrí que podía recordar dulcemente a Jonathan, sin detenerme en las circunstancias de su muerte. En otras palabras, he aprendido a separar mis sentimientos de amarlo, sin asociar los duros recuerdos circunstanciales de perderlo.

Como madres desconoladas hemos experimentado un evento muy trágico y traumático en nuestras vidas - algunos de nosotros más de una vez. Sin embargo, nos corresponde a nosotros decidir cómo vamos a pasar el resto de nuestras vidas tras la muerte de nuestros hijos. ¿Cómo dice el viejo cliché: vamos a ser amargados o mejores? ¿Vamos a ir a través del dolor, o crecer atraves del dolor? Sinceramente rezo para que elijas en crecer y convertirte en una mejor persona. No permitas que el enemigo robe los buenos años de tu vida por seguir ahogándote en la miseria. Después de haber pasado una intensa temporada de luto, ten deseo de levantarte, toma el día y dale gracias a Dios por lo que sí tienes o posees.

♥ Rebekah Mitchell, Presidente y Fundadora
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y Mitchell bebé Mitchell

Happy 15th Birthday, Erika B. Grau!
July 9 – August 3, 1997

Fifteen years ago, there was a myriad of emotions that surrounded Erika’s birth to life and birth to eternal life. Joy, laughter, pain, sorrow, sadness and hope are just a few of the many emotions involved. Today, many of these same emotions still remain, but in such a different way, if that makes any sense. The journey I’ve traveled since Erika left has brought so very much to me in so many aspects of my life. I am a firm believer that, eventually, everything goes in full circle, and sometimes more than once. This circle of life, this circle of love, this circle of daily living—I identify with all of these through my journey of life. A journey that has been intricately paved and weaved specifically for me by my Creator, my Father, my God. A journey that I would not have inflicted upon myself but a journey that I have accepted from my Father because in the midst of these emotions, I know He lovingly and intimately is the author of my life.

Throughout my journey I’ve felt so blessed that God made me the mother of three amazing children, although I only have two to hold here on earth. Mothering is by far the highest calling in my life as an adult. Honoring my mother is by far my highest calling in life as a daughter even though she has been called home to be with the Lord and Erika. This, albeit out of the expected order, is a circle of life.

There is a tall, stand-up lamp in my room, the very same lamp that was in Erika’s room while she was home with us. It was turned on the very first night we brought her home on a “Do Not Resuscitate” order. Other than when the bulb has blown, it has never been voluntarily turned off since that first time it was turned on. It has remained dimly on for fifteen years. I just recently decided it was time. Not quite the time to turn it off just yet, but it was time to transition to a much smaller table-top night lamp which will continue to remain dimly lit. This transition of the lamp light, although meaningless to most, is a symbol of a just another thing I do that contributes to the circle of love for her.

Nik will be a senior in high school; Nataly will be an eighth grader. Erika would have been getting ready to start the tenth grade. I celebrate the milestones of my living children as well as some milestones not materialized for Erika. For the times my heart does not feel like celebrating, my hearts mourns the milestones not materialized for Erika. But it’s okay. My journey continues. Adjustments are made and new challenges are met each and every day. Always, I do the best that I can do with all God’s blessings and in all circumstances, I am thankful. “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for me in Christ Jesus’”’1 Thessalonians 5:18. This verse is my pillar to my circle of daily living.

♥ Yvette Grau, M.E.N.D. — Advisory Board and Spanish Translator
Mommy to Erika B
“... that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

M.E.N.D. Fundraisers

As a non-profit organization, M.E.N.D. is funded solely by private donations and fundraisers. Any assistance you can give us by participating in any or all of these fundraisers is greatly appreciated.

- **Kroger grocery stores** donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers in Texas and Louisiana who have their Kroger Plus Card linked to M.E.N.D. To link your card, contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Kroger Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D.

- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.

- **Glenn Martin** is looking for M.E.N.D. families willing to grant space for small gumball machines in order to raise funds for M.E.N.D. If you have a retail business or connections to a high traffic location in the Grapevine, Southlake, or metroplex area, Glenn will place, stock, and service the equipment and give M.E.N.D. 35 percent of the proceeds. Glenn can be contacted at (817) 874-5366 or glmartin@attg.net.

- **M.E.N.D.** can now earn funds through i.think inc., an online marketing research firm. You can help by signing up as a survey panel member and designating us as the recipient of your fee. Just go to the Web site at http://www.ithink-inc.com and choose “Sign up to become an i.think inc. panel member.” Fill out the sign-up survey. Under the “Funds for Charity” section, select M.E.N.D. from the list of names.

- **IBM employees** may now make charitable donations to M.E.N.D. through automatic payroll deductions. Choose Charity Code 0M562 from the IBM Employee/Retiree Approved Charity List.

- **GoodSearch.com** is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Powered by Yahoo!, it is used like any other search engine. To earn money for M.E.N.D. using Goodsearch.com, go to www.goodsearch.com and designate M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice.

- **Ebay** has a charitable giving program that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you sell items on Ebay and would like to designate a percentage of your revenue to M.E.N.D., visit www.missionfish.org to find out how.

- **Igive.com** will donate a penny a search and a portion of each purchase made through their website to M.E.N.D. Sign up today! M.E.N.D.’s cause number is 52025.