

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS SHARE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

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SHARING NEWS

FOR NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

MAY/JUNE 2008 ISSUE

BUTTERFLY RELEASE ON MAY 8TH

NWA SHARE Parent Support Group will hold its 4th annual Butterfly Release on May 8, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Circle of Life on Jones Rd. Springdale, AR. Everyone is invited to this event who wants to remember a little one that is not here and to remember that there is hope after a loss.



our new friend that wouldn't leave. It flew to her for a few minutes, but once again, flew back to me. She said, "you know, that's a special spirit".

Finally, after 40 minutes with the butterfly, it flew away. I was 9 weeks pregnant at the

time with our first, and 2 days later, I miscarried. I feel like this little butterfly was my baby, saying "I love you, wish I could stay, but I have to leave you now." Every time I see a butterfly now, I think of all the hope for the future I have and beauty in the world. I know that although this child wasn't meant to be, my husband and I still feel like we were able to "play" with our child for at least a little while.

I hope to see everyone at the service and that for a short time maybe you can find some comfort and a sign of hope for the future.

Submitted by Debbie Rodgers, R.N.C
NWA Share President

Butterflies represent hope. The following story by Regina from El Paso reflects this:

I have been seeing them everywhere lately. Reminders of what I encountered a few weeks ago. I was swimming with my husband at his parents' pool and a small purple/white butterfly landed on my bathing suit. I called my husband over to look at it before it flew away. He teased me because the butterfly wouldn't leave me. I would move my hand close to it and it would move to my shoulder, I pulled on my shoulder strap and it clung on. I dipped lower into the water and it would fly to my husband's arm. For 20 minutes we 'played' with the butterfly. I went to get my mother-in-law to show her



NWA SHARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Debbie Rodgers, R.N.C.
VICE PRESIDENT: Mary Loftus, R.N.
TREASURER: Lee Edwards, L.P.N
SECRETARY: Kerrie Tankersley, parent
Fundraising: Scott Tankersley, parent
Grants: Ronissa Adams M.Ed., LPC, parent
Outreach: Karen O'Donohoe, parent

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

MAY

May 6th, 6:00 pm Fundraising Committee
May 8th, 7:00-9 pm Butterfly Release and Parent Social
May 11th Mother's Day
May 20th, 6:00 pm NWA Share Board Meeting
May 27th, 6:00 pm Angel of Hope Planning Committee Meeting, RSVP to Kerrie.

JUNE

June 3rd, 6:00 pm Fundraising Committee
June 12th, 6:30 pm Parent Workshop
June 12th, 7:30 pm Parent Support Meeting
June 12th, 7:00 pm Subsequent Pregnancy Support Meeting (upstairs in the hospitality room)
June 15th Father's Day
June 17th, 6:00 pm NWA Share Board Meeting
June 24th, 6:00 pm Angel of Hope Meeting

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

BUTTERFLY RELEASE UPCOMING MEETING DATES	1
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S DAY	2
EXPECTING AGAIN SUBSEQUENT PREGNANCY	3
COOKBOOK FUNDRAISER INFO	4
COOKBOOK SELF MAILER FORM	SEE INSERT
HOPE FOR THE DAY FIND YOUR SPECIAL FLOWER	5
JUNE PARENT WORKSHOP 2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS	6

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's Spring time again. This year is moving right along. As we see new growth break through the ground, I hope that this Spring, each one of you may be doing the same with your grief. Breaking through grief to find a new normal is very hard work. Remember that there is nothing wrong with reaching out for help. Our parent support group will always be there to assist you.

The members of the administrative committee of NWA SHARE Parent Support Group are reaching out to you and the community for help. We now have a location for the Angel of Hope to be placed. The city of West Fork is allowing us to place the statue in their Riverside Park. This will be the first Angel of Hope in Arkansas and we are very excited about bringing the angel to our area. For those who are not familiar with the Angle of Hope, it came from the book *The Christmas Box*. Since the writing of that book, it has become known internationally as a monument to all infants and children who have been lost.

Finding the location was just the beginning. We are looking for people interested in helping with fundraising and planning. We already have some very talented people who are working through their grief by trying to make something positive come from their experience and helping others who have been through similar experiences. We need many more of you to help us make this happen for our parents and families who need a place to remember their children. If you are able to assist in any way or want to learn more about the statue please call us or send an email to info@nwashare.org. Please help us remember the little ones who are not with us.

Submitted by Debbie Rodgers, R.N.C. and President of NWA Share Parent Support Group



REMEMBERING ON MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S DAY

Let us begin by saying Happy Mother's Day and Happy Father's Day to all of our Share parents. This time of year can be a very difficult time, particularly after losing a child. Many parents consider Mother's Day or Father's Day their most difficult holiday.

For parents who have no other living children, others sometimes overlook the fact that they are still parents. For those who do have other living children, others do not realize that the absence of one of them on these special days can make the day bittersweet.

Many parents spend the day wondering if they are, in fact, parents. If you fall into this group, remember that you are not alone. 900,000 – 1 million parents in the U.S. are also facing this question after a pregnancy loss. And the answer is YES – you are parents. The best gift you can give yourself on these special days is the acknowledgement that you are a

mother and a father. You may not have your baby to hold in your arms, but you do hold them in your hearts.

Many parents find that doing something special for their missing child gives them the ability to make it through the day because they feel they have not "forgotten" their child. We encourage you to use the holiday to remember your baby, rather than making it a dreaded event to endure. Nothing can lessen the pain you will feel on these days, but you can make sure it has meaning for you. This can be a great time for a husband and wife to take a walk, have a quiet dinner, or set aside some special time to remember your child together.

You also need to make sure to let your family and friends know what you need. If you do not feel comfortable being recognized as a mother or father at a function, substitute it with an activity you would feel good about. Some parents, knowing that their church has something special planned

for Mother's Day and Father's Day, choose to worship somewhere else or not attend services at all. If this is the case, perhaps someone can speak to the minister ahead of time so things can be modified to include *all* parents. There will surely be other mothers and fathers in similar situations who would appreciate the situation being handled sensitively.

The way you choose to spend the holiday should be your decision. Make your plans ahead of time and make sure to make time to remember and talk about your baby. It will make you "feel" more like a mom and dad on the very day designed to do so.

Other ideas to remember your child: 1) a card; 2) a remembrance gift; 3) a donation in your child's name; 4) visiting the gravesite and leaving a small gift; 5) a piece of jewelry that includes your child's birthstone.

Submitted by Karen O'Donohoe
Parent and Board Member



Expecting again...

Greg and Jennifer Patience are expecting a baby in October 2008 while remembering their first child, Trevor Leland, who left us on July 25, 2007 due to an unexplained stillbirth.



SUBSEQUENT PREGNANCY SUPPORT MEETINGS

NWA SHARE Parent Support Group is excited to announce that we will be having a Subsequent Pregnancy Support Meeting. This will be a trial period for these new meetings. They will be June 12th, July 10th and Aug. 14th, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Circle of Life on Jones Rd. located in Springdale. This support group will address the special concerns about making the decision to become pregnant, being pregnant and preparing for delivery after experiencing a loss.

If you are interested in attending the Subsequent Pregnancy Support Group please call **479-305-8588** to register.

We will continue to have the regular support group meeting also as planned on the 2nd Thursday of every month for newly bereaved parents or parents who need support at anytime after the loss of their baby.



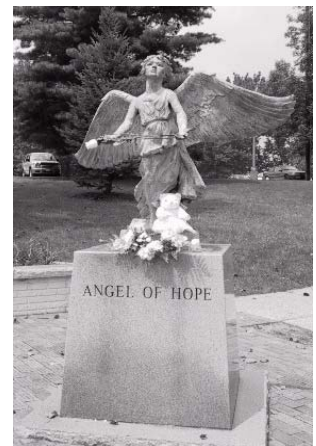
THE SHOOTING STAR

Although my prayers were answered and my wishes granted, something terrible has happened. My baby has died. I don't know what to do or think. I have all of these emotions raging through my body. What did I do wrong? What happened? Why did God take my baby and my hopes and dreams along with him? I will never see her take her first steps, never see him learn to ride his bike. I loved my baby from the moment I found out I was expecting and I still love my baby. I will always love my baby.

Submitted by Lois Cobb, parent

PARENTS WHO ARE EXPECTING AFTER A LOSS OR HAVE A NEW ARRIVAL TO ANNOUNCE, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO kerrie@nwashare.org AND IT WILL BE LISTED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER. PHOTOS AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE ANY PHOTOS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE.



The "Christmas Box Angel" is better known as the Angel of Hope. There are currently over 75 angel statues across the United States and our angel location will be the first of its kind anywhere in Arkansas. We are excited and look forward to bringing this wonderful tribute to our area.

THE ANGEL OF HOPE IS COMING TO NORTHWEST ARKANSAS.

We are in the process of gathering information and support. ***WE NEED YOU!*** We need parents, friends, and families to join us on the Angel of Hope planning committee so that we may all work together to do something amazing in our community for bereaved parents. This garden isn't just for those who've lost a baby, but for those who've lost a child of any age. The statue will be surrounded by a beautiful remembrance garden full of peace and tranquility. Please contact Kerrie Tankersley at kerrie@nwashare.org or call 479-601-4959 to sign up to be a committee member. This will only mean meeting one night a month plus working occasionally to help us bring the Angel to Northwest Arkansas. It is a worthy cause to work for and will offer our community a wonderful garden full of hope for the future.

COOKBOOK FUNDRAISER HAS BEGUN!



Recipes are due no later than May 15th. Get your recipes submitted today!

NWA SHARE is kicking off a grassroots fundraiser with the creation of the first NWA SHARE cookbook! You can help our effort by donating recipes and reserving your copy today. Each recipe can be made in remembrance of a child, which will be listed with your recipe. Due to limited space we are only able to accept five recipes per individual.

We request you submit your recipes by May 15, 2008. Our goal for this cookbook is to collect 150 recipes. Each book is \$10.00 and you can reserve your copy now. All proceeds will stay with NWA SHARE, helping us to continue our support for your family and other families within the surrounding area.

For more information or to request more recipe forms, you can email: scott@nwashare.org.

Look for the insert in this month's newsletter!

APRIL'S PARENT WORKSHOP A SUCCESS!

April 2008 – Stampin' Up! Parent Workshop

Our special project for April was a Stampin' Up! workshop, where parents first learned how to stamp and were able to use those skills to create a unique memory page.

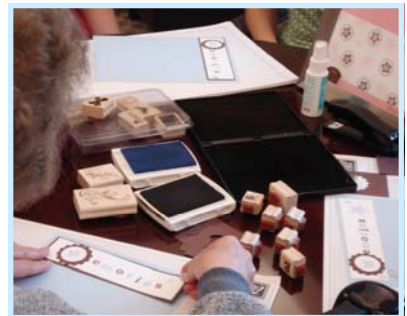
Memory pages, created by stamping or scrapbooking, are a wonderful way to document your child's life. It allows you to creatively express your love for your child by adding pictures, mementoes and special details that remind you of your baby.

Creating a card for your spouse during Mother's Day or Father's Day is also a nice idea for many parents. Remember that you *are* parents and the love you have for your child is very real and everlasting. It is important to remember our spouse in thoughtful ways as you grieve and heal together.

Thank you to Carey Freeman, friend of a bereaved parent, for donating her time, expertise and supplies to our group. Her generosity is kindly appreciated by all who attended the activity.

Submitted by Karen O'Donohoe

Parent and Board Member, Outreach Committee



ATTN: Cookbooks
Northwest Arkansas SHARE
P.O. Box 8512
Fayetteville, AR 72703



From:

I don't recall how it came to be that I was on a weekly newsletter for grief, but I did. Each week another message is sent to help me in my journey. Each one fills me with thought, hope, and love for my son. It always seems to hit the nail right on the head. I want to share one with you. If you like it, please stop by this website, www.clarahinton.com and sign up to receive her weekly newsletters for anyone experiencing the loss of a loved one.

Submitted by Kerrie Tankersley
Parent and NWA Share Secretary

HOPE FOR THE DAY

Robert Frost said it best when he penned, "The sun was warm but the wind was chill. You know how it is with an April day when the sun is out and the wind is still. You're one month on in the middle of May. But, if you so much as dare to speak, a cloud comes over the sunlit arch, a wind comes off a frozen peak, and you're two months back in the middle of March."

So it is with grieving. One moment we are feeling good, being warmed by the sunshine of life. We are active and happy and humming a happy melody that's coming from our heart. Then, without warning, the storm clouds roll in and suddenly we find ourselves in the middle of bad weather. We are seeking shelter from the storm, and we feel cold, afraid, and so alone.

These sudden steps back into grief will not always be so intense, and the spells of grief will grow farther and farther apart. We won't linger as long on our grief, and we'll feel more in control of what is happening.

We will probably never be totally free of the bad weather storm clouds of grief, but neither would we want to be because those periods of longing are really those times that keep us connected with the one we love.

As for those times when we leap into happy moments? I remember the joy I felt watching the vibrant colors of the rainbow following my storm!
--Clara Hinton

"Hope is what we count on when the storm clouds hover nearby. Hope gives us the strength to hold on! -C. Hinton

"Based on research from the Harvard School of Public Health and the Nurses' Health Study, *The Fertility Diet* (McGraw Hill, 2007) can help you avoid the most common cause of infertility: difficulty ovulating. Scientists found that women eating low-fat or fat-free dairy are more likely to have trouble getting pregnant, while full-fat dairy has the opposite effect. The authors recommend one to two servings of full-fat dairy each day, such as whole milk or cheese, while trying to conceive. It's a temporary change, so don't worry too much about the extra saturated fat. The rest of the plan is a balanced diet of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lean protein and encourages a healthy body weight, exercise, and taking a multivitamin with folic acid."

- This article came from Americanbaby.com - April 2008 edition.



FIND YOUR SPECIAL FLOWER

January – Carnation or Snowdrop
February – Violet or Primrose
March – Daffodil or Jonquil
April – Daisy or Sweet Pea
May – Lily of the Valley or Hawthorn
June – Rose or Honeysuckle
July – Larkspur or Water Lily
August – Gladiolas or Poppy
September – Aster or Morning Glory
October – Calendula or Osmos
November – Chrysanthemum
December – Narcissus or Holly

Please don't forget to join us for our JUNE PARENT WORKSHOP. See the back of this newsletter for full details, visit our website, www.nwashare.org, or call Karen O'Donohoe for more information at (479) 530-3315 or karebrenn@yahoo.com.





NORTHWEST ARKANSAS SHARE PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP

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JUNE PARENT WORKSHOP

The spring season is often thought of as a time of rebirth. When flowers begin to bloom and the birds come out to play. This brings another great opportunity to remember your child in a special way – in your garden. Get outside and enjoy the spring weather and plant a special flower or bush that will remind you of your baby. Maybe choose a plant for its special name, month, or just a favorite of yours.

In June, our parents are invited to come together and create a personalized flower pot to add their favorite flowers to. It will be a perfect addition to your garden area or a favorite window spot in your home. And most importantly, it will be a beautiful reminder of your child as you watch your garden grow and blossom.

Parents will meet on June 12th at the Circle of Life center at 6:30 pm. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Karen at (479) 530-3315 or karebrenn@yahoo.com.

Look inside this edition of our newsletter to find “*your special flower*”.

2008 CALENDAR

All meetings and events are held at the Circle of Life Hospice Center located in Springdale unless otherwise specified.

Monthly Parent Support Meetings (7 p.m.)

(Every 2nd Thursday of the month in the library)

May 8	June 12 (@ 7:30 pm)
July 10	August 14
September 11	October 9
November 13	December - no parent meeting held

****NEW****

Subsequent Pregnancy Support Meetings (7 pm)

June 12 @ 7-9 in upstairs Hospitality Room.
July 10 @ 7-9 in upstairs Hospitality Room.
August 14 @ 7-9 in upstairs Hospitality Room

ANNUAL EVENTS:

Butterfly Release - May 8 @ 7-9 (replaces parent meeting)
Walk to Remember - October 12th @ 2:00 p.m.
Christmas Vigil - December 7th @ 6:00 p.m.

Upcoming Parent Workshops (new!)

June 12 @ 6:30-7:30 pm June Potted Plants Parent Workshop, Parent meeting will be held following the workshop. You are welcome to stay if you would like.