“Thanks for Making Me a Mom!”

During my early years of motherhood, I developed a tradition with my husband on Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. On Mother’s Day, Byron took over most of the parental duties in caring for our little son, Byron, Jr., and on Father’s Day, I reciprocated. I viewed those Sundays as well-deserved days off.

On my first Mother’s Day as a grieving mom, nearly one year had passed since the stillbirth of my baby, Jonathan. That particular year, it wasn’t that I wanted a day off; I pretty much required one just to cope with the overwhelming sadness of not having both of my sons with me. By the next year, my perspective of Mother’s Day had changed. I decided I did not want or need a day off that day. Instead, I found that I deeply desired to do everything for and with my young son. I needed to actively be a mom that day. I further started a new tradition that when he tells me, “Happy Mother’s Day,” I reply with, “Thanks for making me a mom.” And I truly mean that. I came incredibly close to losing him when he was born, Jonathan was stillborn, and our third child was miscarried. If it weren’t for Byron, Jr., I would not have the joy and privilege of having a child on earth to raise.

I feel I view and observe Mother’s Day with different eyes than moms who have never experienced a loss or have never suffered with fertility issues. So many women, in my opinion, feel they are entitled to great honor and allegiance, instead of being thankful and grateful that they get to be a mom. Many women take the beautiful gift of motherhood for granted, and admittedly, I’m sure I did, too, before I lost Jonathan. The death of Jonathan taught me to cherish every day, every event, and every milestone we get to experience with our now 20-year-old son, who is a sophomore in college. We never missed a ball game, never missed a band performance, we continue to take advantage of every opportunity to be a part of his life in any capacity, and we still make big to-dos over his birthdays. We realized years ago that we only get one shot at raising a child, and we want to make sure we do it with no regrets.

So really, every day is Mother’s Day for me. I am immeasurably grateful for my three children. Although two of them were born into their heavenly home, I remain their mother and am thankful beyond words that they each made me a mom!

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

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New Online Magazine: Still Standing

Several Houston area M.E.N.D. members participated in a photo shoot over Easter weekend to help launch the new online magazine. Our mission is to reach anyone and everyone who has experienced the loss of a child, or is struggling with infertility. Our goal is to inspire healing, in spite of loss and infertility and to share the voices of women through articles on how to deal with all the life situations that happen after losing a baby- including topics like helping children through grief, taking care of your own body, going back to work after loss and so much more. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Guest Post - please follow the Facebook page for submissions and opening
- Blog Link Up on sharing your place in grief each month
- Submit posts of your own to be featured in the “Featured Blogs” section

To sign up for the newsletter: http://eepurl.com/kpmZn
Website: http://stillstandingmag.com Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/StillStandingMAG

Nota Española: 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 pagina numero 19.
Book Reviews

Grieve Like a Man:
Finding God's Strength as You Walk Through Your Loss
By Jonathan Fann

This insightful book talks about grief in ways that we don’t normally think about: loss of career, loss of dreams, loss of marriage. It was a real eye-opener to me in how to help the men I love deal with the people and things in their lives they’ve lost. If you are a man or have a man in your life whom you care about, this book can help. It will speak to you like a friend over a cup of coffee, using stories about real men who have suffered real loss to explain pain that seems unexplainable. And then it gives advice—good advice for men and for women. The stories are the author's own first-hand accounts of the losses he suffered that brought him to the brink of despair. However, at that pivotal moment, he chose to use his suffering to help others. This book isn’t a pity-party or an excuse for men’s behavior when grieving. It’s a roadmap to walk that road of grief as a man or with the men in your life. Trust me when I say that you will see yourself or someone you love in the pages of this book, and you will be glad to have the roadmap when you do.

Jonathan Fann is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. He serves as a chaplain in the United States Army Reserve and has previously worked as a chaplain and hospice chaplain. Jonathan and his wife, Heather, are the parents of two children, now both in heaven, and a daughter Madison. Heather is the chapter director for M.E.N.D. – Southwest Missouri.

Reviewed by Sara Elliott
M.E.N.D. Newsletter Volunteer

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.

Reader's Corner

Just wanted to say how blessed I was in particular by this month’s newsletter! Jaimie, your story of Abigail Grace was so sweet and touched my heart. What a testimony that you and Gerald carried her to term without hesitation or a second thought! Reading about her life was a blessing to me! Praise God for her life and death! Also, so encouraged by the adoption articles in this month’s newsletter, in particular Brandy’s article. Wow! What a testimony to God’s sovereign plan. What a beautiful story. I would love to email her if you could send me her email address. The Lord has blessed us with five children since Michelle’s death (our firstborn). Adoption has always been near to my heart, and I am often praying if this might be God’s will for our family at some point.

Anyhow, thanks, ladies, again for the encouraging articles. Thanks for all you do to help hurting moms. This August will be 10 years since Michelle died. In some ways it seems like a world away, yet at the same time if I sit still for a minute and relive those days with her in the ICU, the pain and loss is still fresh. Strange how grief is!

Blessings,
Marie
In 2008, when I was 19 years old, I got pregnant. I was so scared, but excited. I couldn't help but sit there and imagine holding that precious baby. On the day of my first ultrasound I went to the doctor, but he couldn't find a heartbeat and told me that I would miscarry that baby. He was right, and I was devastated.

I prayed each day that God would send me the baby that I yearned for. Two years later I got pregnant again. I just couldn't believe that it was true, and I was so nervous up until my first ultrasound. When I went to the doctor that day, and I heard my baby's heartbeat. I can't even express the happiness and joy that filled my heart. I saw the picture of the baby, and I just knew everything was going to be alright. I carried that baby for 21 weeks, until September 28, 2010, when I went into premature labor. I delivered a baby boy, my son, Hunter John Campbell, 15 ounces and 11 inches long, who passed away, Yet again, I was devastated.

As I held that sweet baby boy in my arms, looking at his perfect face I could not imagine a child to be more perfect. But to not have him here with me, I did not know how I would ever make it. I found myself asking God. “Why? Why Lord? Why me? Why my son? What did I do so wrong to deserve this?” But the truth is that God didn't take him from me. He loved Hunter so much that he got to skip this awful world, and go straight to heaven, as my guardian angel. You ask me how I know this. I had asked my daddy to speak at Hunter’s funeral, and he read me something that he told me the Lord inspired him to write. Today I want to share this with you, in hopes that you will see that a baby's life does not just start at birth; their journey begins way before they are ever born.

To read the letter that the Lord inspired my daddy's to write to me, turn to page 13.
Birthday Tributes

Happy 30th Birthday, Jonathan!
Gone but not forgotten, you will always be in my heart.

Jonathan Lee Tardiff
June 5, 1982
Premature
Also remembering
Rebecca Leigh Tardiff
October 1, 1981
Mommy: Vanessa Tardiff
Sister: Jessica

Happy 1st Birthday, Damen!
This is for my son who died before he even got to see one day. I miss you and I love you, wherever you are.

Damen William Halliday Donovan
Miscarried May 5, 2011
Parents: Kyle Donovan and Britany Halliday

Happy 4th Birthday, Rami!
My big boy, you are now 4 years old. Mommie misses you so much, and she can’t wait to see you one day. Te amo mi chiquito angelito.

Mommie

Ramiro “Rami” Faustino, Jr.
May 20 - June 19, 2008
Premature
Also remembering
Baby Anaya
Miscarried February 2000
Mommy: Elisa Ramirez

Happy 6th Birthday, Destiny!
Not a single day passes that I don’t think of you and what I would give to see my baby girl growing up! There are so many things I wish we could have experienced together, but I am blessed with the memories I have of you that keep you alive in my heart forever. Mommy loves and misses you dearly!

Destiny B Coronado
June 9, 2006
Cardiac Anomalies
Mommy: Karina Sanchez

Happy 15th Birthday, Caleb!
It’s now been 15 years, but I can still feel the warmth of your little body when I first held you. There’s not a day goes by when I don’t think of you and what you might have become. I treasure the thought of seeing you again someday, to spend eternity together in heaven. I love you, Caleb.

Caleb Moser
June 17, 1997
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome
Mommy: Jen Moser
Siblings: Cameron, Courtney and Cassandra

Happy 10th Birthday, RuthAnne!
She blessed us for the short time she was here with us. I was blessed to carry her and her twin brother in my womb for nine months. She changed our lives. We still miss her every day and look forward to the day we will get to make up for all the lost time in Glory!

RuthAnne Michelle Hawksley
May 14 - June 10, 2002
Sudden heart attack caused by heart defect
Also remembering
Elijah Hawksley
Miscarried May 1995 at 13 1/2 weeks gestation
Lily Hawksley
Miscarried March 2009
Shalom Hawksley
Miscarried January 2012
Parents: John and Ambra Hawksley
Siblings: Morgan-Britney, Josiah, Zechariah, Gabriellia, Quentin, Micah (her twin), Isaac, ZaraLayna, Jaiden Noah and Kian Adley

Happy 11th Birthday, Griffin!
Dear Griffin,
Enjoy what your birthday holds
As God will unfold
His blessings given to you.
Your family loves you so
And we want to let you know
That we have birthday wishes to send to you!

Griffin Caleb McIntosh
Stillborn June 6, 2001
Parents: Matthew and Naomi McIntosh
Siblings: Mya Quinn and Aidan Pierce
Happy 1st Birthday, June Angel!
If you’d stayed a little longer, I might have felt you there, I could’ve told you that your life Was the answer to my prayers.

If you’d stayed a little longer, I’d have looked into your eyes, And giggled when you giggled, And rocked you when you cried.

If you’d stayed a little longer, I would have kissed your cheek, And sang to you a lullaby As you drifted off to sleep.

If you’d stayed a little longer, I’d have told you of God’s love Instead HE gets to SHOW you As He holds you up above.

I have to stay a little longer, Until my work is through. So please wait just a little longer, And I’ll come Home to you.

June Angel Fannin
Miscarried June 18, 2011
Parents: Jason and Natalie Fannin
Siblings: Racheal, Jenna and Liam

Happy 1st Birthday, Audrina!
Audrina, we are so proud of you, baby girl! You tried so hard to stay here with Mommy and Daddy. We love and miss you so much!

Audrina Kay Duke
April 21 - May 4, 2011
Non-Immune Hydrops, caused by congenital heart defects
Parents: Brandon and Ashley Duke

Happy 1st Birthday, Aspen!
For a life that was too short, for our love that is so strong. Our baby girl is in our hearts always and forever. Just because you are not here doesn’t mean that you will ever be forgotten. We love you.

Aspen Renee Poda
May 10, 2011
Turner’s Syndrome
Parents: Heath and Jennifer Poda
Sibling: Tristian

Happy 5th Birthday, Timothy!
It’s hard to believe you’d be five years old already. I wonder all the time what you would be like. You’d certainly be busy trying to keep up with your older brothers and sisters. I miss you every day. Every time someone asks about our children, my heart hurts that I don’t get to mention your name. I love you so much, and I’m sad that I never had the chance to show you how I love you. I’m so grateful Jesus has made heaven for you, and I can’t wait to meet you there and hold you. You are a special treasure, and I’m so grateful that I get to be your mommy, even if it’s not in the way I wanted to be. Though I can’t understand it, I know that God has a special plan for you and that somehow this world is better because you were here for a short while.

Love and Kisses,
Mommy

Timothy Isaac Meyers
Stillborn May 28, 2007
Unknown cause
Parents: Joel and Elizabeth Meyers
Siblings: Josh, Abby, Sam, Jake, Rebekah, Mary Faith, Hannah and Baby Benjamin

Happy 2nd Birthday, Gabriel!
I can’t believe it’s been two years since I held you in my arms. You are now in God’s loving hands, but I wish you were here with us. We love and miss you, sweet boy. Happy birthday.

Gabriel Levi Conaway
May 25, 2010
PROM
Also remembering
Sophia Conaway
Miscarried January 22, 2002
Parents: David and Christy Conaway
Siblings: Caleb, Joshua and Elijah

Happy 5th Birthday, Adrian!
Wow, it’s been 5 years already, and not a day goes by that your mommy and I don’t think of you. We miss you very much and wish to God you were here helping us control your little brother “J” and little sister “Adrina Bear.” You have taught us to be appreciative, thankful and humble about the life God has chosen for our family. We speak of you often to those who understand and are able to help those who have lost a little one themselves. Until we see you again…Love you, Daddy, Mommy, Bear and J.

Adrian James Hernandez
June 23 - July 14, 2007
Neonecritizing
Parents: Fito and Jackie Hernandez
Siblings: Twin Sister Adrina and Brother Julian
Happy 4th Birthday, Michael!
Now we know what our angel looks like. We love you and miss you.

Michael Heaven Gibson
April 3 - 4, 2008
Multiple abnormalities
Parents: Michael and DeAndra Gibson
Siblings: Michael Jr. and Christopher

Happy 4th Birthday, Sweet One!
I was thinking about you a lot today and was just in awe over how big you would be now. It sure would be exciting to have you here, running around with C.J., but until that day comes, know that we miss you terribly and love you so very much! Happy Birthday, Sweetheart!

Baby Stephens
June 30, 2008
Ectopic pregnancy
Also remembering
David Atkins Stephens
October 23, 2003
Omphalocele, MTHFR
Baby Stephens II
January 2009
MTHFR
Baby Stephens III
February 15, 2010
Ectopic pregnancy
Parents: Rob and Melissa Stephens
Brother: C.J.

Happy 2nd Birthday, Arun!
To our little angel, you were so special to us. We remember everything about you. I was so thankful you stayed nine days with us - the best nine days of our lives. I hope you are looking down on us smiling because every time I think of you, I smile.

Arun Lokireddy
May 25 - June 3, 2010
Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome
Parents: Mastan and Rhonda Lokireddy

Happy 5th Birthday, Trae!
We know we will join you in heaven one day. We love you so much and always will. You hold a piece of our hearts forever, my sweet angel, Trae.

Trae Babb Sanders
Stillborn March 29, 2007
Parents: Nick and Tara Sanders
Siblings: Dre and Keion

Happy 1st Birthday, Jacob!
To our little boy, happy first heavenly birthday! This year has been the toughest ever! We never imagined writing a tribute for our little boy; we planned on holding you in our arms and planning your first birthday! Instead, we get to plan how to celebrate your first birthday in heaven by making it a super fantastic day and remembering you like we have done since the day we lost you! Mommy and Daddy both hope you are proud of everything we do to remember you and know that we will always, always love you...and remember you! We miss you so much, and we can’t wait to see you again when the Lord hands you to us up in heaven! “A Moment in Our Arms, Forever in Our Hearts”

Jacob Teran
Stillborn June 27, 2011
Umbilical cord knot
Also remembering
Cousin Olaya
June 2001
Cousins Gabriela and Camila
April 2002
Parents: Nolvia Varela and Richard Teran

Happy 1st Birthday, Kaidi!
Our precious daughter... How can it have already been a year since we met and then lost you? Your brother takes you balloons and flowers, and we’re making sure he knows all about you. Your mommy picked up a copy of the children’s version of Heaven is for Real the other day, and just looking over the pictures that were painted according to the little boy’s memory gave her peace. We know beyond any shadow of a doubt that you are in the arms of our Lord, and you are saving a place for each of us when our turn to come home arrives. We love you forever, Kaidi. You are always in our hearts, minds and words.

Kaidance Brynna MaeKayla Koopman
May 29, 2011
Potters Syndrome
Parents: Jeff and Tara Koopman
Brother: Kamden

Happy 13th Birthday, Joseph!
We miss you and look forward to seeing you again one day!
Love,
Mom, Dad, Will, John and Mary Grace

Joseph Charles Libby
Stillborn May 26, 1999
Cord accident
Parents: Wim and Sharlene Libby
Siblings: Will, John and Mary Grace
Happy 3rd Birthday, Emma!

Dear Emma,

It is hard to believe that already three years have passed since we got to know you. Not a day goes by without our thinking about you.

We hope you enjoy your third birthday in heaven as we will celebrate yours here on earth.

I miss you very much, big sister. I wish you were here so I would have a partner to get in trouble with.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and little sister Isabella

Emma Krymkiewicz
May 5, 2009
Neonatal hemochromatosis
Also remembering
Baby Girl Krymkiewicz
Miscarried June 13, 2008, at 11 weeks
Parents: Hernan and Ana Krymkiewicz
Sister: Isabella Mia

Happy 1st Birthday, Abby!

We send you lots of hugs and kisses!

Dear Abby,

It’s crazy writing your name, but the thought of never knowing you, makes me insane more and more each day.

I can never teach nor hold you, and can never say I love you, but I can keep you in my heart forever.

In my eyes I see a young girl, The same one that visits Daddy in his dreams.
And for every thought of you I have, My love grows and my sorrow dies.
Bless your heart,
Love, Daddy

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

Happy 2nd Birthday, Sweet Cambron!

We miss you daily, but it brings smiles to our faces when we think about how much you are enjoying celebrating in heaven. We love you so much!

Cambron Edward Fisk
June 28, 2010
Cord accident
Parents: Darren and Meredith Fisk
Sister: Madison

Happy 4th Birthday, Genevieve!

“...My universe will never be the same, I'm glad you came…”

Happy birthday, baby girl! Today we celebrate the time that we got to spend with you, and what you have added to our family. We are so grateful to have had you in our lives, and every day Mommy and Daddy think of, love and miss you.

Genevieve Rose Blais
May 8 - June 14, 2011
Meningitis
Parents: Ricky and Mary Blais

Happy 1st Birthday, Hudson, Weston and Jackson!

My Precious Three,

It is hard to believe that it has been four years since I first saw your sweet faces. I am so very grateful that I was the one God chose to be your mom. Your short lives have made more of a difference in my life than any other experience that I have ever had. I often think of you when I see the 4-year-olds walking through the hallways of my school and wonder about what it would be like to have you there with me.

Happy birthday to you, my three! You will always have such a big place in my heart.

I love you so much,
Mommy
Your family loves you!
“Ma,” Collin and Holden

Hudson Wrenn, Weston Cole and Jackson Reed Crumley
June 30, 2008
Premature birth
Mommy: Alisha Crumley
Siblings: Collin and Holden

Happy 4th Birthday, Noah!

Dearest Noah, happy fourth birthday in heaven. It’s hard to believe it’s been four years since we said “hello” and “goodbye” all on the same day, but I know your purpose in heaven is greater than your purpose on earth.

We miss you and think about you every day of our lives, and I know that one sweet day, we’ll meet again.

“You belong among the wildflowers, you belong in a boat out at sea. Sail away, kill off the hours. You belong somewhere you feel free.”

Noah Powell
Stillborn July 22, 2008
Hypercoiled umbilical cord
Parents: Nate and Barb Powell
Sisters: Julia (twin sister) and Sydney (little sister)
Happy 1st Birthday, Gideon!

Our little love, happy birthday! Mommy and Daddy love you so very much. We know that right now you are having the most wonderful first birthday party we can imagine! Oh, sweet boy, I can just see you dancing and laughing in the presence of the Lord. We can’t believe it has been one year since we got to hold you, kiss you and snuggle you. One year without you. One year of missing you. One year of clinging to the Lord. One year of wondering who you would be. One year of deeply loving you. One year of looking forward to the day when we can be with you again. That has been our last year. Your last year has been glorious. One year of magnificence. One year of peace. One year of being complete and whole. One year of worshipping the Lord in His presence. One year of joy and everlasting love. What an indescribable year you have had, sweet one! Our arms ache for you every single day, but we know that you are being held in the arms of Jesus. And, precious Gideon, that is so amazing! We are anxiously awaiting the day when we are with you in eternity and we can worship the Lord together. We love you with every fiber of our being and with every breath we take. Happy first birthday in heaven, Gideon.

With all our hearts,
Daddy, Mommy and baby brother Silas

Gideon Zeller Mitchell
May 17, 2011
Membranous cord insertion
Also remembering
Avery Mitchell
Miscarried May 2008
Unknown cause
Parents: Todd and Stormy Mitchell
Brother: Silas

Happy 1st Birthday, Skyla!

They say that time’s a great healer,
But I don’t think that’s true.
My heart’s been aching so much
since the day that I lost you.
You never got the chance to open your eyes,
so Mommy could wipe your tears or hear your cries.
I had to say goodbye before I could say hello.
I wish I could have told you just how much I loved you so.
You mean more to me than anything
even though we never formally met.
Mommy loves her precious baby
and I promise I won’t forget.
You’re my shining star and
in my heart is where you’ll always stay.
But don’t be too sad my precious little one,
because Mommy promises we will meet someday.

Skyla Olivia Burns Ennis
May 21, 2011
Pre-term labor
Also remembering
Baby Ennis
Miscarried January 2007
Parents: R. Burns and Tarsha Ennis
Sibling: JoAliece

Happy 3rd Birthday, Lindsay!

“As time passes by each and every day, the love we feel for you will never fade away.”

It’s hard to believe it’s been 3 years since you left this world, but every time we look at Tanner, we see a glimpse of you. We always imagine what it would be like to have you here with all of us and think about all the things you could teach your little brother.

We love and miss you so very much, baby girl. You’re in our thoughts, our prayers and always in our hearts.

Lauren Ashley Scott
Stillborn June 23, 2009
Trisomy 18
Parents: Troy and Emily Scott
Brother: Tanner William

Happy 1st Birthday, Lauren Ashley!

“Happy 3rd Birthday, Lindsay!

Our Little Bird is three years old, and we are thankful for each moment we had together. Haley speaks of you often and says you are drawing pictures in heaven of your family. Your little brother, Jacob, looks so much like you. Know that you are dearly loved, sweet one, and the Lord will provide just the right birthday party for you. We will be looking to the sky and celebrating with you. The thought of you brings joy and strength to our hearts.

Love Always,
Mommy, Daddy, Haley and Jacob

Lindsay Claire Alexander
May 24 - 27, 2009
VLCAD (fatty-acid oxidation disorder)
Parents: Lane and Leslie Alexander
Siblings: Haley and Jacob

Happy 1st Birthday, D.J.!

Mommy and Daddy miss you. There’s not a day that goes by we don’t stop thinking of you. We loved you, but the Lord loved you more. Love you, D.J.

Dewayne Malone Jr.
April 13 - June 2, 2011
SIDS
Parents: Shaletha Mayse and Dewayne Malone Sr.
Happy 1st Birthday, Madison!
So much love we have for her

Madison Humitz
June 27, 2011
Infection
Parents: Jason and Jen Humitz
Siblings: Brenden and Brady

Happy 5th Birthday, Gracie!
Happy birthday, sweet girl! It doesn’t seem possible that it has been five years since we held you in our arms, but you are forever in our hearts. We love you so much and miss you every minute of every day. We know you are the best big sister and taking care of your sister, Emma, in heaven. Thank you for sending your little brother, Wyatt, to us. We are sure when he is chattering away he is talking to you and Emma.

We love you with all our hearts,
Forever and ever,
Infinity,
Daddy, Momma and Wyatt

Gracie Renee Dorr
May 15, 2007
Incompetent cervix
Also remembering
Emma Grace Dorr
October 16, 2008
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Dustin and Janine Dorr
Brother: Wyatt

Happy 4th Birthday, Henry!
Dear Henry, I can’t believe you are already 4! I look at your sister and brother and miss you so much. I know that you would have been the best big brother to them both! I can’t wait until I get to hold you in my arms again in heaven. I am so thankful that you are praising God and living a wonderful life with Him.

We miss you so!
Mommy, Daddy, little sister Kate and little brother Ben!

Henry Ian Ilgenfritz
May 3, 2008
Cord accident
Also remembering
Baby Ilgenfritz
Miscarried August 30, 2007
Parents: Jody and Rhonda Ilgenfritz
Siblings: Kate and Ben

Happy 3rd Birthday, Mackenzie!
It’s hard to imagine that you would already be 3 years old! I often wonder if you would be the complete opposite of your little sister or if you would have been two peas in a pod. I usually imagine you would be opposites since you were born weighing 9 pounds and 7 ounces, and she only weighed 5 pounds and 15 ounces. I don’t know what it’s like to raise a living 3-year-old yet, but from the joy your sister has already brought into our lives this past year and a half, I know we are missing SO MUCH without you here. You will always be an incredibly special part of our family, and I hope you feel included. You will always be our baby.

We love you with all our hearts!
Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Paisley

Mackenzie Noelle Frederickson
June 17, 2009
Full term stillbirth - unknown cause
Also remembering
Baby “Skyler” Frederickson
January 2, 2010
Ectopic pregnancy
Parents: Mike and Ashley Frederickson
Little Sister: Paisley Noelle

Happy 12th Birthday, Chrissie!
Your little brothers talk about you often. Can you hear us? They wanted to buy fabric for you to have a new soft blanket, too. Can you feel it? We wished for you at dinner the other night. Could you smell it?
Great Mother joined you two years ago.
Are you two playing together?

Chrissie Steen
May 3, 2000
Ectopic pregnancy
Parents: Lynn and Mary Steen
Siblings: John, William and Michael

Happy 2nd Birthday, Lucas and Caleb!
Happy second birthday, sweet boys! We love you so much, and we miss you every day. We are grateful for all you have shown and taught us. Your short lives have made such an amazing impact on so many others.

Lots of love,
Mommy, Daddy, Colton, Ethan and Baby Cinco

Lucas Earls
Stillborn June 1, 2010
Caleb Earls
June 1-2, 2010
Twin-To-Twin Transfusion Syndrome
Parents: Willy and Carrie Earls
Siblings: Colton, Ethan, Baby Cinco due October 1
Happy 1st Birthday, Noah!
Noah Bear, it is hard to believe that it’s already been a year. It seems like just yesterday I had everything ready, waiting for your arrival and within a matter of minutes, I was told that you were gone. You’ve touched many lives in your 39 weeks and 6 days on this earth, and you continue to do so! Happy first birthday, Noah Bear! I love you to Pluto and back!

-Mommy

“I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, as long as I’m living my baby you’ll be!”
Happy birthday! We all love you and miss you!

Noah Thomas Romo
May 21, 2011
Clot in umbilical cord
Parents: Megan Isabell and Phillip Romo

Happy 2nd Birthday Madelyn Hope!
To our sweet little princess, Madelyn, we love you and miss you so much. We can’t believe you are already 2 years old in heaven and can’t wait to see you again. You are a blessing to us, and we thank God every day for your life. Your brothers and sisters miss you and talk about you all the time. We think about you every time we look at the beautiful flowers in your memory garden. We love you, princess!

A moment in our arms, a lifetime in our hearts.

Love,
Daddy, Mommy, Brett, Hailey, Ava, Brayden and Ethan

Madelyn Hope Henry
May 4, 2010
Placental abruption
Parents: Andy and Kim Henry
Siblings: Brett, Hailey, Ava, Brayden and Ethan

Happy 1st Birthday, Max!
Happy first heavenly birthday Max! Mommy, Sam and I miss you so much. We think about you all the time and can’t wait to share your story with anyone who will listen. Thank you for giving us the most amazing 22 hours as a family of four. Sam is a lucky little girl because you taught us how to love. Every night when Sam falls asleep, we tell her if she sees you in her dreams to kiss you, hug you and tell you we miss and love you! We will never forget you, Max. We are honored to call you our beautiful, perfect son.

Max Emmanuel Novik
May 9 - 10, 2011
Anencephaly
Parents: Mark and Melinda Novik
Sister: Sam Elana (Max’s twin)

Happy 6th Birthday, RykerLee!
It’s so hard to believe it has been six years since we held you in our arms. In August your little brother Kase was born and joined you in heaven. I know you and Grandma Jan welcomed him with open arms. We all talk about how we know you are showing him the ropes in heaven. Not a day goes by that we don’t think about you both and can’t wait to see you again! We love you, son!

Hugs and Kisses XOXOXO
Mommy, Daddy, Mariah, Derrick and Kellen

RykerLee Serrano
May 18, 2006
Placenta deficiency
Also remembering
Kase Todd Angelito Serrano
August 4, 2011
Placenta deficiency
Parents: Ed and Carrie Serrano
Siblings: Mariah, Derrick, Kellen and Kase

Happy 1st Birthday, Lauren!
Precious Lauren, I cannot believe you are turning 1 year old! I can only imagine what life would be like if you were still with us. There is not a day that goes by that the three of us do not think about you, talk about you or miss you. I am so thankful you entered our lives, even if it was just for a short time, and we will never forget those precious moments we shared with you. I cannot wait to see your beautiful face again. Happy first birthday, Lauren! We love and miss you more than I can express with words.

Lauren Isabelle Autry
June 17 - July 2, 2011
Campomelic dysplasia
Parents: Brandon and Melissa Autry
Sister: Halley

Happy 5th Birthday, Carsen!
Our sweet little love! It has been five years since you came into our world and changed it forever. We miss you every day and cannot wait until we have the opportunity to hold you again in heaven. We will forever be proud parents of an angel! Happy 5th birthday to the most amazing little soul we have ever known!

Carsen Matthew Landis
April 30, 2007
Birth injury consistent with the use of forceps
Also remembering
Baby May
May 1, 2008
Spontaneous miscarriage
Parents: Josh and Jenny Landis
Siblings: Fisher, Brysen and Layne
Happy 1st Birthday, Kamille!
My perfect precious princess Kamille, you are the best little gift (aside from big brother) that God has blessed us with! Although you are not here to entertain us with your little sassy personality, you live on with us every day. Mommy and Daddy and brothers miss you immensely. Mommy will see an outfit and say, “Ooo, Kamille would be perfect in that color!” I miss feeling you, hearing the sound of your heart beating, looking at you. Our days without you here physically are tough, but you’ve touched us each in such a different way that we are healing in different ways and trying to find a “new” way of “living.”

We love and miss you dearly!

Until we meet again our sweet Angel!
Love always and forever,
Mama, Daddy, brothers and the host of family/friends that love you, too!

Kamille Antionette Semien
June 22, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Brandon Semien and Karen McCarter
Siblings: Brandon, Kaiden and Bryce Semien

Happy 2nd Birthday, Brianna!
Mommy and Daddy miss you and think of you every day!

Brianna Denise Segovia
April 30 - May 9, 2010
Metabolic acidosis
Also remembering:
Baby Segovia
Miscarried July 4, 2011
Parents: Homero and Brenda Segovia
Siblings: Thomas and Michelle

Happy 3rd Birthday, Jackson!
We can’t believe it has been three years. So much has happened, but one thing has never changed, and that is how much we love and miss you! We stand firm knowing one day we will all celebrate your birthday together! Until then, we can close our eyes and feel you close! We love you and miss you!

Love,
Mommy and Daddy, Isaiah and Thomas
Nana and Pawpaw Voyles
Aunt Heather and Uncle Terry and Eden and Haden
Grandpa and Grandma Wood
Aunt Amy and Uncle Damon and Grayson and Gavin
We all love you and look forward to the day we all meet again! Here for a moment, in our hearts for a lifetime!

Jackson Connor Wood
Stillborn June 6, 2009
Blood clot in cord
Parents: Darin and April Wood
Siblings: Isaiah and Thomas

Happy 9th Birthday, Matthew!
I can’t believe you’re turning 9, oh, dear precious son of mine!
Wasn’t it just a short time past when I held you in my arms for last?
Your days were few, but oh so sweet as you lived all your days complete.
I held you tight with eyes in tears wondering how I’d live through the years.
But God is good; He’s walked by my side.
He gives me strength; in Him I abide.
As thoughts of you mark each day, I hold you close in heart and say, “You are God’s precious gift to me! I miss you so now, but wait for eternity!”

I love you more and more each day, and I can’t wait to see you again, sweetheart! Happy birthday, Matthew!

Matthew Joel Mifflin
June 6, 2003
True knot in cord
Also remembering
Little One Mifflin
Miscarried February 6, 2006
Lil’ Rosebud Mifflin
Miscarried March 10, 2007
Parents: Dennis and Janet Mifflin
Siblings: Thomas and Michelle

Happy 1st Birthday, Elena!
“How very softly you tiptoed into our world, almost silently, only a moment you stayed. But what an imprint your footprints have left upon our hearts!”

-Sweet Elena, words are not adequate to describe how much we miss you and long to hold you again. Your short life blessed us immensely, and we rejoice in the knowledge that we will embrace you again someday. We love you forever and carry you always in our hearts. Happy birthday, precious baby!

Elena Marie Rusert
May 23, 2011
Premature birth
Parents: Michael and Tina Rusert
Big Brother: Liam

Happy 1st Birthday, Elena and William!
To my darling twins who died with out being able to experience life: I love you, my little angels, always and forever. Love, Mom.

Elena and William
Miscarried March 7 - May 5, 2011
Parents: Britany Halliday and Alexander Stanelle
I have to say that Mother’s Day is bittersweet for my husband and me and even my family. Our daughter, Brianna Denise Segovia, was born on April 30, 2010, only 24 weeks into my pregnancy. Eight days later, I remember my husband and me being at the hospital with my sister and her boyfriend, just waiting to hear that Brianna would be ok. At first, we were hopeful Brianna was going to pull through. For some reason, I remember we had beautiful spring-like days, and that night we had a terrible thunderstorm. Around 3:00 in the morning, we were asked to make the most heartbreaking decision of our lives: to keep her alive on machines, or let heaven have her. We made the decision to let her go, but before we said goodbye, our desire was to have her baptized. As a Catholic, we believe being baptized while a baby is a way to introduce the little one to the faith from a very young age. The parents and godparents make a commitment to keep the child in the faith and lead and teach them to live in God's way. Brianna was only with us a short time, but during the time we did get to parent her, we wanted her to be a part of our faith. We wanted to make our commitment to God and to her, too, that whatever time He let us have with her, we would raise her as He desired.

We were able to have her baptized, and at 5:00 a.m., just two short hours after we had to make our decision, Brianna was disconnected from all of the machines that were trying to keep her alive. Brianna entered heaven on May 9, 2010, Mother's Day. It was my first Mother's Day as a mom, and I had to make the decision to say goodbye to the little girl who made me a mother. She was our first child, and the pain of losing her was something words cannot describe. Throughout the day, I received texts and phone calls wishing me a Happy Mother’s Day, and with each one, I had to explain why Mother’s Day was not happy, and felt my heart break over and over again.

So how can I celebrate Mother’s Day after my first was so heartbreaking? We turned again to our faith - to remember our daughter and to keep us strong. Last year we celebrated Mother’s Day with a mass in Brianna’s honor. This year we plan to do the same. The mass is a Catholic mass. It is similar to a regular Sunday mass, and Brianna Denise Segovia’s name is brought up in remembrance, and the congregation is asked to keep our family in their prayers. On Sunday, May 13, Brianna’s name will be brought up in remembrance of her life, even though her life here on earth was only a few days.

Since having my little angel, I have had a miscarriage, but I am hopeful and still trying to get pregnant to have that little bundle of joy that my husband and I truly desire. I would like to thank my family and friends for being there when we have needed them. Also to my wonderful friends for all of their prayers and support.

♥ Brenda Segovia,
Mommy to Brianna Denise Segovia and Baby Segovia

Happy 12th Birthday, Sydney!
Happy 11th Birthday, Ashley!

We love and miss you both so very much. May all your birthdays be together. Until we meet again.

Sydney Lynne Brown
May 18, 2000
Unknown causes/2 vessel cord
Ashley Mackenzie Brown
May 18, 2001
Premature due to antiphospholipid syndrome (APL)
Parents: Brian and Marilyn Brown
Brother: Samuel

Happy 6th Birthday, Ava!
It’s hard to believe that you would be 6! What a joy it would be to see you grow, but God had other plans. Your family misses you terribly. To know that Jesus is holding you tight and giving you birthday kisses from all of us makes me smile. We love you!
Mom, Dad, Madison, Spencer and Garrett

Ava Grace Browning
March 7, 2006
Epstein's anomaly
Parents: Kevin and Christal Browning
Siblings: Madison, Spencer and Garrett

Happy 1st Birthday, Lucas!
Lucas, as your feet take their first steps on those streets of gold, our hearts long for the memories that you are making in heaven. Until we meet again, we pray our lives and the world you left behind will be changed by our One and only Healer.

Lucas Michael Buckley
Stillborn May 25, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Danny and Lyndsey Buckley
Sisters: Raegan and Rylee

Happy 5th Birthday, William!
Your sister, Jules, has nicknamed you Bill because William is tricky for her to say. You continue to live on in our hearts...forever loved, forever missed.

William Roland Pallant
June 4, 2007
Severe Pre-eclampsia and HELPP
Also remembering:
Baby Pallant #2
Miscarried September 2007
Parents: Andrew and Kristel Pallant
Siblings: Julia and Matthew
Hey Mommy,

This is Hunter. I am sorry that I had to leave so soon, but I want you to know how much I love you. At first I didn't know how I was going to tell you, but things here are a lot different than you can imagine. When I first got here, you would not believe how beautiful it is. In John 13:7, Jesus said, “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

I had so many questions. I kept hearing people talk about a man that could answer all my questions, so, you know me. I started to look for Him and found Him beside a great river that flows from the throne of God. It is called the River of Life—can you beat that? I ran up to Him and He looked at me and said, “You look just like your mama.” I told Him thank you. He said, “Why did you thank me.” I told Him that I thought He was going to say I looked like my papa.

Then He said something that really confused me at first. He said that He loves you more than anyone can. You know me; we had our first words then. You know what I told Him? I said, “No matter how much You say You love my mama, there is no one who loves her more than me.” Then He explained what He meant. He keeps carrying me back to the Holy Bible where it says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not die but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). I asked Him how can I let my mommy know how much I love her. He said that things are a lot different here. He told me of the Holy Spirit and what He does there with you, so He came up with the idea to have Papa write this for me. I said, “Papa is really going to have a great time doing this.” We talk about love up here so much it seems that no one is afraid to use that word or to let you know how they feel. I think that I understand a little better now.

They talk about a mansion that is ours—yes, yours and mine. I know He wanted me to come and decorate it, because I am the only one who knows what you like, and where it needs to go. I hope you like it when you get here. That just got me to thinking even more, so I asked Him how I can know that my mommy is coming here. So you know what He did? He keeps bringing me back to that Bible. He said all of my questions and yours are in it. He showed me the Book of Life with my name, Hunter Campbell, and guess what I saw beside mine? It was “Kassie Campbell, Hunter’s mommy.” He said that you belong to Him and nobody can take you out of that book. I have a lot more to say, but I’ll save it for later. By the way, this man’s name is Jesus; He is pretty smart. Don’t worry about me. I’ll be talking to you later. Listen to a little voice inside of you or a little breeze on the cheek – that will be me. Never forget how much you mean to me and be happy; I can’t stand it when you cry.

See you soon!

Hunter

P.S. You are my hero. I love you, Mommy!

This letter was written by Kassie Campbell’s father, Hunter’s Pop-Pop, in memory of Hunter John Campbell, September 28, 2010, 15 ounces, 11 inches long.
M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates

**Houston**

M.E.N.D.—Houston is anxiously awaiting our 7th Annual Walk to Remember, which will take place on October 6. We continue to support families all over the Houston area by giving out comfort bags and holding our monthly support group meetings on the third Thursday of each month.

Jaimie Crump

**Texarkana**

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana had a great time at our annual multi-family sale. Thanks to everyone who donated items and to everyone who helped with the sale: Tania Greer, Dawn Kennedy, Jessica Standridge, Laura Aguilar, Barbie Fugitt, Toni and Randy Sherman and Shawn Davis. Thanks to Nash First Baptist Church for hosting this event.

Monica Davis

**Tulsa**

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa would like to wish all of the parents in the Tulsa area a happy Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. May our babies in heaven continue to enrich our lives, and may we find peace in knowing that we will meet them again.

Lisa Daily

**SW Missouri**

M.E.N.D.—Southwest Missouri continues to be in awe of the Lord’s timing! Just this past fall, our members expressed a need for a memorial garden in the area. During a conference in February, He brought our organization to the attention of a local garden designer, who just happened to finish a design for a new memorial garden that DAY, and just happened to introduce me to the president of the board for the gardens and land donors the NEXT DAY, and just happened to present it to the board of a local park that WEEK who approved for M.E.N.D. to sponsor the garden! God is so good! Now, we are trusting in Him to continue this much-needed site and help us to raise $15,000 to get it built. If all goes as planned, families will be able to purchase engraved bricks in honor of their babies, and we can host our October balloon release in the midst of this amazing garden. Join us in prayer and let me know if you are interested in making a contribution.

Heather Fann

**NW Washington**

On March 19, M.E.N.D.—NW Washington had our first ladies’ gathering outside of our meetings. Michele Kulhanek, one of my amazing assistants, served a scrumptious brunch to the 17 mommies who attended. We are so pleased to have had such a good turnout. On April 11, we had our first M.E.N.D. playgroup, and we are planning a family barbecue for this summer. Our monthly meetings continue to be well attended, and our Facebook page is a constant source of comfort and encouragement.

Susan Crow

**Hot Springs**

M.E.N.D.—Hot Springs continues to minister to our families. We have had several subsequent births in the past month. These amazing blessings are in some ways a reminder of our losses, but more importantly, a reminder that God answers prayers. We are planning our first Christmas Candlelight service. The service will take place Saturday, December 1, at 7:00 p.m. at New Life Church in Hot Springs.

Amy Humphries
M.E.N.D. — Bryan/College Station
M.E.N.D. is continuing to serve the families of Brazos Valley. We are preparing to have several summer fundraisers, including a memory quilt, a shopping day at Charming Charlie's and a Bunco tournament! We are looking forward to what God has for us this coming summer.

Jennie Drude

Wichita Falls!!

Our first chapter meeting was held April 12 and we welcomed three families. We are working hard to reach out to our community and are looking forward to providing support to those in need. We welcome new members daily on our Facebook page as well. We are grateful to have a M.E.N.D. chapter in Wichita Falls, and we are excited to see our work in action!

Sarah Fukasawa

Amarillo

God is truly blessing us here in Amarillo! We have been holding subsequent pregnancy group meetings, and it has been going great. We received our books from Jonathan Fann, Grieve Like a Man, and are extremely anxious to get them out to our grieving fathers.

Becky Anderson

Looking Ahead

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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

Liam and Sebastian Callaway
Stillborn August 5, 2011
Unknown cause
Given by parents Zack and Rori Callaway

Angel Christian Oswald Cockrell III
March 17, 2009
Given by Christina Campos

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

Aidan Shaw Vander Cruyssen
October 2 - December 3, 2005
Kidney disease
Given by Mommy Shane Meyer and sibling Cameron Shaw

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

Royce Haskell Dugan
Stillborn October 9, 2011
Cord accident
Parents: Sean and Ashley Dugan
Given by Dana Fernandez

Kyler Paul English
Stillborn January 20, 2006
Cord accident
Parents: Laurie McPike and Bob English
Given by Jon and Laurie McPike and brothers Kinser, Kelson and Kayden

Caleb Scott Fann
December 1, 2003
PROM

Baby August Fann
Miscarried August 13, 2004
Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann
Little sister: Madison Grace
Given by friends Neal and Sara Elliott

C.J. Gold
Miscarried August 12, 2008

Marina Gold
Miscarried July 14, 2009
Parents: Greg and Kathryn Gold
Big sister: Emily
Given by Bradley and Julie Wagner

Lauren Paige Grimes
Stillborn March 6, 1999
Unknown cause

Baby Grimes
Miscarried January 25, 2001
Given by parents Paula and John Grimes and sister Rileigh (Baby Grimes’ twin)

Camden Asher Haltom
Stillborn October 31, 2009
Possible cord accident
Given by parents James and Jill Haltom

Marcus Alan Johnson, Jr.
July 5, 2011
Cord accident
Parents: Marc and Jena Johnson
Given by Windrich Dotcom Inc

Aiden and Cameron Lewis
January 1, 2009
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Erica and Andre Lewis and little brother Nathan

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord accident

Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December 2001
Parents: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Big brother: Byron, Jr.
Given by grandparents Dennis and Sue Brewer

Lyle Dale Mitchell
February 21, 1937 - March 30, 2012
Papa to Jonathan Daniel Mitchell and Baby Mitchell
Given by Mark and Beth Shelton

Lily Joy Moore
Miscarried March 2, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Jeremy and Kathleen Moore
Big brother: Isaac
Given by Grammy Marsha Neely

Max Emmanuel Novik
May 9 - 10, 2011
Anencephaly
Given by parents Melinda and Mark Novik and twin sister Sam

Alexander Seely
April 30, 2010
Given by mommy Raquel Robles

Hannah Shachov
Stillborn September 23, 2003
Unknown cause

Baby Shachov
Miscarried June 2007
Given by parents David and Poliana Shachov and brother AJ

Mindy and Maggie Smith
Stillborn November 4, 1997
Twin to twin transfusion syndrome and Polyhydramnios
Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith and siblings Travis and Julia

Benjamin Harrison Taylor
Stillborn December 20, 2011
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Rebecca and Michael Taylor

Alivia Elizabeth Grace Walker
Stillborn July 24, 2006
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Robert and Liz Walker and little brother Jaxson

Gifts of Support
Harrison Medical Center Foundation, Bremerton, Washington
Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO
West Conroe Baptist Church, TX

Legacy Giving
Losing a child has changed each of our lives forever. We appreciate all financial support of the services our organization gives to bereaved parents—no matter the size of the contribution. However, some of you may have the capacity and desire to give a lifelong gift to M.E.N.D. If you’re interested in creating a legacy gift or endowment in honor of your baby, we would be happy to assist you in gathering the necessary information to remember our organization in your will or trust. For more information about legacy giving, please contact Rebekah Mitchell at rebekah@mend.org.
“God, we love You, and You are so good!” That is how the prayers of my father-in-law, Lyle Mitchell, typically began. Even after a devastating accident in 2005 left him paralyzed from the shoulders down, he acknowledged the love and goodness of the Lord.

Lyle endured 6 1/2 years of complete dependency upon others to care for his every need. Unimaginable, really. We as a family watched as his independence, modesty, and any pride he may have had was taken from him in a matter of seconds. Yet, we never heard him speak a harsh word or utter a complaint.

I was privileged to be his daughter-in-law for 23 1/2 years. I loved him tremendously, and he loved me back. When our first son was born, Lyle was a commercial airline pilot for TWA. When he was not flying, he spent a lot of his time playing with, loving, and babysitting his little grandson, Byron, Jr. Anytime I was in the hospital dealing with kidney issues, difficult pregnancies, and births, Lyle was always by my side. He would just sit in my room for hours. In fact, almost every time I have been in the hospital, Lyle has been the one to drive me home.

I vividly remember the day after our baby Jonathan was stillborn. Somehow, Lyle got the job as designated photographer. He took picture, after picture. Admittedly, I was a little irritated at first. I wasn't sure if he expected me to pose with a smile, or if he was content just capturing candid, tender moments. At the time, never did we dream that the photographs he took would be printed in brochures and literature that is now distributed all over the world. I also remember someone asking him to pray that day, and he said he couldn't. I have always wondered if it was because he was a little mad at God, or if he was afraid he would break down and cry.

On March 30, 2012, Lyle fought his good fight and ended his race. Mysteries surround heaven and exactly what it's like until the resurrection of the saints and we receive our glorified bodies, but I like to think my two babies, Jonathan and Baby Mitchell, met their Papa as he entered into his eternal home. I like to imagine that both of his grandchildren each took a hand and led Lyle around the Celestial City and were among the first to see him walk again and be free!

Oftentimes, Lyle told me I was his hero. My response was and still is, “No, Lyle, you're my hero!” Lyle will always be missed, and truthfully, as I write this, the idea that he is forever gone from this earth has not yet sunk in. I pray that the legacy he leaves will be that despite our suffering, we never cease to acknowledge the goodness of the Lord.

I love you Lyle!

♥ Rebekah Mitchell, M.E.N.D. President/Founder
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell
Daughter-in-law to Lyle Mitchell

Andy and Kim Henry, along with siblings Brett, Hailey, Ava and Brayden, of Cameron, Missouri, joyfully announce the arrival of Ethan Blake, born September 17, 2011, measuring 7 lb., 8 oz., and 19 inches long. The Henry family lovingly remembers Madelyn Hope, May 4, 2010, placental abruption.


Lee and Natalie Reeves, of Fort Worth, Texas, joyfully announce the arrival of Ruby June, born March 24, 2012, measuring 7 lb., 14 oz., and 20 inches long. The Reeves lovingly remember Baby Reeves #1, miscarried July 26, 2010, unknown cause, and Baby Boy Reeves #2, miscarried February 9, 2011, Trisomy 13.


Capturing the Moment

I know how difficult Mother’s Day can be for those of us who have lost children. Watching other moms celebrate with their living children can pour salt in an already deeply painful wound. I, too, have felt that sting, even as I celebrated with my own living children, because the day reminded me of my little one who was missing. However, as I look back, one particular Mother’s Day has been a balm, a sweet reminder of a time when all of my family was still together.

My son Joseph was stillborn on May 26, 1999, just a couple of weeks after Mother’s Day. As I awoke on Mother’s Day that year, I had no idea of the pain that I would be facing just a few days later. I instead basked in the accolades and sweet little displays of affection that my two older children (ages 3 and 1-1/2 at the time) lavished upon me that morning. We went to church with dear friends and later went out for lunch with them, celebrating with high chairs, spilled milk and my swollen belly as visible reminders of motherhood. My husband gave me a small, portable Bible to commemorate the occasion, one that would easily fit in my diaper bag or purse so that I could have God’s Word with me, no matter how busy my days as a mother became.

My husband took a photo of my kids and me, all dressed up for Mother’s Day, as we were leaving church that day. The sky was a beautiful blue, and the sun shone warmly behind us. I was dressed in a yellow dress that draped over my protruding stomach. My boys were dressed in blue. I held the hand of the oldest and held the youngest on my hip, balanced just beside his unborn brother. It was a moment in time when we were all happily together as a family, captured forever on film.

As I face Mother’s Day each year, that moment has been one that keeps coming back to me. It is a reminder of how important it is to appreciate what you have when you have it. It is a memory that sustains and comforts, bringing to mind the knowledge that, no matter what the future may hold, there are blessings in my life that can be appreciated now.

♥ Sharlene Libby
Mommy to Joseph
M.E.N.D.—Newsletter Volunteer
Celebremos la vida por ser Padres!

“Gracias Por Hacerme Mamá!”

Durante mis primeros años de maternidad, desarrolle una tradición con mi esposo para la celebración del día de la madre y el día del padre. En el día de la madre, Byron asumía la mayor parte de los deberes parentales sobre el cuidado de nuestro pequeño hijo, Byron, Jr., y el día del padre, reciprocamente yo lo hacía de la misma manera. Mi punto de vista era que en nuestro día, nos teníamos merecidos descansar de nuestras labores cotidianas en el hogar.

En mi primer día de la madre como una madre doliente, pues ya había pasado casi un año desde la muerte fetal de mi bebé, Jonathan. Ese año en particular, no quería un día de descanso. Ese año en particular, no era que quería un día de descanso, sino que quería el día solo para poder enfrentar mi inmensa tristeza de no tener a mis dos hijos conmigo. Al año siguiente, había cambiado mi perspectiva sobre el día de la madre. Decidí que no deseaba o necesitaba un día de descanso ese día. En cambio, encontré que deseaba profundamente hacer todo para y con mi hijo. Necesitaba ser activamente una mamá ese día. Además, empecé una nueva tradición que cuando él me dice, “Feliz día de la madre,” Respondo con “gracias por hacerme una mamá.” Y realmente lo digo con sinceridad. Llegué increíblemente cerca de perderlo a él cuando nació, Jonathan estaba muerto, y nuestro tercer hijo fue un aborto involuntario. Si no fuera por Byron, Jr., no tendría el privilegio de tener un hijo en la tierra a quien poder educar.

Ahora siento que yo veo y observo el día de la madre con ojos diferentes que las mamás que nunca han tenido una pérdida o nunca han sufrido problemas de fertilidad. Tantas mujeres, en mi opinión, sienten que tienen ganado el derecho a honor y lealtad, en lugar de ser sumamente agradecidas por poder llegar a ser mamás. Muchas mujeres toman el hermoso regalo de la maternidad por concedido, y es cierto, estoy segura de que yo también lo hice, antes de perder a Jonathan. La muerte de Jonathan me enseñó a apreciar cada día, cada evento y cada etapa que llegamos a experimentar con nuestro hijo de 20 años, que ya es estudiante de segundo año en el colegio. Nosotros nunca nos perdimos un juego de pelota, nunca nos perdimos una actuación de la banda, y todavía participamos en cualquier etapa recorrida y por recorrer y aún haremos grandes fiestas para sus cumpleaños. Nos dimos cuenta hace años que sólo tenemos una oportunidad de criar a un hijo, y nosotros queremos asegurarlos de que lo haremos sin ningún arrepentimiento en el futuro.

Así que realmente, cada día es día de la madre para mi. Estoy enormemente agradecida por mis tres hijos. Aunque dos de ellos nacieron en su hogar celestial, sigo siendo la madre de ellos y estoy agradecida más allá de las palabras que cada uno de ellos me hizo mamá!

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

Safe in His hands,
Secure in His love,
When Life gets too hard,
Just look above.

For our Fathers:

It must be very difficult
To be a man in grief,
Since “men don’t cry”
And “men are strong”
No tears can bring relief.

It must have been very difficult
To stand up to the test,
And field the calls and visitors
So she could get some rest.

They ask if she’s all right
And what she’s been through.
But seldom take his hand and ask,
“My friend, but how are you?”

You hear her sometimes at night
And you think your heart will break.
You dry her tears and comfort her,
But “stays strong” for her sake.

It must be very difficult
To start each day anew.
And try to be so very brave
You lost your baby, too.

For our Mothers:

Time has taken me from you,
although not very far.
I’ll be watching through the sunshine
And through the brightest star.

I’ll be watching you,
from the heavens up above.
So take good care of yourself
and carry all my love.

If you’re ever wondering
if I’m there,
Here’s where you can start.
Take a look inside yourself
deep within your heart.

I’ll always be your baby,
your child, your best friend.
So anytime you need me,
close your eyes, I’m back again.

www.MissingSolace.com
Retrieved April 7, 2012
“... 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 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.