

November 2006 Newsletter

The Annual IRIS

Holiday Service of Remembrance

Infants Remembered In Silence, Inc. (IRIS) would like to invite you, your family and friends to our Annual Holiday Service of Remembrance "Remembering With Love". This special service will be held on December 3, 2006 at 2 pm in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd on Shattuck Campus, 1000 Shumway Ave. in NE Faribault.

The IRIS Holiday Service of Remembrance is designed by and for parents, family and friends who have experienced or been touched by the death of a child in early pregnancy (miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, etc.) or from stillbirth, neo-natal death, birth defects, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), illness, accidents and all other types of infant or early childhood death. Everyone is welcome regardless of how long ago the child died or the cause of death.

Having Your Child Remembered

If you would like to have your child/children remembered during the candle lighting part of the service, please complete the enclosed form and return to the IRIS office by November 27, 2006.

Your Participation Is Needed!

One of the things that make the Holiday Service so very special is the participation of parents, family and friends. We would love to have your help with the reading of poems, singing, playing an instrument, reading a scripture, decorating the chapel windows, and/or providing treats for the receptions that follows the service. You will find signup information on the registration form. Please help make this a very special service by sharing your time and talents.

Decorating the Chapel Windows

Decorating the Chapel Windows has become a very special tradition of the IRIS Holiday Service.

You are invited to bring any keepsake items that you would like to display in the windows. Keep in mind that you will be working with other parents to create a loving display. You will be in charge of placing your child's/children's keepsakes in a window and clearing the area when the reception is over. Suggested items for window displays include: scrapbooks, blankets, pictures, poems, holiday items, etc. There will be volunteers on hand to answer questions and help you however they can. No flames or water allowed in the displays. Due to the magnitude of this project, IRIS will not be able to return items sent to us. Everyone is welcome to visit the displays during the reception that follows the service.

Memorial Poinsettias

For your convenience, IRIS has made arrangements with Donahue's Green House for memorial poinsettias to be labeled and delivered to the Chapel of the Good Shepherd. If you would like to order a poinsettia for yourself or as a gift for family, and friends please fill out the Holiday Service Registration Form and return it to the IRIS office along with \$12 per plant by November 27, 2006.

Sharing Information on the Holiday Service

Please feel free to share the information on the Holiday Service Remembrance with other bereaved parents. You are welcome to invite your family and friends to the service and are encouraged to ask your local churches, newspapers, TV and radio stations to run information about the service. If you would like to hang posters for the Holiday Service please visit the IRIS website for information www.irisRemembers.com or contact the IRIS office

Siblings and Children at the Holiday Service

This is a hard topic for everyone.

Because of concerns voiced in previous years, parents with children under the age of 6 years are lovingly requested to sit in the back of the chapel close to the exit. Please remember children that can sit quietly for two (2) hours are welcome at the service. Out of consideration and compassion for grieving parents, you are asked to take children out of the Chapel if they are crying, talking, making noise of any kind, or disrupting others in any manner. In addition it should be noted that accessing the one and only restroom at the Chapel is also a problem for children. During the service the restroom will only be accessible by walking outside and around to the side vestibule. If you are debating a child's ability to attend the service you may want to consider an alternative. For obvious reasons, children are not allowed to touch items on displays. If you have questions, concerns or would like to discuss the issue please feel free to call Diana Sundwall at the IRIS office (507) 334-4748.

Directions and Map

1. Highway 60 East to the North East side of Faribault.
 2. Turn North onto Shumway Ave.
 3. Follow Shumway Ave. past MN State Academy for the Deaf to the main entrance of the Shattuck/Saint Mary's campus. (On your left)
 4. As you enter the campus grounds, you will pass under the graceful Shattuck Arch and have full view of the campus.
 5. Follow the "one way" circle drive to the Chapel of the Good Shepherd.
- You will be able to follow the lavender IRIS signs through Faribault to the Chapel.

A Death Has Occurred

By Paul Irion

A death has occurred and everything is changed. We are painfully aware that life can never be the same again, that yesterday is over, relationships once rich have ended. But there is another way to look upon this truth. If life now went on the same, without the presence of the one who had died, we could only conclude that the life we remember made no contribution, filled no space, meant nothing. The fact that this person left behind a place that cannot be filled is a high tribute to this individual. Life can be the same after a trinket has been lost, but never after the loss of a treasure.

Excerpts from ...

Handling the Holiday Hurts

By Diana Sundwall

The holidays are often difficult for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one. This statement is especially true for parents who have had a child die. For some parents the holiday with all of its rich traditions bring extra stress and pressure. Instead of being a time of comfort, togetherness, and joy, the sights, sounds, smells and holiday gatherings can bring feelings of defeat, unhappiness, meaninglessness, and worthlessness. For others Holiday Traditions and Rituals offer a way to remember their child and offers them permission to comfortably express their emotions.

Parents often talk about the expectations others have for them; the requirements placed on them, and the demands to "be back to normal" before the holidays. One mother stated, "It's like everyone 'needs' me to be ok. How can I be? My daughter died on Christmas Day, I'm going to be spending my holiday thinking of her and visiting the cemetery. How can that be normal? Why would I want to go to a party that day?"

Another mother tearfully said, "The holidays are intended for children. Toy commercials and ads are everywhere. People are talking about the gifts they are going to give to their children and others. One even went so far as to ask me to find a play gym for her new baby! I find it surprising that everyone expects me to smile and never cry. They expect me to help them, and to be understanding of their wants and needs and now both families expect me to make Christmas cookies and take my turn hosting the Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. How can I be

kind when they don't even say our son's name, they don't talk about him, they don't ask how we are doing, and they don't take our feelings into consideration."

Overcoming these types of frustrations is not easy. Parents often have difficulty making decisions regarding the holidays. Everything from holiday baking to family gatherings has changed. Be gentle with yourself, and allow yourself to do what feels right, even if others disapprove.

1. **Give yourself permission to:** express your feelings, to talk about your feelings and grief.

2. **Talk about your child.**

3. **Spend time looking at your pictures and other keepsakes.**

4. **Participate in carefully selected functions.** Choose the gatherings you truly want to attend and are manageable for "you". Common reasons for declining or limiting an invitation include:
 1. Pregnant people in attendance
 2. Children of the same age in attendance
 3. Anniversary dates (due dates, birthday, date of death)
 4. Non-supportive people attending
 5. Number of people attending
 6. Simply do not want to be with those in attendance

5. **Surround yourself with supportive people**

6. **Seek professional help**

7. **Change your home's environment**

8. **Slow holiday rushing, and accept help**

9. **Memorialize Your Child**

Attend a remembrance ceremony such as the IRIS Holiday Service of Remembrance

"Remembering With Love". This remembrance service has been held annually since 1993 on the First Sunday in December at 2 PM in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd on Shattuck Campus, 1000 Shumway Ave in NE Faribault MN

Hang a stocking with your child's name at home and/or at the cemetery.

Light a special candle.

Say a prayer, blessing or toast at the start of the family meal or gathering mentioning your precious child and if appropriate, offering others thanks for their support.

Purchase a special flower, plant, tree or wreath for your home, your holiday table, your church/synagogue, memorial service / cemetery.

Decorate your child's grave or special area with anything that you would like, a Christmas tree with lights (use battery operated lights), a wreath, a toy, a candle, wind chimes, bird feeder, an ice luminary, etc.

Send holiday cards and include information about your child.

Purchase a special ornament every year.

Start a collection, or purchase a precious keepsake such as a ring, necklace, or picture frame, etc. for yourself or your partner.

Keep a journal, write a letter, a song or poem to your child telling him/her how much you love and miss them. Write their life story.

Take pictures of everything you do to remember your child. The pictures become a part of your child's keepsakes.

Give someone who has helped you a gift or special card.

Do for others. Some parents make a cash donation or donation of time or talent to a group that was helpful to them, others will purchase gifts for needy children or family.

Create and maintain a new ritual or tradition ~ whatever that feels right.

Memorial Candles can add to your holiday season. Many parents feel that burning a candle is a great way for them to remember their child. You may wish to purchase a special candle or use a candle that already has a special meaning to you. Candles can be burned during your holiday meals and gatherings with or without others knowing their significance.

Show your compassion in memory of your child. Volunteer on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, or Christmas Day at your local homeless shelter, food line, or community meal. Consider going Christmas Caroling in the hospital where your child was at or in a nursing home. (It can be very rewarding).

Understand that there is no right or wrong way to deal with the holidays, anniversary dates, birth dates, etc. You have to do what feels right to you, regardless of others personal feelings

10. Take Care of Yourself: You may feel emotionally exhausted, stressed, weak, fragile, helpless, or like a failure. Taking care of you physically and emotionally will help. Get plenty of rest, eat properly and go for a walk or some other form of exercise.

11. Adapting Old Holiday Traditions: Many parents feel that their extended family (your parents, siblings, cousins, etc.) traditions need to be changed or adjusted following the death of their child. Consider some of these changes:

Eating at a different time or location

Opening gifts on a different day

Attending a different worship service

Buy the cookies and other treats instead of making them

Choose to shop online rather than venturing into the stores

Give everyone the same gift (gift cards, fruit, cookies, etc.)

If you always host the holiday meal, suggest that someone else take a turn or have it catered in a hall or church

Allow yourself the privilege to NOT attend holiday gatherings and/or parties

Follow your heart; do what feels right to you. This year "It needs to be all about you"

12. Shopping: can be one of the most stressful tasks of the holidays. Many bereaved parents find that they need to find a new way to complete their holiday shopping.

If you're comfortable with it, shop online

Set spending limits and make a list

Consider shopping with a friend, someone who is compassionate & understanding. Someone who will help you do your shopping

Shop early in the day or late in the evening, by doing so you will miss the crowds and the holiday music

Consider giving gift certificates, cash, books, CD's, DVD's or savings bonds, fruit baskets, flowers, lap blanket, etc

As a special surprise for the recipient, you could have the gift shipped to, or delivered to the them

13. Holiday Cards: are nice to receive but a lot of work to send out. If you should decide to send cards consider explaining how the death of your child has affected you and how important their support is to you. Consider sending the same letter to everyone and asking for help sending them out if you need it.

14. Baking: is another holiday tradition that maybe difficult to enjoy or can be a stress reliever. If it's too much, consider purchasing bake goods from the bakery, your local cake decorator, church group, etc. If it is a stress reliever for you, consider baking your gifts this year. Who doesn't love home made treats.

15. The Christmas Tree: can be a heartbreaking reminder that your child is no longer with you. If you decide to put one up, consider putting up a smaller one, and/or using an artificial tree. With the artificial tree you do not have to remember to take care of it or worry about taking it down right away. If you do put up a tree consider decorating it differently.

16. Anticipation: As with many things, anticipation is worse than the actual day or event. Take your time and be gentle with yourself.

If you would like more information on surviving the holidays please stop into the IRIS office or visit your local library for books on how to handle the holidays.

All

Of us

At Infants

Remembered In

Silence hope and pray that

You have a gentle Holiday Season

Holidays Worksheet

Use this list as a starting point. It is meant to assist you with the many decisions that we have at this time of year. Go through the list and mark the items that you want to do. Come back to the list in a few days to make adjustments. Remember there is no right or wrong way to grieve the death of a child and there is no right or wrong way for you to get through the holidays. You have to do what is right for you.

Shopping:

- Shop as usual
- Give cash gifts or Savings Bonds
- Give gift certificates
- Shop online or through catalogs
- Ask a friend for help
- Shop early
- Make your gifts
- Give baked goods
- Give fruit baskets or flowers
- Have gifts delivered to the recipients home
- Ask for help wrapping gifts
- Make a list of whom you need to get a gift for and what you want to give each person

Christmas Cards:

- Send cards as usual
- Shorten your card list

- Include a handwritten letter
- Include a copied letter
- Include a picture of your child or of your family with an item that represents your child
- Send e-cards or e-mail a letter
- Skip sending cards this year

Decorations:

- Decorate as usual
- Decorate on a smaller scale
- Ask for help decorating
- Make changes in type of decorations, type of tree, location of items, etc.
- Display a special ornament in memory of your child
- Eliminate the decorations this year

Christmas Music:

- Enjoy as usual
- Avoid turning on the radio
- Shop early in the day or late at night to avoid the music
- Listen to it, have a good cry and allow yourself to feel sad or happy

Traditions:

- Keep the same traditions
- Attend holiday parties
- Go to an entirely new place
- Bake the usual holiday cookies and candies
- Bake using new recipes
- Purchase baked goods and candies
- Attend the usual religious service
- Attend a new religious service, location, or time
- Spend quiet time alone
- Visit the cemetery
- Open gifts as usual
- Change the gift giving tradition
- Other: _____

Visiting the Cemetery:

- Visit the Cemetery during the holidays
- Do no visit the cemetery
- Decorate the grave
- Bring flowers, teddy bear, ect.
- Spend quiet time at the cemetery or other special location

Holiday Meals:

- Prepare the usual holiday meal
- Prepare a holiday meal with changes to menu
- Cater holiday meals
- Go out for your holiday meals
- Invite friends and/or family to join you
- Eat a quiet meal that is special to you
- Change the meal time or day
- Change the routine of the meal, different room/home, eat desert first
- If it's "your turn" ask for help or for some one to trade years

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day:

- Spend the day as usual
- Remove the decorations
- Attend parties
- Spend time with friends/family
- Write in your journal your hopes for the coming year
- Go to a movie
- Go to bed early

Other: _____

2006 Gathering and Balloon Release

Sunday October 1st Infants Remembered In Silence, Inc. (IRIS) held it's annul Potluck lunch and Balloon Release at Kinder Park (the IRIS Park) located at the corner of 17th St. and 24th Ave. in NW Faribault, MN.

Approximately 100 people were in attendance with over 250 memorial balloons being released. So far we have had reports that balloons 5 have been found in western WI. If you have had a balloon found please let us know. If you would like more information about the balloon release please visit our website www.irisRemembers.com

The Garden in Winter

Winter fades the garden now
Where laughter used to flower.
It makes us sad to linger here.
The minutes seem like hours.

But though we only see the loss
Of what we used to know,
In time the warmth of memory
Will make the garden grow.

And shades of love we thought we'd lost
Once again will show.
Peeking trough the snow.

Our Wish List

50 - Ice Cream Pails - they will be used for bingo trash at the IRIS Charity Weekend Feb. 10th and 11th, 2007)

Baby Lotions (sample)

Baby Yarn or Sport Weight yarn in pastel colors

Film – 35 mm (400 speed)

Shipping/postal Scale

Bottled Water

Stamps

Baby blankets and cap/bonnet's Sizes 4, 5, 6 and crib needed

Jar Candles for the office

Wooden shaker boxes – undecorated

Mailing labels (size Avery 8160)

High speed internet

Permanent Signs for the four IRIS windows. 33"x7" these signs will be in full sun. They can be cling on, acrylic or some type of Plexiglas, etc.

Knitted or Crocheted Baby Blanket and Cap sets. We are currently in great need of size 4, 5 and 6. (24", 28" and 32" square) if you or someone you know is able to help please call the office for more information. We currently have 1 girl and no boy size 4 blankets. 1 girl and 3 boys size 5 blankets and 2 girl and 3 boy size 6 blankets.

Thank You

Given in loving memory of **Mara Kotterman** by Mark & Jennie Umbreit family. Several Rolls of stamps, 2 packs of onesies, Baby lotion, Baby wash, Comb and brush sets, and Film.

Given in loving memory of Sayer Clarence and Bennett Charles Gfrerer and Baby Beaner Gfrerer Cedar Chiropractic of Owatonna. 12 cases of copy paper

Given in loving memory of Daniel James Piepho by Grandma Ryks. 3 winged teddy bears with blankets. (2 pink and 1 blue)

Given in loving memory of Zachary Andrew Schmit 450 teddy bears by Libby & Thomas Schmit 7 family.

Removing Unwanted Solicitations

Having a child is a matter of public record,

because of that, many magazine companies and businesses can get your name, address, and phone number to make solicitations. If you Do Not want these types of solicitations Contact the numbers / addresses below.

Provide them all of names that you receive mail or Calls in: i.e.: child's name, Mr., Mrs. Ms. etc. It can take six months or longer to be removed from a list once you have been added.

Direct Marketing Association: 1-212-768-7277 or visit their website: www.dmaconsumers.org or send a letter to:

Direct Marketing Association

Mail Preference Service

P. O. Box 9008

Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008

Direct Marketing Association

Phone Preference Service

P.O. Box 9014

Farmingdale, NY 11735-9014

It works best if you contact all addresses, and provide them with all variations of your name and spellings.

Visit the National Cell Phone Do Not Call List at: www.donotcall.gov

If you are receiving baby product samples and / or formula samples, please contact the IRIS office at (507) 334-4748 for assistance.

Memories

are like threads of gold,
They never tarnish
or grow old.

In Kind Donations

Father Doyle for presiding over the IRIS Common Burial service.

Anna Kincade and Gayle Reineke (from the Golden K), Carol Vande, Alberta Erickson, Marcia Pugh, Blanche Sorenson, Kay Heiskari, Debbie Thompson, Judy Conroy, Carol Underferth, Kay Heiskari, Jody Landwenr, and all of the others who have made baby blankets and hats over the summer to refill our supply.

To Helen Kelley and everyone who helped water the flowers at the IRIS Common Burial Site in Maple Lawn Cemetery.

Margaret Walker for writing hundreds of thank you notes.

Stacy Chmelik for volunteering in the office.

All of the volunteers who helped at the Golf Tournament

All of the volunteers who helped with the Annual Balloon Release.

Special Thank You to Faribault Rental Center for their donation of portable sanitation unit for the Balloon Release.

Thank you to Community Corrections (adult and youth programs) for their help in cleaning and maintaining the marker at Kinder Park, getting the park ready for the Balloon Release, transporting picnic tables to and from the park.

St. Luke's Church in Faribault and individuals who have been collecting MilkMoola for IRIS.

Insty Prints – Faribault & Owatonna for two - 8 foot canvas signs

Children Who Die

By Turlough O'Carolan

Children who die are not really gone,
But go to a place that is something like home,

Where they sleep the deep sleep, as quiet as stone, until we can join them when our lives are done.

Children who die are not really dead,
But just like good children tucked into bed,
Wait the long wait while we go ahead
Till our tales are all told and our tears are all shed.

Children who die feel only pleasure and no pain
In the place where they wait till they see us again,
And all of us dance in a world washed with rain
Where the sun shines so brightly

no sorrows remain.

2006 Annual Golf Tournament

The IRIS Golf Tournament that was held on July 21st at the Faribault Golf club. The event that was chaired by Kelly Velander was a huge success bringing in a profit of over \$7,000!

A Huge Thank You to Kelly Velander for chairing the IRIS Golf Tournament. To Stacy Chmelik, Margaret Walker, Diana Sundwall, Natalie Crooks, Amy Piper, Chris Petricka, Brad and Shelly Germundson, Kathy Hanek, Marianne Vandereide, Anna and Dick Kettering, Jessie Donahue, Tami Kielen, Melanie LaCanne, Wendy Rysavy, Joan Robins, the staff at the Faribault Golf Club, Golfer's and all of the others who graciously donated their time and talents to the golf tournament.

We would also like to thank all of the golfers and the guests that joined us for dinner.

Golf Tournament Memorial Wind Chimes

Anna Lily Fridstrom

Bluhm-Howie Amelia Marie

Chase Douglas & Finley Rae LaCanne

Chyanne Rose Kuschel

Danny Novak

Darby Park Meier

Darren Russell Leahy

Declan and Malachi Donahue

Declan Arthur & Malachi Donahue

Derek Joseph Sundwall

Drake Michael Vickney

Emma Kaye Ward

Ethan Jay Swanger

Gianni Anton Carrasca

Halen Alan Kelly

Hannah Rose Rysavy

Jacob Glenn Luecke

Kelly Jean & Erica Kay Vandereide

Kilian Richard Donahue

Lizzy Dienst

Luke Taylor Wood

Nash Reuben Adams

Nikolas Michael Fischer

Our Three Gfrerer Angels

Owen Benjamin Pugh

Preston Hugh Crooks

Sabrina Marie Strouth

Tahirih Dimayuga

Tolzman Benjamin Owen

Weston Bradley Germundson

Zachary Andrew Schmit

World Wide Candle Lighting

Held annually since 1997 on the second Sunday in December, the Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe as they light candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 pm. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

A Mother's Love

Author Unknown

I didn't have to look into your eyes
To fall in love with you.
I didn't have to hear you cry
To know you loved me too.
I didn't need to hold your hand
To cherish you always.
Within my womb we shared our hearts
You touched my soul
You sweetened my spirit
You gave me memories I'll always
Hold very dear
Yes, my heart aches since
You departed so soon
But a mothers love does not
End with death
For you are my child
my love is forever yours.

Infant Memorials

Happy 6th Birthday Joshua! We love and miss you.

Mommy and Daddy (Angie & Dan Neubauer)

In loving memory of Daniel James Piepho

Grandma and Grandpa (Ken and Katy Ryks)

In loving memory of Finley Ray and Chase Douglas LaCanne

Mommy & Daddy Melanie & Nick

Grandma & Grandpa La Canne

Grandma & Grandpa Van Dam

Dr. Kris & Matt Drevlow

Janel Pitzen

Amy Bartz

Tanya Kruger

In loving memory of Danae Bell, well love and miss you.

Michelle Bell

In memory of Joshua Schwichtenberg

Rene` Perrance

Happy 10th Birthday JT! We love you.

Mom & Dad (Lori Jo & Todd Markman)

Lovingly remembering your special birthday. Grandma & Grandpa

(Toni & Harold Amundson)

Wishing you a Happy Heavenly 21st Birthday Derek !

Mom (Diana Sundwall)

In loving memory of our precious little Mara Kolterman

Anne Johnson

In loving memory of our precious grandson, Hayden James Hachfeld.

Grandma and Grandpa (Lynne & Loel Holthus)

In loving memory of our sweet little Sara Jane Murray. Lovingly remembering your special birthday.

Grandma and Grandpa (Toni & Harold Amundson)

An Angel's Kiss

Your breath is the song that the morning sings,

Chirping birds, fluttering angel wings,

Daylight dances on the air,

Leaves rustle unaware.

Quietly, thoughts of you wander through my mind,

A gentle breeze on my face I find,

As if a kiss delivered to me

By the angels I know are there, but cannot see.

Just like the love that will never end,

Oh how I long to call this sorrow my friend.

Thank You

For Your Contributions

MN Center for Philanthropy - Dr. Ben and Pat Tuma – Faribault

St. Michael's Council Catholic Women –Kenyon

Kettering Properties – Faribault – 4 donations

Sue and Dave Stark - Owatonna

Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign

Owatonna Clinic Employee Club Casual Day

Nancy Scherfenberg – stepping stone sales

Northfield Area United Way

United Way of Faribault

Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign

Rice County Auxiliary VFW #1562 -Faribault

Thank You For Golf Tournament Donations

College City Beverage – Northfield

Morristown Firemens Relief Assn.

Cedar Chiropractic Office – Owatonna

Elks Club No. 1166 - Faribault

Fraternal Order of Eagles #1460 – Faribault

HomeTown Realty – Faribault

Foldcraft Co./Plymold Seating – Kenyon

Donahue Hardware Inc. – Faribault

La Cannes Marine, Inc. – Faribault

Velander Construction – Faribault

Cable Connection & Supply Co. - Faribault

Petricka Trucking - Kenyon

Special Thank You To

Special thanks to Midwest Wireless of Faribault for their on going support of IRIS. Thanks to donations of old cell phones to IRIS and the Faribault store, Midwest Wireless has made a donation from their phone for funds program to IRIS in the amount of \$1,179.26

Special thanks to Wal-Mart Foundation for their donation of \$250 to IRIS. Wal-Mart has a program where employees who volunteer for an organization can earn a donation for that organization. Special thanks to Stacy Chmelik a Wal-Mart employee and IRIS volunteer!

Special thanks to Karen Ohmann for her gift of employee designation in the amount of \$250 from Gemini Incorporated of Cannon Falls.

Special thanks to the Faribault Elks Club No. 1166 for their donation of \$1,500 that was presented at the IRIS Golf Tournament.

We Do Not Need A Special Day

By Connie Dyer

We do not need a special day
To bring you to our minds,
The days we do not think of you
Are very hard to find.

Each morning when we awake
We know that you are gone,
And no one knows the heartache
As we try to carry on.

Our hearts still ache with sadness
And secret tears still flow,
What it meant to lose you
No one will ever know

Our thoughts are always with you
Your place no one can fill,
In life we loved you dearly
In death we love you still

There will always be heartache
And often a silent tear,
But always a precious memory
Of the days when you were here.

If tears could build a staircase
And heartaches make a lane
We'd walk the path to Heaven
And bring you back home again.

We hold you close, within our hearts
And there you will remain,
To walk with us throughout our lives
Until we meet again.

Our family chain is broken now
And nothing seems the same
but as God calls us one by one
The chain will link again.

Life is not about finding yourself,
It's about creating your self.

Calendar of Events

November 2006

- 18th Scrapbooking 10 am – 4 pm at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)
- 27th Holiday Service Registration paper work due to the IRIS office
- 28th Evening Support Group Meeting held at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

December 2006

- 2nd Setup for the Holiday Service of Remembrance 1 pm at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd
- 3rd Holiday Service of Remembrance ~ Remembering With Love
2 PM Chapel of the Good Shepherd ~ Shattuck Campus 1000 Shumway Ave., Faribault MN
Please come early to display your keepsakes
- 10th **The Worldwide Candle Lighting – “That their light may always shine” you are asked to light a candle at 7 pm in your time zone in remembrance of your child**
- 13th Midday Support Group Meeting 11 AM – 1 PM (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)
- 16th Scrapbooking 10 am – 4 pm at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)
- 26th NO Evening Support Group Meeting this month

January 2007

- 9th IRIS Board Meeting 7 pm at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

10th Midday Support Group Meeting 11 AM – 1 PM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

20th Scrapbooking 10 AM – 4 PM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

23rd Evening Support Group Meeting 7 – 8:30 PM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

February 2007

10th IRIS Charity Weekend: Family Fun Night - Faribault Community Center (more info to come)

11th IRIS Charity Weekend: Breakfast, Silent Auction, Bingo – Faribault American Legion (more info to come)

14th Midday Support Group Meeting 11 AM – 1AM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

24th Scrapbooking 9 AM – 4 PM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

27th ~ Evening Support Group Meeting 7 – 8:30 PM at the IRIS office (101 NW Third Street Faribault MN)

We would like to **hear** from you!

We are sure that in some point in your life you have moved and when you did, we are sure someone said “stay in touch!”, “write us and let us know how you are!”, or “call so we know your Ok!”. The same goes for us at IRIS. Drop us a note, give us a call, we would love to hear from you! And don't forget:

To let us know if you have a change of address. IRIS newsletters are sent by bulk mail and they will not be forwarded if you have a change of address.

If you would like to be added or would no longer like to get the newsletters please let us know.

Feel free to send us your letters, articles, and poems that you would like to have in the newsletter. Be sure to include the authors name if you know it.

We value your feedback. Let us know what you like and what you would like to see us change.

Tree of Light

By Jean Felice Eilbert

Here we stand in winter's glory,
We've shared the pain and told our stories.
Tree of Light, Tree of Light, Let it shine!
In the chill of December,
We take this time now to remember
Tree of Light, Tree of Light, Let it shine!

Ribbons tied, the lights all shine,
A dream remembered for all time:
Remembering yours, remembering mine
Let it shine!

Tree of Light, Tree of Light,
Let it shine all through the night.
Tree of Light, Tree of Light,
Let it shine!

In the darkness of this night,
We find reflection in this sight:
Tree of Light, Tree of Light, Let it shine!
Lift our voices through the dark
Remembering you with all our hearts
Tree of Light, Tree of Light, Let it shine!

Ribbons tied, the lights all shine,
A dream remembered for all time:
Remembering yours, remembering mine,
Let it shine!

Lullaby for the Innocents

Hear now a lullaby
You'll never hear,
For your life was something
That was held dear.
You need not a lullaby
For you don't weep,
Nor love's arms to hold you
In death you do sleep.
What your life might have been
We'll never know,
A miracle happened
But there's nothing to show.
We're left with this sorrow
But hope all the same,
That in heaven there's Someone
Who knows you by name.

Only Sometimes . . .

By Anita Hobbs
In memory of her daughter Nicole

It's been years since I walked, with empty arms, out of the NICU but still cry sometimes.

But only . . .

When I pull off the road for a passing funeral procession,
Or hear "Tears From Heaven",
Or on his birthday,
Or on his death date,
Or hear a newly bereaved mother's story,
Or at church when we sing "...safe and secure from all alarm",
Or as I hear about an unwanted baby abandoned in a dumpster,
Or read about a one pound baby who survived,
Or when my "subsequent pregnancy" daughter asks if she will get to hold her big brother when we all get to Heaven,
Or when I try to say his name aloud,
Or as I light his candle at Christmastime.

Yes, I still cry after all these years ...

But only sometimes . . .

Christmas Wish

Author Unknown

The heart of Christmas is hope
We need hope.
We need Christmas!

The New Year gives us time.
We need time to grieve.
But most of all to Heal.

I wish you the gift of peace from an aching heart;
I wish you the gift of strength for the day ~
I wish you the gift of recognition,
I wish you the gift of remembrance,
I wish you the gift of care,
I wish you the gift of belonging,
These are the gifts I wrap in prayer,
And loving send your way.

May the memories of this Season
Come on Gentle Wings and
Bring you, your family and friends
Love and Peace.

From Diana's Desk . . .

I hope all of you take time during this holiday season, to remember your beloved child, to honor him/her, and to cherish your most precious keepsakes. With all of the pressure on bereaved parents, and people expressing their feelings on what is right for you to do, it becomes very important for you to take time to remember, to make time for yourself, to make time for each other, and to honor your precious child.

A wonderful way to honor your child and yourself as parents is to attend the IRIS Holiday Service of Remembrance "Remembering with Love". This very special service has been held annually since 1994. Many of the parents that attend have come for years and say that it is the perfect start to the holidays. We all feel the need to remember and honor our child before we can do anything else. One dad stated "It's just not the holidays without coming to this service first. We missed it one year and we will never miss it again." Consider joining us on December 3rd. Feel free to invite family members and friends to join you, I promise you will create breathtaking memories that you will never forget.

Wishing you peace and warm memories,

Diana Sundwall
IRIS Founder & Executive Director

My Angel Evermore

By Carolyn Griffin

You always were my angel ~
I knew it from the start.
I little bit of God's own love
Sent right into my heart.

I didn't know you'd soon be gone
To heaven's distant shore.
He took you home ~ now you're complete ~
My angel evermore.