

May, 2012

Sharing Parents is a Sacramento based non-profit organization devoted to supporting parents who have experienced the loss of a baby from the time of conception through early infancy.

Our Purpose is to provide a safe environment where grieving parents with similar experiences can come together and share their feelings about the loss and the love of their babies. Our meetings are also a place where parents express the love they have for their baby in their compassion for others, where they can give and receive emotional support by sharing common experiences and learn about the natural grief process while working through and resolving their loss.

We Offer a variety of meetings and support services that are designed to help parents throughout the different stages of their grief. There is never a fee to attend our meetings.

Our Meeting Place

Mercy Women's Center
 650 Howe Avenue, Ste #530
 Sacramento, CA 95825

**Our Mailing Address
 & Phone Number**

Sharing Parents
 P.O. Box 19538
 Sacramento, CA 95819-0538
 (916) 424-5150

Upcoming General Meetings

May 6 : Mother's Day – Art project
 June 10 : Father's Day – Father Group Discussion
 July 8 : Friends & Family
 August 12 : Guest Speaker

Subsequent Pregnancy Meetings

May 27 : Subsequent Pregnancy
 June 24 : Subsequent Pregnancy
 July 22 : Subsequent Pregnancy
 August 26 : Subsequent Pregnancy

Inside this issue:

Message from Pres.....	2
Remembering our Babies.....	3
SP Update.....	5
News.....	6
Passages.....	8
Mothers Day.....	10
Librarian's Corner.....	11
Announcements.....	13
Butterfly Order Form.....	14
Love Gifts.....	15

When someone comes into our lives . . . and they are too quickly gone, they leave footprints on our hearts . . . and their memory stays with us forever.

2012 Sharing Parents Volunteers

President

Rebecca Erickson

Vice President

Deanna Lockhart

Secretary

Noël Lehman

Treasurer

Ken Hisey

Past President

Kristie Avila

Short Term Grief Coordinator

Stacey Hisey

**Pregnancy Interruption
Coordinator**

Erin Greenough

Listening Line Coordinator

Lynne Genzel

Listening Line Volunteers

Molly Lawrence

Noël Lehman

Oct. Memorial Coordinator

Jennifer Stiltz

Community Outreach

Kristin Lunardi

Event/Fundraiser Coordinator

OPEN

Librarian

Rebecca Erickson

Newsletter Editor

Brion Maciel

Newsletter Assistant

Allison Clavel

Webmaster

Ken Hisey

General Volunteers:

Shannon Anderson,
Sarah & Nelson Canales,
Neil Genzel,

Molly Lawrence, Laura McHugh,
Ryan Stiltz, Tzeli Triantafillou

Message from the President:

Spring—nature's season of birth—is clearly here. Flowers are in bloom everywhere, yet some of us are *not* enjoying the flowers. Some of us may feel stuck in winter, nature's season of dormancy and death. Even though the seasons change, we may feel at a standstill grieving the loss of our baby or babies.

The upcoming months of May and June bring us Mother's Day and Father's Day—days that can be very difficult for parents who have experienced the death of a child during pregnancy or early infancy. July also brings the seventh anniversary of my daughter's death. In previous years, I would imagine what Emma would be like and what she would be doing. I imagined her taking her first steps, learning to talk, learning to read, the first day of kindergarten. But this year, I am experiencing an additional loss as I realize her personality and interests would be dictating much more what she would be doing as a seven year old. If her umbilical cord had not failed her seven years ago, would she be a soccer player like her big brother? Would she be a pure tomboy like her younger sister? Would she want to ride horses or take ballet? I feel further disconnected from what she would have been . . . and what she would have become.

I hope that on this May Day, and in the months that follow, that you recognize yourself as a parent worthy of recognition regardless of whether you have any living children at home. Maybe you will be able to enjoy a flower or two—or not! Whatever your needs, please be kind to yourself wherever you may be in your grief journey—in whichever season you may find yourself.

Rebecca Erickson
Sharing Parent's 2012 President

Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are difficult times for us. We remember with love....

MAY

Pedro Adame
Faith Annalyse Alvarez
Taylor Reese Bacon
Payton Hadley Bazzocco
Kierran Black
Caleb Michael Brown
Emelia Burns
Baby Camarena
Grace Marie Canady
Michael Enrique Canales
Madaleine Joy Canimo
Annabelle Olivia Castablo
Jack Thomas Clauer
Johnathan Constantine
Baby Crawford
Baby Crawford
Baby Crawford

Benjamin Dirish
Franklin Dirish, Jr.
Samantha Emery
Michael Esteada
Millie Rose Genzel
Timothy W. Gergen, Jr.
Klayton Javon Hooper
Baby Jensen
Kandance Lyric Kaplan-Samuels
Gavin Kalani Kawelo
Charlie Kingston
Baby Krebs
Bjorn Erik Law
Grace Lindeman
Paul Lintz
Sarah Lintz
Nicholas Lunardi

Mark O'Brien, Jr.
Baby Pethel
Matthew Provost
Santia Sargeant
Baby Boy Scacco
Maria Elizabeth Schubert
Jashua Zane Shunk
Ashley Grace Sisson
Babies Small
Sidney Marie Smith
Baby SMith
Rebecca Grace Spangler
Gavin Thomas Stamm
Baby Tan
Sophie Tye
Chek
Sophia Shaw
Jacob Zaretsky

JUNE

Brady Ryan Adam
Isabelle Adams
Andrew Bond Dos Reis
Mateo Marcos Bravo
Crystal Campbell
Matthew Cleaves
Baby Cromeenes
Josiah Nicolas Davidson
Hannah Noel Crews
Annabelle Dorothy Day
Erin Leigh Fink
Jacob Fink
Baby Fisk
Jasmine Allen Ford

Isac Dailon Goldman
Jack Franklin Hisey
Julian Jackson
Hope Kelley
Timothy John Kilkelly
Kyla Knighton
Baby Latino
Baby Legrand
Baby Levy
Selma Livadic
Tessa Elizabeth Lockhart-Ralston
Baby Lopez
Puter Martinez-Gardner

Baby McCornell
Elijah Loren Meyer
Derrick Morgan
Ethan Michael Peters
Sara Lopez Rye
Justin Michael Sanders
Issac Anthony Sheff
Baby Shields
Summer Olivia Sprenger
Noah Joshua Sung
Jacob Zaretsky
Wyatt Andrew Nowicki

Names are entered through the sign-in sheet at all Sharing Parents meetings.

Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are difficult times for us. We remember with love....

JULY

Baby Beck
Baby Binns
Thaddeus Lawrence Birdtail
Kaleb Julius Bracy
Baby Bracy
Tea Elyse Cepeda
Leah Grace Clavel
Brian Cleaves
Baby Davis
Kaleb Reyes Delacruz
Sarah Helen Delp
Jaden Christian Denham
Rachel Joyce Encinas
Michael Farquar
John Silva Fialho IV
Olivia Fillion
Peanut Fong
Baby Ford

Baby Fosco
Spartacus Gone
Livia Darling Somera
Andrew Shaw
Emma Margaret Guelker
Helena Grace Gundersen-Lehman
Christian Higa
Hayden Matthew Hope
Hunter Aaron Hope
Sarah Leigh Howitson
Shelby Jean Isola
Terrence Brophy Jett
John Xander Jones III
Audrey Elise Krater
Zachary Mikalos Kristianous
Valerie June Lozano

Zaia K'lea Marquez
Joslyn Isabel McBroom
Leo Davies Melbourne
Baby Peterson
Baby Boy Rouse
Baby Siino
Olivia Arabella Sillion
Baby Sperry
Maurice Adams Steptoe
Baby Szillinsky
Andrea Grace Teixeira
Jordan Vose
Presley Vose
Baby Westrup
Taylor Javon Lee Wilson
Joaquin Victor Torrence

We offer our sincere apologies to the family of Mark Brittain, Jr. whose last name was misspelled in our last newsletter. We take great effort to make sure the baby names are correct. Despite our best efforts, occasionally mistakes do happen. We understand how painful it can be to have a child's name misspelled. We care deeply about this. If your baby's or babies' names have been misspelled in the past newsletter, *please* contact us at sharingparents@yahoo.com so we can correct this before they are printed again. Thank you for your help in making our newsletter accurate.

Names are entered through the sign-in sheet at all Sharing Parents meetings.

Sharing Parents Update

The 2012 goal of Sharing Parents is to increase utilization of our services. We are achieving this goal by training our volunteers so they are better able to support bereaved parents. We are also leveraging social media as a way of getting the word out about our free services. Our new open community facebook page will be launched within a few weeks. We are continuing our outreach to the community. This year volunteers have already presented to the Child Abuse Prevention Council, Alta, and a CSUS graduate level counseling class. We have upcoming presentations scheduled with Kaiser, the Breastfeeding Coalition, the Northern California Ob-Gyn Symposium in addition to offering CEU's (Continuing Education Units) in an upcoming presentation to Sutter Memorial nurses and social workers. Through our outreach, we hope to raise the awareness of pregnancy and infant loss in the community as well as make more people aware of the free services Sharing Parents provides.

Our society tends to have difficulty acknowledging and discussing death—let alone deaths that occur during pregnancy and early infancy. Many parents who have experienced a pregnancy or early infancy loss find themselves in a secret club of which no one wants to be a part. All too often, pregnancy and early infancy loss is revealed and discussed only when we learn someone else has undergone a similar loss. Whenever I tell the story of my loss, I inevitably hear that a similar loss has happened to that person's friend, neighbor, sister, etc. There certainly are a lot of us out there. The Centers for Disease Control reports one in every 115 American pregnancies ends in stillbirth. With the Back to Sleep Campaign, SIDS is much more recognized but happens much less often. The American SIDS Institute reports 1 in 2500 US children die of SIDS. Miscarriage rates are usually reported as 1 in 4 pregnancies although some estimates are as high as 1 in 3. Once we or our baby(ies) become a statistic, statistics can lose all meaning. It 100% happened. The more open we are, though, the more we may find that we are not alone in our experiences.

Please help Sharing Parents spread the word about pregnancy and infant loss in the community. If you know of an organization that would benefit from learning about pregnancy and early infancy loss and/or how Sharing Parents supports bereaved parents, please email sharingparents@yahoo.com. Please consider liking us on your facebook page. Please feel free to recommend Sharing Parents to people who you meet who have also experienced losses. Please don't assume that people already know about Sharing Parents. Sometimes it takes a positive referral for someone to try out our meetings. Our General Meetings are open to all parents who have experienced a pregnancy or early infancy loss *regardless of how long ago the loss occurred*. Our Subsequent Pregnancy Meetings are for those considering, or who are currently pregnant with, a pregnancy after a loss. Sometimes it can be helpful to look up the next meeting's day and time for the person and possibly offer to come to a General Meeting with them as a support person. In helping others, we are also helping ourselves.

News

The Sharing Parents' Team walked for the March of Dimes on April 28, 2012. Thanks to Stacey Hisey, our Sharing Parents Coordinator, 46 people were able to walk in honor of 13 babies. We met at the north steps of the State Capitol and chose to walk or run either 3 or 6 miles.



The Sharing Parents Bench in the McKinley Park Rose Garden

Photographed and Reported by Rebecca Erickson

Many people may not realize that Sharing Parents has a bench with a plaque honoring our babies in the Frederick N. Evans Memorial Rose Garden at 33rd and H Street in McKinley Park. The rose garden was recently opened after renovations making it ADA accessible. Even though the benches are still waiting to have the slats attached, the rose garden is in beautiful bloom and I encourage you to visit.

Sharing Parents' annual October Memorial Ceremonies have been held in the Rose Garden at McKinley Park for as long as volunteers can remember. Due to the renovations, the 2011 Sharing Parents October Memorial was held for the first time at the Capital Rose Garden. Last year the volunteers enjoyed the intimate setting and lack of distractions so the 2012 October Memorial will also be held at the Capital Rose Garden. This year's memorial will be held on Sunday October 14, 2012, from 3-5 pm.

The plaque below the Sharing Parents' bench states

***Sharing Parents
... Dedicated to helping
Dedicated to supporting ...
In honor of our babies
1995***

The Sharing Parents bench offers parents and families a place to gather and remember their baby(ies). It is located on the southwest corner of the rose garden center. I personally have used it on several occasions to receive solace and gain inner strength, sometimes alone, sometimes with family.

Home to over 12,000 roses, the McKinley Park Rose Garden is over 1.5 acres and is the largest of Sacramento's Rose Gardens. Specialties include tree roses and blooming perennials. The McKinley Park Rose Garden is one of only 130 All-American Rose Selection display gardens, and is a popular place for casual visitors, weddings, and memorial services. Amid all the beautiful roses, the Sharing Parents' bench can be a soothing place for parents and families to go to remember our babies.



Passages

by Joanne Cacciatore

A pink stripe!
It's positive!
Destiny prevails
screaming, "*This shall be!*"
Ten lunar months shall pass
with or without her participation.

She engages in the battle of denim
as the expanding belly is declared *The Victor!*
And with it comes the tearful quest
toward acceptance of new self
and elastic waistbands.

Tup-tup, tup-tup, tup-tup.
Their eyes dance to the beat
of their unborn sister's heart.

Anticipation.

Hope.

Patience.

Love.

Lessons esoteric

And then off to the sandbox...

What is happening?

Could it be? Yes, a gesture of life.

Maybe just her stomach? Must be indigestion-

No! Again...the flutter of her baby.

It is 2 a.m.

No words.

Just silence and a moment,
a sacred moment.

Tears of joy accessorize the day as
dancing bears and mint green lambs
adorn the walls.

The bassinet awaits to become the warm, safe place
second only to the nest of her arms.

Three weeks remain now.

All eyes turned toward her, waiting for her masterful performance.

She deletes days of the calendar in her mind, July 7, 8, 9...

It is 2 a.m.

Hurry, hurry, hurry.

She fights her body to let her rest.

Elusive sleep is

her only escape from the exhaustion, swelling,
and pain of the tenth month.

Six pillows and bathroom run three.

Her ankles engorged.

The sacrifice of self is palpable.

At times, she feels
trapped in her own body.

Vulnerable. Frightened.

It is 2 a.m.

The journey has taken its toll.

Two more days.

It is 2 a.m., and she gently strokes her abdomen unaware
that their hands meet,
separated only by a few layers of skin and veins
that carry oxygen through her pulsing cord.

They are one.

The sun rises, bringing the morning saunter
but this day will be different.

She collapses as if in prayer

as her body convulses in excruciating pain,

"*Oh my, God!*"

Too fast...it is all too fast.

Rushing, rushing...get the doctor!

"*She is term, contractions every minute...she'll be ready soon!*"

Excited, yes, but scared too! It is happening so fast.

The culmination of her sacrifices

finally yielding the reward.

"*It will be worth it, it will be worth it,*" her mantra.

She fights tears through the ebb and flow of the contractions.

A hodgepodge of white coats,
medicine men and women,

unrecognizable faces sharing in the moment
schooled by choice to bring life into the world.

With brazen confidence the man who will guide
the passage from the womb's safety meets her glance.

And then,

faces transform.

Silence.

There is only silence interrupted
by her moans and the sweat trickling down her forehead.

Their smiles crash like glass,
glances unfamiliar to her.

"*What is happening?!*" she asks in between the pains that com-
mand her attention.

No response,

only looks of panic exchanged between scurries.
screaming repetitions of nothingness.

"*What is happening!?*"

Terror ravages every cell in her body.

His heart is callused like a laborer's hands.

The diagnosis, detached, is louder than anything she's ever
heard:

"*Your baby is dead.*"

"*Your baby is dead.*"

"*Your baby is dead.*"

Please, please turn the volume down.

Passages (cont.)

by Joanne Cacciatore

Contractions every thirty seconds.
No time to think. No La Maze. Too much pain.
Unimaginable pain.
Physical. Spiritual. Mental. Emotional.

"What? No. No. No. No. NO!"

She tries to get up from the bed,
but they hold her down like a prisoner.
What crime has she committed?
"No. I'm leaving. I'm going home."
Stupid, mindless people. Liars.

She protests,
as the contractions bound her and kick her,
and punish her.

Sweat and sorrow
rain like fire from her temples.

Push, push, push.

She can feel her child being born.
Head, elbows, chest. Finally feet emerge
from her Judas body.

Someone puts the camera on slow motion.
Frame by frame, outside herself she watches.

Eyes clenched tight
awaiting, baited breath.

"Cry, baby. Cry for mommy," she pleads in her mind as
she negotiates unsuccessfully: Her life for the baby's.

Still she is gone.

Pink, white, and blue are the choices,
not for lacy dresses but for caskets.

They ask her to choose.

Looking around the formaldehyde-incensed room, planning
her escape,

she cannot see, as the tears asphyxiate her.

Falling to the cold tile

"This just cannot be," she recites repeatedly.

The second hand is in a hurry today.

She begs it to stop, but the time has come.
Reluctantly she places her into the pastel casket
and she bends over to kiss her one final time
as milk burns her breasts in disapproval

Today,

she will bury her beautiful girl,
all eight pounds,
with dark curly hair and porcelain skin.

Cathedral flowers are tied with ribbons of sorrow, and
black limousines stand at attention.

Her anesthetized consciousness fades
in and out, as the sun dances
between summer clouds.

And from the earth that swallows her child
she begs acquittal.

Months later and her mind becomes a dangerous stranger.

Evolution,
bursting explosions, dragging her through the muddy waters of grief
forcing her to swallow the poison of reality,
blinding her, confusing her.

Senseless propaganda in her ears about God's will and time healing
and
still stinging reminders around every corner.

It is 2 a.m.

She curled into her pain, like an embryo
her body bleeding in defiance.
Her soul lay mortally wounded
amongst the shadows
on the dark closet floor
where her elastic-waisted garments hanged,
anointed with French vanilla
and where no one witnessed
as she invited Death to come.

But He declined her offer.

Bastard.

Another time, perhaps?

He left her in the carnage.

Like Gretel, she searches for crumbs of hope
to guide her through the forest,
through the passages of the deepest torment she will ever know.

Not one in the millions
of peoples, languages or philosophies
can begin to speak of
the true torment of a mother
whose child has been ripped, without mercy
from her burning arms.

2,190 days.

Six phantom years.

But love does not decompose as flesh.

Memories try to sneak away when she is not looking.

The alarm sounds and quickly she brings them home.

Edges of the photographs are time-faded and worn from too much
handling,

so she juxtaposes scenes from two worlds
and escapes to the voices of a thousand ghosts.

Yet, in the underground passages of her mind
through the only pardon from darkness
shines the light of hope.

The beauty born of pain

Now she walks the forests thick with grief.

Like Gretel, leaving crumbs for others,
to find their way
and to discover.

It is 2am.

Over and over again.

© 2000, Joanne Cacciatore

What Grieving Moms Want for Mother's Day: 10 Simple Ways to help Moms Cope When Mother's Day Hurts

Acknowledgement is what grieving mother's want most for Mother's Day, suggests a survey by www.thecomfortcompany.net, a website that specializes in meaningful sympathy gifts. The online survey asked "What can others do to ease your pain on Mother's Day". Over 80 percent of the 200 respondents answered, "Recognize that I am a mother".

"While Mother's Day is generally considered to be a day of celebration, for many women it is a day of pain and loss" says Renee Wood, former social worker and founder of The Comfort Company. "It's important to remember those moms who have had a failed pregnancy or who have lost a child at any age."

In response to the survey results, thecomfortcompany.net has issued a list of ten simple ways to reach out to a grieving mother on this difficult holiday.

- 1. Recognize that they are a mother:** Offer a hug and a "Happy Mother's Day". Send a card to let them know you remember they are a mother even though their child is not with them physically.
- 2. Acknowledge they have had a loss:** Express the message, "I know this might be a difficult day for you. I want you to know that I am thinking about you."
- 3. Use their child's name in conversation:** One mother responded, "People rarely speak his name anymore, but when they do it's like music to my ears".
- 4. Plant a living memorial:** A tree or rose bush, like memories, will grow in beauty as the years pass.
- 5. Visit the grave site:** Many mothers felt that it was "extremely thoughtful" when others visited their child's grave site and left flowers or a small pebble near the headstone.
- 6. Light a candle:** Let the mother know you will light a candle in memory of their child on Mother's Day.
- 7. Share a memory or pictures of the child:** Give the gift of a memory. One mother wrote that the "greatest gift you can give is a heartfelt letter about my child and a favorite memory with them".
- 8. Send a gift of remembrance:** Many mothers felt a small gift would be comforting. Suggestions included: an angel statue, jewelry, a picture frame, a library book or toy donation in the child's name or anything personalized.
- 9. Don't try to minimize the loss:** Avoid using any clichés that attempt to explain the death of a child. ("God needed another angel.") Secondly, don't try to find anything positive about the loss ("You still have two healthy children").
- 10. Encourage Self-Care:** Self-care is an important aspect of the "healing the mind and spirit effort" according to several mothers. Encourage a grieving mother to take care of herself. Give her a gift certificate to a day spa or any place where she can be pampered.

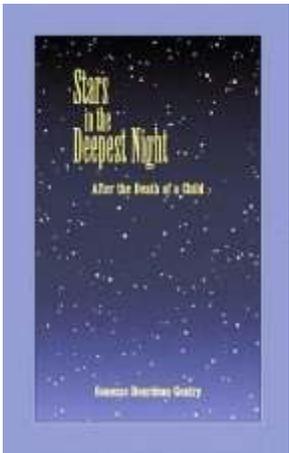
Article courtesy of

The Comfort Company
www.thecomfortcompany.net

Librarian's Corner

Book Reviews by Rebecca Erickson

We have two new books of poetry by Genesee Bourdeau Gentry in the Sharing Parents' Lending Library: *Stars in the Deepest Night: After the Death of a Child* (1999) and *Catching the Light: Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child* (2009). The poem by Gentry, "Grief's Garden," reprinted with permission after this book review appropriately appears in both books. *Stars in the Deepest Night* describes the intense grief many feel in the earlier years after the loss of a child while *Catching the Light* describes the hope and positive way that our grief can change our lives. I believe many Sharing Parents readers will be able to relate to the grief journey Gentry describes in the poems of both of these books.



Stars in the Deepest Night contains grief poems like "First Thanksgiving," "First Christmas," "Your Birthday" and "Searching Through the Darkness." Gentry's first book also touches on how grief can change friendships. In poems like "Unspoken," the bereaved is speaking to someone who wants their old friend back: "The person you still/want me to be/is gone, locked away,/and I don't have the key." (34) Bereaved readers may relate to feelings of isolation when friends desert us at a time when we need their support the most: "I was broken, defeated,/starved for friendship, for care./I peered out from the shadows/and you were not there." (37) Gentry's grief journey in *Stars in the Deepest Night* ends after four years of mourning her dead daughter, Lori: "We think we are accustomed/to the fact that you are gone./Then here it is- your birthday-/and the memories come on." (69) Gentry concludes the book with a poem to her living daughter, Megan, and with two poems written by Megan about her sister, Lori.

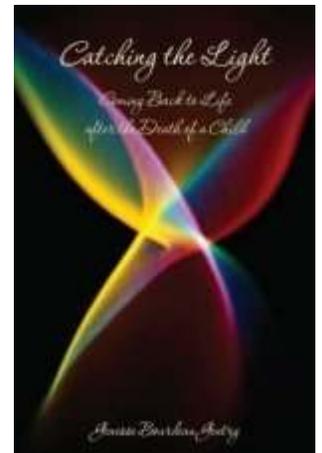
Dedicated to both of Gentry's beloved daughters, *Catching the Light* begins with "The Promise" in which Gentry promises her deceased daughter, Lori:

For if your death destroyed my life,
made both our lives a waste,
it would deny your life's meaning
and all the love you gave.

...

In your honor, I live my life,
now living it for two (3-4).

The overarching theme of the book is putting the shards of our lives back together in a different way to make a beautiful prism capable of reflecting light as opposed to the flat pre-grief glass which let the light shine right through: "Instead of light shining straight through us, it is captured by all our facets, each finely polished by our deepening into grief." As Gentry explains at the beginning of the book: "A prism is only glass until light catches it. The more light hits it, the more colors are revealed, and the more the rainbows are reflected." (no page number)



I was fortunate to attend a "Grieving Through Writing" workshop given at a The Compassionate Friends meeting by Gentry. I've been recently struck by a similar sort of message from artists who state their creativity came out of the grief for their dead child. Gentry describes this in one of her poems to her deceased daughter, Lori, as the "poetic words, you gave to me". Gentry began writing her poems two and a half years after losing Lori. From what I understand, it seems that embracing the pain of grief puts us more in the right hemisphere of the brain from where art is said to come. I asked Genesee Gentry to describe the process for the Sharing Parents newsletter:

Before my daughter Lori's death, I had never written poetry. After her death, I was given the ability to express and better understand my feelings in the form of poetry. I have learned that this miracle of creativity after deep loss isn't unique. William Bridges, in his book, *The Way of Transition*, says that when our lives are devastated and our world collapses, we are thrown into something he calls "the neutral zone." This can last for months or years, depending on the loss, until we finally grab back onto life again in a new way. And that time spent in the neutral zone can be the most creative of our lives. Now that I have grabbed back onto life, the poems don't come as often, but when they do, I am so grateful.

And just as important to me, when I hear from readers that my poems are truly helping them in their own grief, I can't tell you how grateful and blessed it makes me feel. It always felt like the poems were gifts sent to help me through and I realize they were also sent to help others.

Grief's Garden

by Genessee Bourdeau Gentry

When our innocence has ended
and the dark night has begun,
despair and heartache vie with numbness,
mind and body, shocked, unstrung.

Levels of pain and understanding
must be reached 'fore we see gain.
Taking longer than expected,
no one else can know the pain.

Grief, like clearing virgin farmland,
full of boulders, stumps and stones,
back breaking and bone crushing,
and, in great part, done alone.

Think when feeling strong emotion,
"Another boulder moved today."
When it's felt with all your being,
it can then be moved away.

If we feel the stone's not moving,
we may have to look beneath,
bring to sunlight what's in shadow,
so what's there may be released.

Treat yourself to gifts and blessings
that will help to keep you strong.
Give yourself to happy moments,
feel each feeling, then move on.

Work and work to clear the garden,
feel transcendence in the toil.
Under all the stones and boulders
will be found much fertile soil.

Watered by our weary weeping,
warmed by tender words and sighs,
green shoots sprouting all around us,
springtime comes through open eyes.

When we look to find what's growing,
we are shocked to see ourselves.
Now replacing fearsome chaos,
an awakening garden dwells.

As at first we glimpse the garden,
the next moment it feels gone.
It's a painful kind of growing,
falling back, then moving on.

Since this garden's fed by feelings,
some form mist to block the view.
If we try to feel them wholly,
they will always move on through.

Just when we think we're finished,
that the hardest work is done,
there before us, weeds and brambles,
so immense they shade the sun.

Grief's garden work's not easy.
But from deep inside the soul
will come strength and deep compassion.
With love and care it will take hold.

And our loved ones watch the growing;
somewhere they are growing too.
And the tears that flood the garden
create rainbows and clear views.

With our gardens we pay tribute
to our loved ones who have gone.
Their memorials are our gardens;
through our gardens they live on.

Announcements



A Special Thank You from Sharing Parents

Thank you to Abi Crouch, founder of A Heart to Hold, which makes and distributes pillow hearts weighted to the baby's (ies') weight(s). Abi made pillow hearts for recent Short Term Grief Participants who requested them. Abi has also put together our new open facebook page!



Thank you to Kathleen Montgomery, Director of the Mercy Women's Center, for her unending support of Sharing Parents. In addition to providing a meeting space for Sharing Parents, Kathleen donated to the March of Dimes on behalf of Sharing Parents and "the outstanding service" Sharing Parents provides.

Sharing Parents thanks you both!



News about the Sharing Parents Bunko Tournament will be coming soon! If you would like to donate raffle prizes or be contacted regarding the Bunko Tournament, please email sharingparents@yahoo.com

Call for Newsletter articles or submissions, especially from newly bereaved parents:

For some, writing about their grief can be therapeutic. Please share your experiences with others in the newsletter. Please send newsletter contributions to sharingparents@yahoo.com with "Newsletter Contribution" in the Subject Line. The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is July 15, 2012.



26th Annual October Memorial

Sunday, October 14, 2012
at the Capitol Park Rose Garden at 3:00pm

Butterfly Release Form

At the October Memorial there will be a time for parents, family and friends to release butterfly(ies) in honor of their baby(ies).

Orders and payment **must** be received by **August 26, 2012** in order for your butterfly(ies) order to be placed.

The cost is **\$20.00 per butterfly.**

You may visit our website at www.sharingparents.org/events.htm to place and pay for your butterfly order via the Sharing Parents Pay Pal account.

OR

Please include this form along with your check when you mail in your order.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

I would like to release _____ butterfly(ies)

Check total: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **Sharing Parents**

Mail completed order form and payment to:

**Sharing Parents
PO Box 19538
Sacramento, CA 95819**



Love Gifts

To honor your child's memory, send a "Love Gift" to Sharing Parents. A Love Gift is a monetary donation given in honor of someone or as a memorial to a baby, relative or friend. Not only will you be memorializing your baby but you will be helping Sharing Parents, which survives on donations and fundraisers. If you would like to donate a Love Gift to us, please fill out the form below. The deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is July 15, 2012.

We welcome your Love Gifts in support of Sharing Parents. A Love Gift is a monetary donation made to honor your child's memory. Please make checks payable to **Sharing Parents of Sacramento**.

(Donations to Sharing Parents are tax deductible.)

Enclose your check, attach any special message to this form and mail to:

Sharing Parents
P.O. Box 19538
Sacramento, CA 95819-0538

In Loving Memory of:

Date of Birth:

Date of Death/Loss:

Donor Name:

Address: