

Helping Hands

Helping After Neonatal Death

Spring 2003

Don't

*Don't tell me that you understand,
Don't tell me that you know...
Don't tell me that I will surely survive,
How I will surely grow...
Don't tell me this is just a test,
That I am truly blessed...
That I am chosen for the task,
Apart from all the rest...
Don't come at me with answers,
That can only come from me...
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free...
Don't stand in pious judgment,
Of the bonds that I must untie...
Don't tell me how to suffer,
And don't tell me how to cry...
My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see...
But I need you, I need your love,
Unconditionally...
Accept me in my up's and down's,
I need someone to share...
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, My Friend, I care...*

Author Unknown

How to contribute to HAND of the Peninsula

Over the past 20 years, HAND has provided a lifeline of support to families who have lost babies before, during, or after birth. HAND is entirely volunteer-led with a single part-time administrator so any monetary donations are highly leveraged. HAND also participates in community fund-raising events, such as the Human Race, sponsored annually by the Volunteer Center of San Mateo County, in order to raise money and awareness.

The organization works very hard to ensure that monetary donations are returned to the membership as resources and support for neonatal loss. HAND's contributions for 2002 include:

- ◆ Paying for burial arrangements for needy families;
- ◆ Holding 36 grief and subsequent pregnancy meetings attended by 8-14 people per meeting;
- ◆ Providing approximately 200 hours of phone support to grieving parents;
- ◆ Presenting training sessions to healthcare professionals;
- ◆ Publishing four newsletters featuring articles on miscarriage, adoption, subsequent pregnancy and infant death;
- ◆ Receiving hundreds of hits to our informative web site,
- ◆ Hosting a Service of Remembrance and wildflower seed scattering at Huddart Park attended by HAND members, families and friends.

HAND of the Peninsula hopes to continue to provide all of these services to the community and also expand these services. Ways in which you may be able to help span form contributing time and skills to fundraising and personal donations. The following are some different ways in which to contribute monetarily:

Contribute *continued on page 2*

Many ways to contribute to HAND

continued from page 1

Human Race: Sponsored by the San Mateo County Volunteer Center, the Human Race is a 5k/10k pledge walk and run where participants designate any non-profit of their choice to receive pledges that they collect to walk or run in the event. HAND is participating in this event and encouraging HAND members to collect pledges and run or walk on behalf of HAND. The event is Saturday, May 10th at Coyote Point at 8:30 a.m. To obtain pledge sheets and additional information, please call the HAND office at 367-6993.

Individual Donations: Contributions to HAND from parents, families and friends are the only source of funds at this time supporting HAND's small operating budget. Foundation grants awarded in the past have all but disappeared. Donating to HAND is a thoughtful way to honor our lost babies and can be a nice tradition on our baby's anniversary date(s). All contributions are acknowledged in HAND's newsletter as well as on the website (www.handsupport.org). A donation to HAND helps continue our mission of helping any Peninsula family coping with neonatal death, stillbirth or miscarriage.

Company Matching: You can double or even triple your contribution to HAND if your and/or your spouse's employer offers an employee-contribution matching program. This is a common, but often overlooked benefit offered by many larger companies in the Bay Area. Often you need to only complete a one-page form in order to have a matched contribution sent to your charity. You usually need to provide either a tax ID number for your charity (and your company will check with the charity to confirm your donation) or else show a receipt of your contribution in order for your company to process the matched contribution. Many firms will contribute matching funds of up to \$500 or \$1,000 per employee per year. Taking advantage of your company's employee contribution matching program is an easy way to multiply the impact of the donations you make to your favorite charities.

eScrip: eScrip and partner merchants have created a system that rewards customer loyalty by donating a percentage of purchases to a chosen group, such as HAND. We encourage parents, friends and families to register their credit/debit cards with the eScrip program. Upon registration, a percentage of all purchases made by you with eScrip merchants will be given back to HAND of the Peninsula. You can sign up by calling the HAND office at 367-6993 or online at www.escr.com. HAND's identification number is 141808774. There is no cost to you.

It's that simple!

Helping After Neonatal Death

Chapters:

HAND of the Peninsula
P.O. Box 3693
Redwood City, CA 94064
(650) 692-6655 crisis line
(650) 367-6993 office
Web site: <http://www.handsupport.org>

HAND of Santa Cruz Co.
P.O. Box 3693
Redwood City, CA 94064
(650) 367-6993 office
(831) 438-4513

HAND Santa Clara Co.
South Alameda,
Contra Costa Counties
Central Valley
(888) 908-HAND

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Helping Hands

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next issue:**

MAY 1, 2003

Unspoken

By Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

*Dear Friend,
Please put it behind you,
let it go for a while.
You're too lost in mourning,
lighten up, try to smile.
I know it's a tragedy.
I know how you feel,
but you must just get through it,
move on so you'll heal.
I just can't stand
to see you in pain.
I know if you try
you'll be happy again.*

*Dear Friend,
The person you still
want me to be
is gone, locked away,
and I don't have the key.
I'm really not choosing
to be like this,
but my life is pure feeling,
clenching me like a fist.
There's a bleak, somber moat
between me and the world,
the drawbridge so heavy,
splintered edges so cruel.
When I venture out strongly,
the pain wraps me still,
colors my actions,
saps at my will.
So please, don't give up,
though I'm hopeless and lost.
Our friendship's true value is
in its costs.*

Support Meetings

Support meetings are informal gatherings where parents can receive and give support by sharing common experiences as we work through and resolve our loss. We cordially invite you to attend.

Meetings may start out with a topic of discussion, but everyone is free to bring up any questions or aspects of their loss which may concern them.

Attending your first meeting does take courage, but parents who attend find a comforting network of support, encouragement, friendship and understanding.

Nothing is required of you. There are no dues or fees. You need not speak one word. Even if you no longer need the meetings for yourself, come and share your experiences with someone who has recently suffered a loss.

HAND of the Peninsula

Support meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Contact: Celia Hartnett (650) 367-6993

Time: 7:30-9:30 PM

Dates: Mar 5 and 19, 2003
Apr 2 and 16
May 7 and 21
June 4 and 18

Location: Sequoia Health and Wellness Services, 702 Marshall St., Redwood City.

HAND of Santa Cruz

Support meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Contact: Kristie Shulman (831) 438-4513.

Time: 7:30-9:30 P.M.

Dates: Mar 19, 2003
Apr 16
May 21
June 18

Location: Congregational Church of Soquel

Pregnancy Support Meetings

Parents who are pregnant again after a loss have special emotional and psychological needs. Pregnancy Support Group meetings address the concerns of bereaved parents who have started or are thinking about starting another pregnancy. Fathers are especially encouraged to attend.

HAND of the Peninsula holds subsequent pregnancy support meetings on the second Wednesdays of the month as needed. Please call (650) 367-6993 if you plan to attend..

Time: 7:30-9:30 P.M.

Dates: Mar 12, 2003
Apr 9
May 14
June 11

Call (650) 367-6993 for more information.

HAND of Santa Cruz's subsequent pregnancy meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month.

Dates: Call ((831) 438-4513 for more information.

Births

KEVIN THOMAS -- Sept 4, 2002, to Ellen, Tom Shea and big brother Patrick

Donations

Our warmest thanks to those who have sent donations to HAND of the Peninsula. It is through your support that HAND is able to grow and help others.

Caryn Goldman, in memory of Sasha
Denise and Jeffrey Goldman, in memory of Baby Jason and Baby Jennifer Goldman
Linda Lebreux, in memory of Baby Phoenix Merle
Maureen O'Connor, in memory of Camille Eulalie Henderson
Nursing Mothers Counsel, in appreciation of HAND's volunteers and members
Shirley and David Guidi, in memory of our granddaughter, Natalie Marie Guidi
Denise and Miles Bresee, in memory of Emma Gabriella Bresee
Irene and Maia Lustgarten, in loving memory of our niece and cousin, Talia Elise Nelson Twicken
Wendy Hopfenberg,
Kristie and Michael Shulman, in memory of our son, Daniel Shulman
Jill Nelson and Joseph Twicken, in loving memory of Talia Elise Nelson Twicken and Isabelle Grace Moeller on their 4th birthdays
Celia and Don Hartnett, in memory of Gregory Hartnett on his 20th birthday
Thanks to Bill and Carolyn Wilson for their donation of two books and a videotape to the HAND Library.

Donations *continued on page 6*

Inservices

Santa Cruz HAND — Birthwise Doula II class, Twin Lakes College of the Healing Arts in Santa Cruz.

Adoption Night

HAND of the Peninsula families who have adopted children will share their experiences

6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, 2003

Sequoia Health and Wellness Center

702 Marshall St. at Jefferson Ave., Redwood City

(enter from rear parking lot)

Call HAND's office for more information 367-6993

JOIN THE HUMAN RACE

Collect pledges from friends, family and coworkers and come walk or run a 5K or 10K course with other HAND parents

8:30 a.m. Saturday, May 10, 2003

Coyote Point County Park

For pledge forms and more information

contact HAND's office 367-6993

Donations *continued from page 4*

Kellie and David Bliss, in memory of Rose Tamikka Bliss and Landen Michael Bliss - our beloved children, lost but not gone

Patty McLucas, on behalf of John McLucas who is Laurie McLucas' brother
Ada and Robert Lai, in memory of Matthew Francis Lai
Jill Morgan and Doug Keare, in memory of Steven Brad

ford Keare
Christine and Michael Reeve, in loving memory of Edgar and Christian Reeve
Deborah Robinson, in memory of Sean Patrick
Patti Leeper and Craig Ball, in memory of Abigail and William Leeper
Yvonne Nava, in memory of Danielle Nava
Becky and John Fanous, in memory of Jasmine Christine Fanous Ball
Kerstin Spangner, in honor of Emily, Celia, Jana, Mary, El

ham, Twila and Kristen for the support training
Twila and Paul Forbes, in memory of Cosmo Forbes
Jennifer and Michael Weise, in memory of our twin girls.
Sharon Slezak, in memory of Joel Contreras
Becky and Andy Loga
Hellene and Kenneth Barillas, in memory of
Hellene Emil Barillas
Melinda and Eric Ruchames, in memory of Zachary Clark Ruchames' 16th birthday.