

# Helping Hands

Helping After Neonatal Death

Winter 2000

## Just Ask Wisdom

By Ruth Berkes

There was once a woman named Wisdom.

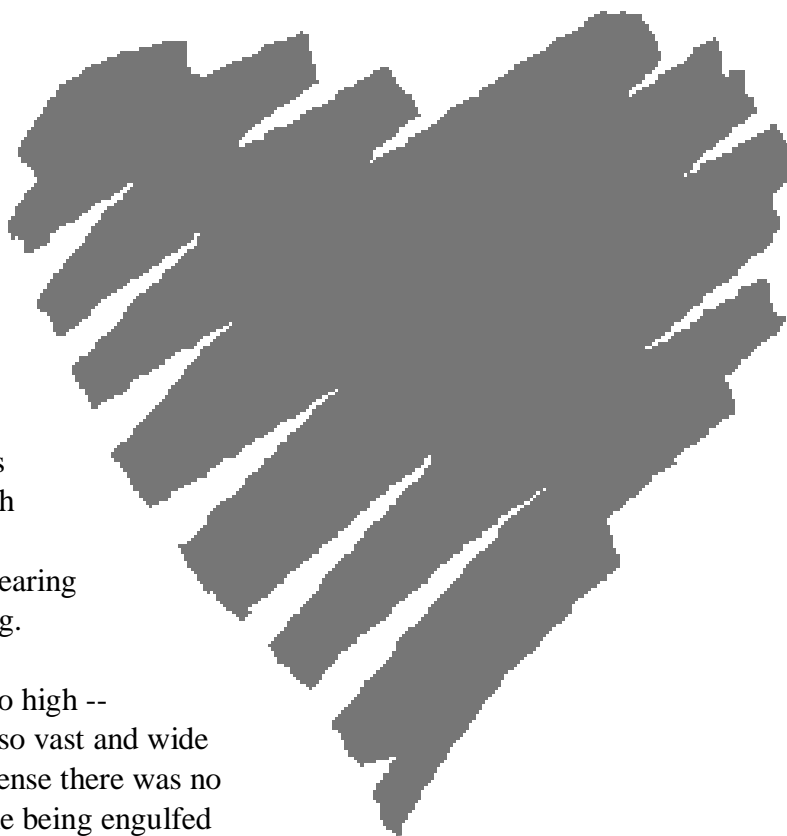
One day someone who was very near and dear to her died and it truly broke her heart.

The sadness was overwhelming -- and the mountain of grief she carried was so heavy it took all of her strength and energy. She was not able to accomplish anything else -- for bearing this load required her whole being.

This mountain of grief towered so high -- Wisdom couldn't peek over it -- so vast and wide she couldn't see around it -- so dense there was no way to view through it. It was like being engulfed under a thick fog -- and having no direction.

At first all she could do was walk day by day in circles -- just doing her best to carry this blinding mountain of grief. I can do no more than this, she often thought. No more.

But as time went by, Wisdom noticed a fellow traveler on the road of life whose grief was so new and heavy he was not able to carry it alone. Maybe, just maybe I could assist him, Wisdom thought. If I could help him with his grief for awhile, he could rest and maybe have the strength to go on.



**Wisdom** *Continued on Page 6*

## HAND of the Peninsula

# Welcomes new executive director

After many months searching and interviewing to find that very special person who would take charge and guide our little support group into the 21st century, we finally found her and her name is Alison Tam.

"What impressed me most about Alison during the interview process was her professionalism and her desire to truly understand and contribute to HAND's mission," said Jill Nelson, a member of HAND's board of directors and chair of the personnel committee.

A social worker by training and a recent graduate of California State University at Hayward where she earned a Masters in Public Administration, Alison previously served as executive director of the Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association.

Like HAND, the association is a peer-support group of parents whose babies have Down Syndrome. During her tenure, she improved and expanded services to families securing permanent funding from both public and private sources. Among these was a multidisciplinary support and intervention program for parents with Down Syndrome newborns.

She was instrumental in obtaining governmental support for a pilot project integrating mentally disabled children into regular schools. She organized the first Hong Kong Medical Genetics Conference in collaboration with the Hong Kong Society of Medical Genetics.

Among the first things on Alison's list were getting to know the players and the routines. She has sat in on a support meeting, an inservice and facilitator training. She wants to get to know all of the HAND parents and you will certainly enjoy meeting her.

## 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 business office  
<http://www.handsupport.org>

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

HAND of Santa Clara County  
P.O. Box 341  
Los Gatos, CA 95031-0341  
(408) 732-3228  
[info@h-a-n-d.org](mailto:info@h-a-n-d.org)  
<http://www.h-a-n-d.org>

So. Alameda &  
Contra Costa County  
P.O. Box 341  
Los Gatos, CA 95031-0341  
(800) 963-7070

Central Valley  
P.O. Box 341  
Los Gatos, Ca 95031-0341  
(209) 823-5503

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### Helping Hands

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# A Path To Healing Perinatal Bereavement Conference Notes

**By Erin Osai**  
*HAND of the Peninsula*

The recent perinatal bereavement conference, "A Path To Healing," held in Cincinnati Sept. 22-24, was full of a wide variety of topics from miscarriage, teen mothers, prenatal loss to SIDS multiple loss and services offered by First Photo.

Keynote speakers included Richard Paul Evans, author of "The Christmas Box," and Dr. James Woods, who discussed Delivering Bad News in Obstetrics.

Hospital programs in the Midwest are quite impressive. I was especially inspired by the medical personnel's

enthusiasm for wanting to treat their patients as best they can under the sad circumstances that surround loss. A beautiful senior citizens group in the Midwest makes baby clothes for preemies..

There was a wide selection of videos and reading materials on inservices for medical staff and bereaved parents resources. I was able to increase our library with many wonderful books, pamphlets and other information for all of the groups listed above.

However, I didn't see anything for bereaved parents with alternative lifestyles. I also found only one book about

teen loss and adoption and would love to add more to the library. "Unsung Lullabies," a collection of various HAND chapter parents' poems and letters, was well received.

The next conference will be held September 2001 in Texas. More information is available in HAND of the Peninsula's office.

I would like to thank SHARE, Good Samaritan Hospital and all the other conference sponsors and especially Sequoia Healthcare District, the benefactor which funded the trip allowing me to represent HAND of the Peninsula.

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## **Santa Clara HAND Holds Service of Remembrance**

Over 130 people -- a record turnout -- participated in HAND of Santa Clara County's annual Service of Remembrance held on October 15, 2000.

Thanks to the volunteers, headed up by Marianne Bullock and Karen Carroll, for putting together an outstanding memorial to our babies.

### **Contributors:**

Diana Abeyta, in memory of Daniel Abeyta  
Karen Adams, in memory of Lesley Melissa Vaughan

Timo Allison and Diana March, in memory of Callum Timo Allison  
Alexei Rodriguez and Elena Baquero, in memory of Isabel Margarita Rodriguez Baquero and Manuel Antonio Baquero Rios

Larry and Irma Biral, in memory of Emily Colleen Biral  
Laura Blundell, in memory of Rose Marie Blundell

Carlos and Sally Chavez, in memory of Precious Angel Chavez  
Raymond and Shirley Choy-Marshall, in memory of Babies Choy-Marshall

David and Becca Coleman, in memory of Chad Robert Coleman  
Steve and LeAnn Crawley, in memory of Keegan Crawley

Rosalie Sanchez and Rene Cunanan, in memory of Ian S. Cunanan  
Sherry Day, in memory of Brian Day

Michael Dilts and Elanah Kutik, in memory of Jesse C. Speicher and Mildred DiSanto

*Service Continued on Page 5*

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## **Births**

**Hannah Kindt**, Aug. 28, 2000, to Greg and Rachel Kindt

## **Inservices**

October 10, 2000 -- Sequoia Hospital new nurses perinatal unit

# 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 Santa Clara County**  
Support meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month.

**Time:** 7:30- 9:30 PM

**Dates:** Dec. 7 and 21  
Jan. 4 and 18, 2001  
Feb. 1 and 15,  
March 1 and 15

**Location:** Call (408) 732-3228 for information.

**HAND of Central Valley**  
Support meetings are held on the first, third, and fifth Sundays of the month.

**Time:** 6:30 - 8:30 PM

**Dates:** Dec. 3 and 17  
Jan. 7 and 21, 2001

Feb. 4 and 18  
March 4 and 18

**Location:** Call (209) 823-5503.

**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:** Dec. 6 and 20  
Jan. 3 and 17, 2001  
Feb. 7 and 21  
March 7 and 21

**Location:** Sequoia Health

and Wellness Services, 702 Marshall St., Redwood City.

**HAND of Santa Cruz County**  
Support meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Contact Kristie Shulman (831) 438-4513.

**Time:** 7:30-9:30 PM

**Dates:** Dec. 20  
Jan. 3, 2001  
Feb. 7  
March 7

**Location:** Congregational Church of Soquel

**Facilitator:** Kristie Shulman (831) 438-4513

**HAND of So. Alameda/ Contra Costa counties**  
Meetings are currently being held on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

**Time :** 7-9 PM

**Dates:** Dec. 6 and 20  
Jan. 3 and 17, 2001  
Feb. 7 and 21  
March 7 and 21

**Location:** Call (800) 963-7070 and ask for "HAND" for more information.

# 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 Santa Clara County**  
Pregnancy support meetings are held the second Thursday of the month.

**Time:** 7:30-9:30 PM

**Dates:** Dec. 14  
Jan. 11, 2001  
Feb. 8  
March 8

**Location:** Anyone wishing to attend may call Gina (408) 868-9605 or Kathy (408) 848-1716.

**HAND of the Peninsula**  
Subsequent pregnancy support meetings are on the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m.. Anyone wishing to attend a subsequent pregnancy meeting may call HAND at (650) 367-6993.

**HAND of So. Alameda/ Contra Costa counties**  
Subsequent pregnancy support meetings are being held as needed. Anyone wishing to attend a subsequent pregnancy meeting may call (800) 963-7070 or (925) 373-4114 and ask for "HAND."

## Service

*Continued from Page 3*

Dan and Dana DiVerde, in memory of Baby Girl DiVerde  
Paul and Elisa Donovan, in memory of Anthony, Isaiah, Isabella and Alexandra Donovan

Jeff and Teri Dunkin, in memory of Miranda Mary Dunkin  
Robert and Maria Federle, in memory of Ana Julie Federle

Toru and Mari Lou Hagiwara, in memory of Baby Hagiwara  
Greg and Karen Hanson, in memory of Christopher Ryan Hansen

Zhuoning and Huddee Ho, in memory of Rebecca Ho  
Hsuan Wei Hu and Wen Chiu Tu, in memory of Shannon Hu

Dan and Karen Jenson, in memory of The Jensen Babies  
Jim and Katherine Keaney, in memory of Dane Lyle Keaney

Chris and Jennifer Kelch, in memory of Emmett Lucas Kelch  
Roger and Cindi Kellmann, in memory of Aaryn Kellmann

Robert and Kathleen Kraker, in memory of Susan Elizabeth Kraker  
Stewart and Nellie Lai, in memory of Megan Jennifer Lai

Robert and Alana Lee, in memory of Kyle Robert Lee  
Ed and Mary Ludwick, in memory of Tyler Jones Ludwick

Todd and Ellen Lukanc, in memory of Laura Anne Lukanc  
Aaron and Dora McCracken, in memory of Melissa Marie McCracken

John and Esther Mote, in memory of Timothy James Mote

Paul and Anne Musial, in memory of Natalee Elizabeth Musial

Dan and Paula Nehrling, in memory of the Nehrling Babies  
Bob and Sherri Penny, in memory of Megan Valerie and Erin Arielle Penny

Piero and Ann Pianetta, in memory of Roberto Carlo Pianetta  
Rebecca Pounds, in memory of

Kiera Nicole Pounds  
Jennifer Ramsey and Monty Clark, in memory of Elijah Ramsey-Clarke

Vince Washington and Melissa Rodick, in memory of Hannah Grace West

Steve and Ann Shilling, in memory of Andrew Cole Shilling  
Laura Schoderbek, in memory of Anna Lynn, Anna Lee and Baby Schoderbek

Paul and Belinda Spallas, in memory of Baby Lauren Spallas  
Craig and Anne Stenehjem, in memory of Haley Anne Stenehjem

Shane and Brandy Suhama, in memory of Cody Suhama  
Thomas and Nina Suydam, in memory of Danielle Nicole Suydam

Steven and Kathryn Wahl, in memory of Karyn Jean Wahl  
Peter and Lori Williamson, in memory of Shelby Williamson

John and Janell White, in memory of Jacklyn Mae White  
Michael and Cassandra Wood, in memory of Jeffrey Daniel Wood

Tony and Laura Zielonka, in memory of Zachary Curran Zielonka

## Donations

Janelle Bloom, in memory of Emily Pampeyan  
Bob & Kathee Kraker, in memory of Susan Elizabeth Kraker

Mike Smith, in memory of wife Lynn and son Samuel Smith  
Jolin and Lian Jek and siblings John and Joshua, in memory of Cordelia Jek, who would be 8 on Aug. 25, 2000.

Michele & Mark Hollar, in memory of William Adam Hollar

G. Gloria Gillogley  
Kraig & Amy Kaiser

Leslie and Frank Muennemann in honor of HAND of the Peninsula's Board of Directors  
Mary and William Schorr in memory of our son, Daniel Patrick Schorr on the anniversary of his 23rd birthdate

In memory of Emily Colleen Biral from Sister Isabella Emily Biral  
Jill Nelson and Joseph Twicken in memory of Maria Corpos' 25th birthday.

Jane Bigwood, in memory of my granddaughter, Katharine Rogers King  
Anne G. Pieper, in memory of twins, Tommy & Tim Pieper.

Lori & David Reddy, in memory of Baby Conklin  
George Mason, in honor of Celia Hartnett. With love and thanks just for being you

Yvonne Nava, in honor of Danielle Nava, in memory of her 5th birthday  
Jocelyn Martin-Leano, in memory of my beloved son, Joseph Jonathan Leano's third anniversary of his homecoming to heaven Oct. 16, 2000.

## **Wisdom** *Continued from Page 1*

But to do this, she realized, I must put down my own grief for a time. -- do I dare try?

After looking again at this weary man through the eyes of her heart -- Wisdom felt compelled by compassion to help.

So with a whispered prayer -- she carefully set aside her own grief -- and gently took hold of her new friend's burden.

And as they talked and shared their experience -- they both gained strength.

As Wisdom sent him on his journey a stronger man -- she noticed as she picked up her grief again, it was lighter, too.

As Wisdom continued to help others along the path -- her own sadness was slowly being melted by the warmth of shared friendships.

She could start to see over, around and through it and notice again the flowers, the sky and the beauty around her -- and she began to plan a future.

In time, Wisdom found her grief had become more manageable and more portable.

Finally, it was tiny enough to fit into a unique pocket right next to her heart -- only to be taken out on special occasions or when needed.

*From Caring Concepts newsletter*