



Emily Keen's "Forever in our Hearts" Story

A 15 year old sibling's memory and response to the loss of her brothers and sisters.

Everyone has heroes and role models. More often than not, the hero changes a person's life in some way, although the individual has not actually met them. I have had the same experience, but I didn't even have a chance to see the heroes that changed my life. Their presence was so brief, I had no idea they were there for the short time that they were. These are my brothers and sisters. Six miscarried babies that I never knew managed to change my life, constantly reminding me of a quote almost as short as their existence on earth — "A person's a person, no matter how small."

I was not always aware of my brothers and sisters. I remember being told I would have a brother or sister soon, but no baby ever came. I also have vague memories of my mom being in the hospital, and sometimes seeing her cry while she was driving me to school. I wondered why these things were happening, but I quickly forgot about my mom's sadness and my curiosity faded away with the busyness of watching videos of the New York City Ballet Nutcracker and imagining that I was the prima ballerina in a ballet recital for the Queen of France.



Several years later my brother, Joseph, was born. Everyone told me that he was truly an incredible blessing and a miracle child. It was not until the summer before I began middle school that all of these pieces came together. My mother and father began working on a special garden in Arlington Cemetery through an organization called SHARE Atlanta. With the construction of this garden, I learned of my six brothers and sisters that were never born. One of them, Jeremiah, was Joseph's twin.

The finished garden is in the section of the cemetery where young children and babies are buried. For the ones that couldn't be put into a box, there are bricks with their names inscribed. Among these, there are six with the most beautiful names—Elijah Thomas, Autumn Bray, Frances Grace, Sarah Elizabeth, Samuel Brown, and Jeremiah Davis. Making them more beautiful still is the name that follows, which is the same as mine. In the trees, there are dozens of wind chimes that sing in the breeze, as if the children are whispering messages of love back to the ones they left behind. In the center of this garden there is an angel. Its intricately carved face is that of a child, and its flowing robe shows that it is truly more than a sculpture carved from stone. With tiny feet that dance on the grass below, and hands and eyes that are lifted towards heaven, I can't help but wonder if this angel is truly a message from God with words of hope inscribed in its wings.

I believe that it is, because an eternity of hope has been brought to me since the angel project began. I found hope in knowing what happened when I was so young and too small to understand. My brothers and sisters also helped me to find faith in God and become a better Christian. I have also been shown the amazing amount of love that can come from a single person, whether it is a sibling, my father, my mother, or my heavenly father. Most of all they taught me about life. They have shown me the extraordinary value in every single day, in that I have the chance to live and should live each day as if it was my last.

Although they are not here physically, my brothers and sisters are with me every day. I see Elijah's playfulness when a plump, brown rabbit bounds across the lawn. I hear Autumn's caring heart singing when the soft breeze blows across my face. I see Frances's innocence when a perfect butterfly lands on a flower, and I catch a glimpse of Sarah when my mom laughs out loud. Samuel is there to giggle when I fall into the swimming pool, and I sometimes feel Jeremiah's hugs when Joseph gives one to me.

Even though they were never born, I know for certain that my brothers and sisters are people, and no matter how small, they have shown me more about love, life, and hope than a bigger or older person ever could.



This essay responded to, "What do you think is important in life?", in the Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest. The contest is sponsored by J.B. Fuqua and financed by Emory University. Most of the 50 finalist were juniors and seniors, and Emily was one of 4 freshmen who received an award during the Rotary Club's banquet. She was 15th on the list. Her entry touched and opened many hearts.

Emily, Polly, Joe, and Joseph at the Festival of Trees 2004.

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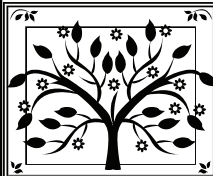
Cindy Ivey and Jennifer Greer

(March of Dimes)

Wish to volunteer with us? We always need extra hands. Email, call, or tell one of our members. We welcome your support and outreach.

THE BURNING BUSH

The Editor's
Note



SHARE Atlanta's Email Updates

For news between newsletters ~ go to our site's front page, click on "Email Updates," and send us your email address. Or click on "Updates" for the latest news.

We hope to have an emailed newsletter. We appreciate your patience as we reach our goal. *Our latest newsletters are online in pdf form.*

Note: We average 400 newsletters at each distribution and our Updates go to over 200 people.

Lasting Gifts

As a co-founder of SHARE Atlanta who helped in the previous group, AMEND, I have been involved with grief support groups for over twenty years. I have had friendships with some incredibly wonderful people and watched parents move from intense grief after the loss of their baby to intense joy when they find their path of "what will be." I also have been honored to be part of the process of parents working to give meaning to their special child's presence - often hearing the first thoughts as to the many gifts that these special babies can offer a parent. These gradually come as a parent can begin to see clearly through the fog of pain into the light of healing. Every time this happens, I feel a deep sense of respect for what God has created in us. We are survivors and truly capable of turning "mourning into dancing."

Jennifer Greer, our newsletter editor for ten years, was one such person. It took time to deal with three losses, and the many wonderful outreaches that Jennifer provided in memory of Jamie, Jesse and Jacob and in honor of her three living children, Braxton, Cullen, and Grace, have touched so many bereaved families. Jennifer helped bring us the quilt project, wonderful newsletters, the angel, the March of Dimes Walk, the memorial brick pathway, and her lasting gift - her deep and tender support for so many grieving parents along the way. Several of these projects were her initial idea that she then worked hard to make happen.

We have been blessed by this gifted lady, and as with so many of our group volunteers, her support in any way in the future will be welcomed. We thank you, Jennifer, for all you have shared with us, and what you have given will be vital to the healing of future families. These gifts, much like the love we have for our babies, will be everlasting.

Marcia



Jennifer (by the "s") holding Grace with some of those who attended our gathering to welcome our Angel of Hope.

Jennifer and SHARE Atlanta Moments...

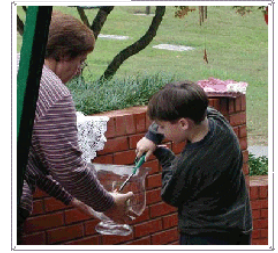


Jennifer, second from left, at 11Alive's taping session in Marcia's home in 2001.

SHARE Atlanta's Annual Memorial Celebrations



"Forever in our Hearts"
Angel of Hope Garden Memorial
Music ~ Candlelighting ~ Balloons & Bubbles ~
Mementos ~ Remembering our Babies...Together
Babyland ~ Arlington Memorial Park
Sunday, October 23, 2005 ~ 3:00 PM



- * **Litany** ~ To have your baby's name included in the written program and in the ceremony, click on "SHARE Atlanta Annual Memorial Celebrations" on the front of our website - follow the link and send Marcia an email from the Angel of Hope Memorial page. Or call 770-928-5606 and leave a message. Please spell all names and leave a number where you can be reached in case of questions. Please do this by Friday, October 21 to be included on the written program.
- * **Outreach for Healing** ~ Foster Care Shelter, 4B's Donation, and Festival of Trees' Ornaments received on this day.
- * **Gentle reminder about young children:** For the comfort of our newly bereaved families, please leave your young children with someone you trust. Children ten or over who can remain attentive are welcome.
- * **It's never too late to remember, to grieve and to heal. Please join us whether your loss was 5 days or 55 years ago.**

Directions to Arlington: From I-285, take the Roswell Road exit and turn North (outside the perimeter). At the 2nd traffic light, turn left onto Hammond Drive. When Hammond ends, turn left onto Mt. Vernon and then immediately right into Arlington Memorial Park. Once inside the park, take the first right and the fourth left. The angel will be waiting for you at the bottom of the hill.

Rain location ~ Arlington's Chapel - Once inside the park, after about 200 feet take the first left. You will see the office directly ahead. After another 200 feet bear right. There will be two buildings on the left. Sunrise Chapel is the second building. There is a covered drop-off area.

I was touched by the beautiful Angel of Hope Memorial Service. It was perfect. Events like this are "bitter sweet" and so helpful in the grieving process. I am glad my mother-in-law went. It helped her to better understand our grief and hers. I was touched the most by the balloons and bubbles at the end. My husband, Derrick, just stared up at the balloons until they were no longer a little dot in the sky. I loved the poem, "No Heartbeat" - isn't that the truth?! *Christy Rowan*



The Candlelight Ceremony meant so much to me. It was such a nice way to remember my babies. On the way home, I thought about what gifts our children have given us. I realized the biggest gift for me was that my babies chose my husband and I to be their parents. That is the greatest gift they could have given us. *Julie Palmieri*

Women's Group Candlelighting

November 16 ~ 7:00 PM

At the home of Marcia and Leon McGinnis



Tanya's Memory Box

Join us for this special night of sharing and friendship with old and new friends. Our theme is "forever in our hearts." Each one of our babies is a very special presence in our lives. The thoughts, feelings, and memories shared at our candlelighting service help us continue the process of grieving and healing with gentle support from one another.

- ♦ Please bring a **candle with a holder** to light in memory of your baby. We will have some extras for anyone who doesn't have one and wishes to light a candle.
- ♦ Please bring a **finger food** to share - if you are able.
- ♦ Please bring any **mementos** you would like to share for our *memorial table*.
- ♦ **Outreach for Healing** ~ Foster Care Shelter, 4B's Donation, and Festival of Trees' Ornaments received.
- ♦ For directions (Women's Meeting home) or more information, please call 770-928-5606 or see website.

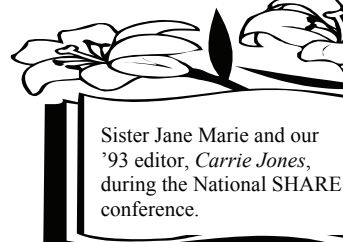
The Love Stays...

Sister Jane Marie Lamb Foundress of SHARE National (8/24/36-3/8/05)

Years ago, Sister Jane Marie wrote about how she felt inadequate to walk into a newly bereaved couple's room and comfort them. But, she did so and left with an idea about parents "who have been there" helping other newly bereaved parents. This is the *mutual support* between bereaved parents that Sister Jane Marie Lamb believed in when she started her organization in 1976. (She remained the SHARE director until 1991.) SHARE Atlanta supports her philosophy. The core of today's SHARE Atlanta program speaks to its positive impact upon grieving parents. Grieving parents gain hope through outreach, and they do heal as they support one another. Sister Jane Marie's foundation was strong and well placed and continued in her program as well as in her book *Bittersweet.hello goodbye*. Many bereaved parents were blessed by this kind and dedicated woman's outreach through the years.

Sister Jane's obituary and funeral homily described her birth as the tenth one in a loving, faith-filled and giving family. Most likely, her mutually supportive and loving upbringing provided her with the insight of what was to be the basis of her gift to so many. It is, to me, a part of God's ultimate plan.

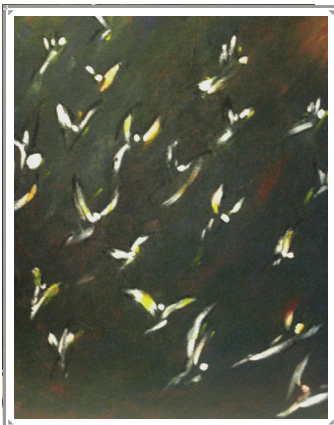
It gives me comfort to believe that this gentle angel is amongst our many angels. Now, together, they rest in a peaceful and serene safe place. In her homily, she thanks her friends and family for all they have given her. We, at SHARE Atlanta, will be forever grateful and thankful to this special lady for her gifts to us. Marcia McGinnis



Sister Jane Marie and our '93 editor, Carrie Jones, during the National SHARE conference.



"I am a Mother, but in a very different way."



Ascension

When I lost Zari (10/24/03), the first feeling I felt was numb. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I didn't know anything. I felt numb and empty. The only decision I can recall making, is the decision to contact SHARE Atlanta. One of the first lessons I learned at SHARE Atlanta was that there was no wrong or right way to grieve, and the only thing I needed to do was to remember that I am a Mother. I also learned that I, too, would come to realize how I would celebrate Zari's life.

Zari was due on February 23rd 2004. I got through that date with ease. My birthday was next. For months while carrying Zari, I had thought about how different my next birthday would be. How this birthday would be marked as my first year of being a mother. I knew, and looked forward to how that day would leave me feeling.

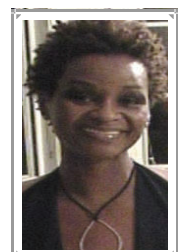
Well everything was different now.

Note: Kenya's beautiful painting is in color in the online newsletter.

The day had come, but how would I mark it? I am a Mother, but in a very different way. Then the thought came to me in the dark of the night. "Go to the paint store, pick up everything you need," and it will come. I didn't ask any questions. (Even though I had been on an emotional roller coaster lately I knew that "thought" to be Spirit speaking to me.) I set up the easel, put the paint out, and sat and stared. I had never picked up a paintbrush a day in my life. I had no idea what I was doing. Day came and night fell; with me sitting and staring. While doing so, I begin to see it.

First I painted blue because it represented the sadness I felt. Then green because it represented the new life that I had experienced. And then red because it represented the anger I felt. I stared longer. Then I saw the brightness of the Creator's energy represented by bright orange and yellow and I painted. Then amazingly I saw beautiful precious Babies going towards the Energy. The more I stared, the more Babies appeared. Everywhere I saw one appear; I painted.

I call this piece *Ascension* ~ the journey of our babies. In celebration of Zari. Kenya Beyah



...forever in our hearts

Tender Moments with Dorothy Ellen...18 Years of Love....

Marcia, I'm having a really "tender" time right now because our local High School's graduation is Thursday night. *It would have been Dorothy Ellen's year.*

We went to several graduation parties this past weekend, mostly for kids from our church. They were bittersweet. We once missed a baby, then a little girl, then an adolescent. Now we wonder what she would have been like as a young woman. What would have piqued her interests? What would she have wanted to do next? Would there be a special young man in her life?

You know for the first few years we took wreaths decorated with "age-appropriate" items to the cemetery at Christmas time. Mark had a surprise for me yesterday! He'd been to the local home improvement store and bought a small concrete bulldog – complete with red painted sweater – for me to take out to the cemetery on Thursday night. We'd like to THINK she would have been Athens-bound at this point, being raised in a "red and black" household!

Anyway, you know that I have the greatest support at home – always have had. Mark and my Dad are not typical men in this regard. But, it would have been nice to connect with you and some of the other ladies last week. I was thinking of you, and somehow, knowing you were there supporting each other made me smile a little, even if I couldn't be there with you, myself. Reece Ritter (Dorothy Ellen was born and died at full term on July 10, 1987.)

Dorothy Ellen's Treasures and Mementos



Baby Shoes on a Wreath ~ The Ritters always put age appropriate mementos on Dorothy Ellen's grave site.



Georgia Bulldog..

Family Support

My sister, Candi, is a big-time gardener (I'm not a dig-in-the-dirt kind of a person!). Her birthday present each year is an early-morning (to avoid the heat) visit to the cemetery with a flat of some type of annuals that she plants in the flower garden next to Dorothy Ellen's spot. The first time she did it was Dorothy's first birthday, and it was a surprise for us when we arrived later that day. Candi has done this every birthday since. It's not always flowers, sometimes just green plants, but it's been different every year. This year, she knew there was a new bulldog, so she went with something red! You can also see the trunk of the dogwood tree that Mark's mom and dad planted in '88.



Dorothy Ellen's family today...Cammie, 13, Isaac, 12, and Mom and Dad (Reece and Mark). One major *change* brought about by their child's death was Mark became a funeral director. He, with Reece's help, has supported many bereaved parents through the years.



Hallmark Times: In July's meeting, Reece offered much comfort to other moms. Remembering and healing come in stages. The birth and growth of a subsequent baby can cause us to realize "all we missed" because our baby died. Or various events and/or ages become significant reminders that our baby died. For example, for a Jewish family at age 7 the youngest child has an important part in the family Seder service so when this year approaches it can be very difficult for a family. We think about these experiences with our living children as being hallmarks to "growing up" so we do this with our children who have died, too. These times can "trigger" unexpected emotions. Often parents will visit or call us expressing confused feelings. Realizing that these are normal reactions, and then thinking of ways to cope as the Ritters have shared, eases us through these times. Thus, allowing us to continue along our path of healing. Marcia McGinnis



Festival of Trees

Last year we raised over \$1000 for
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

What

Our decorated tree will be judged and then sold to raise money for this year's project: the **Neonatal Intensive Care Units** at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. Our tree will be viewed and appreciated by over 100,000 visitors!

Kim Shiflett has donated the \$100 for the tree. It was raised from the percentage of her proceeds from Bracelets of Hope, www.braceletsofhope.com. This special donation begins our 2005 project in a positive, sharing manner. We will buy lights and additional decorations (other than the donated ornaments) for the tree.

When and Where

- Dates Saturday, December 3 to Sunday, December 11, 2005
 - Location Georgia World Congress Center, Exhibit Hall A-1
 - Exhibitor Move In and Drop Off: Tuesday, November 29 from 1 to 9 pm. We will do the set-up on this date.
- No one needs to be there during the festival, but visiting is fun and rewarding.

Festival of Trees' Statement of Personal Safety

Due to insurance regulations, no children under 16 will be allowed on the floor during set-up and breakdown. This includes babies in backpacks and strollers.

Sibling Participation

SHARE Atlanta encourages sibling's pre-festival participation by inviting your baby's sibling or close relative to have an ornament from him/her in memory of your special baby. They can 'visit' the finished tree, and the children's activities at the festival are wonderful! I took my boys there every year to start the holiday season.

How

SHARE Atlanta's theme "Forever in our hearts"

In keeping with our theme and our bear topper who is carrying stars, anyone that wishes can donate heart, star-shaped or bear ornament(s). We will include the baby's name in our own "memorial" handout (which will be at the Gingerbread Information Center) so others will know that we will not forget these little ones. We also will include a baby's name if you will *email* it to us. Pictures of the tree and our children's names will be on our website.

Note: You might consider buying a matching keepsake for your family.

Festival Committee (email Marcia: marciahm@mindspring.com and I will send out Festival Updates.)

- Attends a "Jersey Mike's" planning gathering before our 9/21 meeting at 6 pm—all else will be done via email, possibly one other meeting, and on November 29th. You can be a part of either or both the planning and Nov. set-up, but please tell me of your interest.
- Plans and buys the rest of the decorations (lights, ribbons, etc.)
- Makes or buys a tree skirt

SHARE Atlanta, with the help of donations, will cover the costs involved.

Donating Ornaments..

We will receive your ornament(s) in these ways:

Bring to -

- a. Group Meetings
- b. Memorial Service on October 23, at 3 pm
- c. Women's Candlelighting Service - November 16, at 7 pm
- d. Mail to our post box (see back page of newsletter)

Include with (*not on*) your donated ornament

- Your baby's name if you have chosen a name.
- Your name and phone number
- If you wish, write or email me a brief message as to what this donation or experience means to you. These may be included in our written materials.

Julie Franklin's 2004 Note:

Seeing all the *ornaments* I realized each represents much more than the child lost... *represents the love, hopes and dreams of the parents*. It is such a special tree, while full of sorrow, full of more love than anyone could fathom. I was honored to work on the tree in memory of Caleb. I am looking forward to next year and already have begun to look for that perfect ornament.



This year's *teddy bear topper*, chosen by Tamara White in memory of Ryan, has on a white gown with gold stars. A color picture is on our website.

March of Dimes WalkAmerica

Team #562- SHARE Atlanta
Raises \$13,174 & Wins 3 Awards
For Medical Research- Materials-Understanding
As we "Walk to Remember" Our Babies..

SHARE Atlanta had around 60 people sign up to raise donations with us this year and many more gave donations to us in memory of their baby. Our thanks to these members and friends as well as to our two team captains: *Cindy Ivey* (in memory of Lacey Ivey) and *Jennifer Greer* (in memory of Jamie, Jesse, and Jacob). Also, a huge thank you to *Polly Keen* who has been so instrumental in making this project happen as well. *We "Walk to Remember" as we walk to raise funds.*

On February 4, Chairman's Club: Polly, Cindy with new baby Caden, her mom, and I attended the luncheon. We were honored to be included as one of the 2004 Olympic Park Top Teams during an inspirational celebration entitled "From Polio to Prematurity." There were representatives from organizations such as Bell South, Equifax, Turner Construction, Publix, present. The key speaker was Bob Moore, Vice President, Atlanta Division of Publix Super Markets. He told his touching story about his son who had survived a birth defect and died as a young adult. Bob was an incredibly motivating speaker!

The special guest speaker, Dorenda Washington, the mom from the MODs' National Ambassador Family, who has lost 6 babies, shared her story with us. The audience, mostly non-bereaved individuals, was hearing what you and I hear in our group each time we come together. She told her story with passion and with a very clear message of her hope during each pregnancy, her incredible pain at each loss, and how she and her husband gradually coped and continued their efforts to have a family. She closed with the introduction of her 7 year old son, Justin! He is a true miracle! We were blessed to hear his words of support of how MODs had helped his parents through some of their losses and then helped Justin survive his four month premature birth.

I wish that each of you could have heard Dorenda's testimony and then felt the pride she had for her son. Justin's words spoke clearly of the need for more support from those of us who can help to continue the efforts of the MODs. They are working to stop prematurity, but they also are working to find reasons and cures for birth defects and other issues that: cause babies to die, to be born with life threatening birth defects and life limiting conditions.

We beamed as we accepted two awards for our group's hard work. We then had our pictures made with Monica Sanghavi, the local foundations WalkAmerica Director (and our supportive friend), Justin and his mom, and our newly won awards. Great fun for all of us as we remembered why we are supporting the MODs.

Marcia McGinnis



Monica, Polly, Cindy, Justin and Marcia with our three awards on February 4, 2005

April 30, 2005's Walk: The actual walk was rained out! As Jennifer shared: "Thanks so much to all of you who raised money for our team. What a miserable day to look for the light of hope! The Keen family and I took shelter in a pavilion near our beloved tent when the thunder rolled in. Once local authorities called off the walk, we dashed back to our cars with a few extra balloons. I dropped two of them off at Arlington and snapped a quick shot between bolts of lightning."

We were thrilled and honored to have earned, because of our previous year's \$17,000, a SHARE Atlanta tent! The biggest disappointment was not being able to use all we had planned for under the tent. *Nikecia Ingram, Polly, and Emily Keen* had a poster ready for all of our babies' names. *Carole and Ken Britten* along with *Karen and Charlie Major and Sharon Cryor* were ready to hand out materials. Polly had created beautiful tags for us to wear with our baby's names on them. Most exciting was- more dads, family members, and friends were joining us this year, and we were going to surpass our average of 40 walkers!

As Angie Purcell stated, the most important aspect is our part in helping MODs exceed the \$101 million mark. We know we can pull together with our lasting hope of helping MODs to put our group "out of business" while carrying our special babies in our hearts.

June 14, Team Captain's Celebratory

Luncheon at Dave and Busters: Polly and Cindy attended, and we won an award for raising the most money in our group's category. *LaWanda Lee* was our top fundraiser! *Cindy* was second on the list and, once again, she had the largest group of mutually supportive friends. Many members came together, and we appreciate everyone's efforts. *The award is for each of you, and the hope for the future is for all of us.*



Julie Franklin, Suzanne Chezem, Kim Shiflett, Nikecia Ingram and Allison Egger with one of our MODs' balloons at the Women's meeting.

Advocacy ~ Understanding Brings Support...

Our responses and actions *do* make a difference.

October Is Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness



Some Statistics

- ⇒ 26,000 stillbirths occur per year.
- ⇒ An estimated 1 in 4 pregnancies ends in miscarriage - the MODs state 50% of pregnancies end in miscarriage.
- ⇒ 19,000 newborns die during the first month.
- ⇒ 460,000 babies in the U.S. are born too soon every year, some so small they fight to survive...

**Advocacy is needed to brighten the future ~
for ourselves and others!**

Mutual-Support and Advocacy

When we attend or become a part of any activity:

- * support meetings or events
- * Outreach for Healing activities
- * memorial services
- * inservices
- * professional conferences

Or respond to people who see our awareness pins or learn of our loss..

*We honor our own and other parents' children,
and we become advocates for the Pregnancy and
Newborn Loss Community's issues and needs.*

Why Have a Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month?

- * Because life, even the tiniest life, is special.
- * Because life, even the tiniest life, must be remembered.
- * Because parents want to remember.
- * Because grieving parents need sensitive doctors, nurses, clergy, funeral directors and families.
- * Because the larger community needs to be reminded that pregnancy and infant losses occur often.
- * Because the larger community needs to know how to help grieving families.
- * Because the larger community needs to be reminded that life, even the tiniest life, is special.

"A supportive environment can make all the difference in how parents incorporate their loss, their precious child, into their lives in a healthy manner." The Pregnancy and Infant Loss Center's Loving Arms newsletter, Fall '84 and 8/9/'91

The Pregnancy and Newborn Loss Community's Ongoing Issues

⇒ **Support from society:** Families who suffer this tragedy need sensitive caregivers, understanding friends, supportive families, and the opportunity to attend grief support groups in order to heal.

⇒ **Prevention:** We need to *work to prevent pregnancy and newborn loss*. The MODs has picked up the banner in providing medical support for conditions such as toxemia, placenta previa, neural tube defects with folic acid, etc. which cause difficult pregnancies and babies to die or to be born with health problems. As the MODs works with other groups such as the CDC, NIH, and dedicated medical professionals, they will ultimately limit the number of parents who will need SHARE Atlanta's support.

SHARE Atlanta was invited to and attended the CDC conference on August 23, 2005—more info next issue!

⇒ **Advocacy:** Parents *must continue advocacy both for emotional health and for prevention and possible intervention during pregnancy*. Awareness, about perinatal health care and the *right* of a woman who fears that she might be experiencing a problem to *seek medical care*, must be a primary issue for mothers-to-be. Babies of difficult pregnancies (at any stage of pregnancy) need to be protected so they will not die. **Advocacy Pins are available at our gatherings. For an Advocacy Ribbon Magnet for your car visit braceletsofhope.com.**

⇒ **Mutual-support:** At every gathering, we support grieving parents- no matter how long ago their loss was or how early a loss they experienced. We also show collective appreciation for *continuing awareness* so others might not suffer similar losses and parents will feel comfortable in seeking support.

Taken from SHARE Atlanta's Advocacy and Awareness Brochure and from our website by Marcia McGinnis 2002

Awareness—Our babies are real and special to us

Memorial Brick Pathway

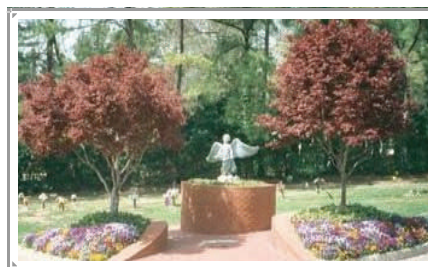
Please help us make this special haven available to bereaved parents for a *long time to come*—by *limiting the number of memorial bricks placed in our garden...thank you.*

Emily Keen writes, on the front page of this newsletter, of the blessings that the Angel of Hope Garden has brought her and her family. She shares that seeing the names of her six brothers and sisters brings much peace, love and beauty to her heart. She mentions that the whisper of the chimes in the trees is like the children are whispering messages of love back to the ones they left behind. The impact that this special garden has on her is very clear. Since 2001, we have had numerous emails and notes from other family members and parents expressing similar feelings and responses. SHARE Atlanta wishes to make this garden an available option to others for a very long time. *We need your help to do this.*

Bricks will continue to be sold on a space available basis and added to the garden pathway. The purpose of our pathway is to have a safe and special place for families to remember their little ones. It was our intention for this to be similar to a memorial garden...with one, possibly two memorial bricks per baby.

We have had a few families begin to order a large number of memorial bricks often from various members of a family—for one child. We appreciate the desire to remember our special babies, and we encourage this recognition for healing and sharing the memory of our little ones with others. Though we want to embrace the efforts of each family to heal, we fear that our space will quickly be consumed and future families will have no where to place a memorial brick.

We ask that future families consider our other “Outreach for Healing” options to do this (many are shared within this newsletter and on our website). These projects not only honor our special baby, but provide hope and support to other bereaved parents. All include the name of the babies that are being honored with the outreach. In this way, families can recognize and remember their baby both in our garden and in other special ways. Then, our garden can continue to be a place of peace for bereaved parents, their families and friends for a very long time. We thank you for helping us with this effort. Marcia McGinnis



A special haven...

Sean and I made it through Emma's 1 year anniversary on April 17th. We actually went and spent an hour at the angel garden at her bricks. We read books, lit a candle, laughed and cried. It was a beautiful day to sit and reflect at the garden. I am so thankful that SHARE Atlanta was able to build the garden, as we now consider it Emma's gravesite. My family is eager to see it when they come into town next weekend.

Thanks again, Laura O'Brien

Memorial Brick Pathway

- * Thanks to continued member support of SHARE Atlanta and a family run brick company, we are able to continue to offer the bricks at a cost of \$25. each. *Neither SHARE Atlanta nor Arlington Memorial Park profit from this project.*
- * A printable order form with detailed information can be found on our website or use the Angel brochure form.
- * Deadlines to order: May 1; Aug. 1; Oct. 1 and Feb. 1
- * Bricks are received about 3 to 4 months later.
- * You will be notified after the brick is installed.
- * If you would like a brick to keep as a memento, please include a note to that effect with your order along with an additional \$20 per keepsake brick.

SHARE Atlanta Memorial Brick in Australia!

Jennifer, I just thought that I would send you a photo of Tyson's “SHARE Atlanta” memorial brick now that it has been laid in the memorial garden of our local cemetery. We did it February 6 which was his due date.

Thank you again for all the trouble that you went to, to help make this possible. *I hope you know how much we both appreciate all you've done. It's people like you that make the world a better place -your an angel!!* Take care and keep doing your fantastic work.

Cherona Lowe, xoxoxox

(Jennifer had gotten the brick to a Cherona's friend who was in the states visiting and about to return to Australia.)



Healing Happens....

Keeping your options open along the "path of healing" makes it possible..

Does healing really happen? A frequent discussion within our group meetings revolves around the question: Does healing really happen? For parents who are in the mist of their pain and grief, it usually seems unlikely. And, parents interpret the statements, "You'll never get over it." or "It will be with you for the rest of your life."- as meaning that healing really will not happen. The fear that the pain will always be there intensifies their grief.

Healing happens if we let it. It is an *option* that we have to *work* towards. It doesn't usually happen by itself, and the pathway varies between men and women and for different individuals. We never have to like what has happened to us, but so we do not suffer for the rest of our lives, we must find ways to cope, resolve, and make life meaningful again. All of this is "doable" with an ongoing effort and a better understanding of the grieving process.

Our hope is to come to a place where we have gradually released the fear, confusion, and pain around all of what happened to us. As we let go of our grief, with the aide of various options, we slowly embrace new reactions and feelings. As these transitions and changes happen, they can enable us to carry the love we have for our child forward into all that we do. As one of our group's moms, Nikecia, expressed to me, "Healing does eventually happen; however, it is a choice, and it comes in little spurts or pieces."

A major source of healing comes as we *remember* our babies through our actions, mementos, outreach and/or words. During anniversaries, the holidays, and outreach activities, parents' expressions in short writings and poems capture their thoughts and emotions about their loss and the special place their baby holds in their ongoing life. Often when we read what others have written, we find in their words the very feelings that we are moving through. We begin to realize that we are not alone in our grief and that others are moving through their grief with similar reactions as our own. Then, we can proceed in our own healing efforts with more confidence. Marcia McGinnis

Memorial Jewelry

SHARE Atlanta mom, *Kim Shiflett*, expresses her love for her two babies in her beautiful memorial jewelry that she offers from her website. Kim shares, *"I started making bracelets after my daughter, Hope, was stillborn in September 2004. I wanted to have her name close to me at all times. Since then, the bracelets have brought comfort to many women."*

Kim's Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Bracelet



This lovely bracelet pairs frosted pink and blue Cat's Eye beads with sparkly Swarovski crystals in Light Rose and Light Sapphire. Sterling silver beads add an everyday "wearability" to the design. The Awareness Ribbon Charm is included. For many more loving choices, please visit Kim's site: braceletsofhope.com.



SHARE Atlanta mom, *Kimberly Schulte*, shares this beautiful portrait that she had made of baby Greyson and his siblings, Ashley and AJ. The artist was able to create this with photos of the three children. Kim also had a doll made in Greyson James' memory (January 21, 2004).

Websites for Creating Memories: See Coping Ideas on our site

- * <http://www.portraitsbydana.com/default.html>—At our Women's meeting, we also have seen Nikecia's loving portrait of Joshua and Jordan done by Dana.
- * http://www.sherwoodsforkids.com/sonogram_frames01.htm—Frames for sonograms
- * <http://www.starregistry.com/aisle2.html>- Name a Star after your baby.
- * <http://www.miraclebabydolls.com/> - Memorial dolls are created as mementos that look just like your baby.

Anniversary Notes...Remembering is healing.

I survived Caleb's first birthday and was surprised at how drained physically I was. It REALLY hit me. Andy and I went to the cemetery and put a balloon on Caleb's grave and released a balloon which got stuck in a pine tree. We both went "AWWW" then started to laugh! I was happy to see that Caleb got to see us smile on his birthday. I read a poem I wrote on his 6 month birthday and Andy read the lyrics to "Beautiful Boy" by John Lennon. He had read that to Caleb in the NICU. We sang "Happy Birthday" before we left. It was very bittersweet and sad. But, I am so glad we both stayed home from work and did our little ceremony.

After we left the grave, we finally ordered Caleb's headstone. This felt so good, as I wasn't ready to do it for so long. I was recovering from my infected c-section incision when we made the arrangements for the funeral so I stayed home. Andy, my sister, and my brother made the funeral arrangements. Thank God they wanted to wait to let me pick out the marker, and it's done.

I missed seeing you guys this month. I REALLY did. I can't say how much it has meant to me the past year to have our SHARE Atlanta group. I haven't missed a single meeting. Thanks so much for being there for me and for all of us. What we have been through really sucks - pardon my French. It has helped me so much to have somewhere to go once a month, and it's okay to still cry about my baby. I don't know how I would have made it without you guys. Wishing you all peace, Caleb's Mom, Julie Franklin ~ In Loving Memory of Caleb Andrew, August 17-25, 2004

Happy Birthday Caleb by Your Mommy

Beautiful Boy
Gentle Son
Fierce Independent
Loving one

Hold my hand
Kiss my cheek
My gentle strong son
Let me feel your presence until day is done

Engraved on our hearts
Your love always to abide
We walk without you
Yet you are always at our side

Anticipation Excitement
Wonder and Joy
We wanted to know you
Our sweet baby boy

Come in our dreams
Let us hug you and kiss you
Gone from our lives
Now we so dearly miss you

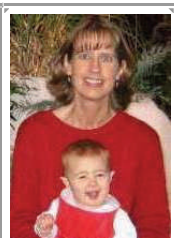
Determined to meet us
You arrived earlier than planned
Inspiring to others
A loss hard to understand

With love from our family
More than one could comprehend
Happy Birthday Sweet Angel Caleb
Our Little Man Son and Friend



"I think of lambs when I think of Caleb."

Remembering Cole ~ On His Fourth Birthday



Leah & Katie
12/13/04

Marcia, Each year on or close to Cole's birthday we plan something to do in his memory, something to celebrate his life. This year we chose to take part in a candlelighting at the cemetery he is buried in, and on Sunday we attended the Festival of Trees. Yesterday, we visited his grave marker with birthday balloons—which nine month old, Katie, picked out (given a choice of 2 different ones).

Cole would have been 4 years old yesterday, and this year the grief and sadness has been building for weeks. I have cried multiple times daily for him. Perhaps because I hate that Katie will never have her big brother around to teach her new things, to play with, and of course, to bother her. Having Katie makes me realize even more what wonderful, joyous times we missed with

Cole. However, having said that - seeing the SHARE Atlanta tree in honor of our babies and seeing Cole's name written on the litany made me smile through the tears. He will never be forgotten. His memory is forever alive in our hearts and minds.

It cannot be said enough: thank you for your love and dedication and for joining us in keeping Cole's (and all our babies') memory alive. SHARE Atlanta helped keep me from drowning in my sea of grief. You made me feel normal in my grief and helped me see that eventually life would be worth living again. I just wanted you to know that I hold you in the highest esteem, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you do. Leah Blurton ~ In loving memory of Cole Alexander, Dec. 13-14, 2000



Down the Path...

Subsequent Pregnancy Group

Are you expecting again? Nervous? Excited? Confused about your emotions? There's a group just for you.

SHARE Atlanta's Subsequent Pregnancy Group is the perfect place to share your most fervent wishes and irrational fears with those who completely understand.

RSVP for more info – 770.928.9603 or email Polly Keen, group facilitator, from our site

Topics...

Wednesday, October 12 - Keeping your marriage strong, "loss of innocence."

Wednesday, November 9 - Will the birth of this baby bring up grief issues?

Wednesday, December 14 - Dads invited
Dad's concerns and expectations. How to deal with Mom.

Wednesday, January 11 - Will this pregnancy ever feel "safe"?



Subsequent Pregnancy Support Online

Check out the special Subsequent Pregnancy section of our website at:
www.shareatlanta.org

Follow along with Crystal's Ongoing Diary.



Other helpful links:
Subsequent Pregnancy After a Loss
www.spals.com/home/index.html

Multiplicity - Support while expecting multiples
www.synspectrum.com/multiplicity.html

Are you on bed rest?

Contact **SIDELINES** for support:
www.sidelines.org

Or Call (888) 447-4754
(HI-RISK4)



SHARE Atlanta Family Reunion

Mark your calendars for September 25, 2005 from 2 to 5 pm. Even when it is storming, the sun always shines on our family reunions each year. We gather to meet our newest subsequent babies and to marvel at the size of the Earliest "safe arrivals." Some of these children are now in college! The kids, big and little, can be seen playing ball or on the great playground equipment in the beautiful back yard of *Polly and Joe Keen*. Meanwhile the grown-ups catch up and enjoy the delicious offerings of the day. This year's theme is **"Fall Picnic."** We ask that each family bring a picnic type food and a blanket to sit on so we can gather together outside to share the beauty of the day. (If it is raining, we will "picnic" inside.)

There's something special about this day every year. We look around at the smiling families and know that there is the promise of hope, for all the newly bereaved and for each one of us. There is hope and joy in our futures.

What to bring: If your last name starts with A-M please bring easy to eat main food or fun finger food; N-Z please bring dessert, fruit or fun finger food.

RSVP or Questions...call our Event's Line or email Shenja Kirkland, shenjakirkland@yahoo.com. If at the last moment you can make it, and you haven't called, please do come along-there is always plenty of food and lots of wonderful memories!



Our oldest and youngest 2003 SHARE Atlanta "babies" - Ryan Anderson, 16, who drove to the reunion, and Johari Johnson, 5 months, who had recently discovered his toes.

New Arrivals

Devon and Nikhol Jackson welcomed **Autumn Malae** on March 7, 2005. Autumn weighed 5lbs 13oz and was 18 1/2 inches long. Nikhol and Nikhol's mother, Jackie, who often joined us at our meetings, share that Autumn is a blessing and a joy! The Jackson family remembers with love **Jaden Alexandria** born February 23, 2003.

Susan Henderson and Dale Hu adopted twin baby girls, **Daria Ling and Tara Li** from Jiangsu province, China on March 14, 2005. The babies were 10 months old at adoption. Susan and Dale remember their losses to miscarriage in October 2002 and August 2003.

Jamal, Angela and Johari Johnson welcomed **Ayinde** on March 19, 2005! He weighed 7lbs 10oz and was 20 inches long. Ayinde was welcomed by many as Angela has been sharing his/their story on our website. The Johnson family remembers with love **Gwendolyn Gerforne** born October 12, 1999 at 21 weeks due to incompetent cervix and her three angel siblings.

Kenneth and Sharon Washington welcomed their "little man" **Sebastian LaMar Washington "Zion"** on March 21, 2005. Zion weighed 8lbs. 2oz. and was 20 1/4 inches long. The Washington family remembers with love **Caleb Bertrand** born too soon due to incompetent cervix on April 23, 2003.

Allen and Karis Lam announced the birth of **Lauren Faith** on March 21, 2005. She weighed 7 lbs. 7 oz. From their new home in Ft. Bragg, NC, Karis writes, "I spent 30 'up and down' weeks on bed rest, but in the end we went 40 weeks and taaa daaa- her she is. Our angel **Kalynne** made it possible to bring Lauren into this world. Both these babies are a miracle and a blessing. From the day of Lauren's birth - we have said our prayers thanking her sister, Kalynne, for giving the gift of life."

Courtney and Sheniah Kirkland wrote, "We are thrilled to announce that a wonderful ray of 'sunshine' has come into our lives. Our daughter, **Kendall Leigh**, was born on April 11, 2005. She weighed in at 7 lbs. 3oz. Kendall was born two days before her big sister's birthday. So, we were able to celebrate Kennedy's birthday together as a family. Courtney put it best when he said that we are so very blessed to have an angel in heaven and a princess on earth"! The Kirkland family remembers with love **Kennedy Leigh** who was born April 13 and died May 27, 2004.

David and Tamara White welcomed **James Lucas, "Luke"** on 2005 at 34 weeks. He was 19 inches long and weighed a whopping 6 pounds 12. The White family remembers with love **James "Ryan"** who was born October 27, 2003 and died November 1, 2003.

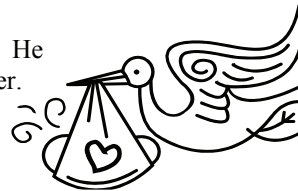
Jeff and Cindy Helms welcomed **Colton Bennett** on April 5, 2005. Colton weighed 6lbs. 5oz and was 19 1/2 inches. The Helm family remembers with love **Bennett**, stillborn at 28 weeks in June, 2004.

Chad and Chiquita Smith announced the birth of **Carrington** on April 13, 2005. Carrington weighed 4lbs 13oz. The Smiths remember with love their two little ones born at 23 weeks in January 2004 and at 8 weeks in May 2004.

Warren and Lori Phillips announced the birth of **Zachary David** on April 19, 2005. Zachary weighed 8lbs 11 oz. and was 21 1/2 inches at 37 weeks. The Phillip family remembers with love **Noah David**.

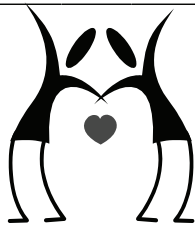
Grant and Shannon Schoonover announced on May 5, 2005 that "**Jack Forrest** is here!" He was 7lbs 15oz and 20 inches and named after his maternal grandfather and great-grandfather. The Schoonovers remember with love **Bennett Ellis** miscarried on December 7, 2004.

Milan, Nima and Tarin Janmeja wish to announce the birth of **Amar Devin** on August 5, 2005. Amar weighed 7lbs. They remember with love Akash Cary born at 20 weeks on March 1, 2004. Nima writes, "Thanks for helping me through some really dark days to the joy that I am having right now. I still cannot believe he is here. I feel so happy when I see him and his brother together."



Sharing Your News!

Please send an email with details and any brief thought to: Sheniah, our 2006 columnist for New Arrivals- sheniakirkland@yahoo.com Not on email-please send this info to our P.O. Box. Our subsequent babies are very special to all of us.



Donations

Donations made directly to SHARE Atlanta, Inc. are the *only* financial support we have. We receive no grant money or funds from anyone other than our members and friends.

We offer most of our programs and materials at *no charge* so everyone can participate.

All donations cover: Printing of: Parent Packets, meeting booklets, grief and advocacy information brochures. Mementos given to parents. Telephone answering system and mailbox. Upkeep of memorial garden. Materials used for inservices. Any promotional or outreach activities that require funds. **We thank those who have supported us. Because of this support, we can continue our outreach within our community.**

Kevin and Lori Hamada in loving memory of Julianna Hisae who was born on January 20, 2003 and died January 21, 2003 and in honor of Jacqueline Hope born January 4, 2004.

Kenneth and Carole Britten in loving memory of Carter Franklin stillborn on July 28, 2004.

Sharon Pearson, in loving memory of her granddaughter, Hannah Louise Egger, December 7, 2004.

Hope Brooks, grandmother of Seth, Catherine and Elizabeth McGinnis, in memory of Hope's friend, Mary Ann Zoller, 1917 - 2005. From Mary Ann's memorial card, "If I have done one deed in life to alleviate another's strife..Then all my life has not been in vain." Caring for others is continued with this donation in her memory.

Susan Henderson, seven books about miscarriage, donated in memory of her two little ones and in honor of their twin daughters, Tara and Daria. Susan writes, "I remember feeling so lost after the miscarriages. I would read passages in some of those books over and over again, wondering if there would ever be a time when I would feel better. Now, listening to the sounds of my babies, I realize I had to go through that grieving and healing process to get to this point. I just can't imagine life without these darlings."

Barbara Shaw, from Orland Fork, IL, for the upkeep of the SHARE Atlanta's angel garden in loving memory of her grandbaby.

Note: We are in numerous transitions—one of them is a new newsletter editor. Our hope is that all is moving along smoothly, but if you have sent in a donation or other information, and it has not been recognized here, we apologize. Please email us with that information, and we will include it in our next newsletter. Thanks for supporting us...and for being patient.

All donations can be sent to:

SHARE Atlanta
PMB 212
9925 Haynes Bridge Road,
Suite 200 Alpharetta, GA 30022
...and are tax deductible

Some companies have matching donation programs. Does yours?
Our C-3 (taxpayer ID#) is 58-1792723

Upcoming Grief Group Meeting Topics

- **September** - Grief and Subsequent Decisions
- **October** - The Significance of You and Your Baby (Please bring your pictures, mementos, etc. to share if you wish)
- **November** - Grief and the Holidays & Women's Group Candlelighting
- **December** - No Grief Group Meetings
- **January** - Grief and Secondary Losses (loss of: innocence, role of parent, hope, self-esteem, etc.)
- **February** - Grief and Emotions

Phone and Email Volunteers
Keep Us Connected!

Many thanks to phone committee members: Karen Verner, Valerie Scholovich, Leah Blurton and Kathleen Blum and our email correspondent, Melina Smith for their many hours of loving work on the SHARE Atlanta lines.

Holiday Foster Care Shelter Donations...

"The people at the foster care shelter were *thrilled* with my truckload of toys, books and clothes! This donation included our fall and winter donations. They especially liked the matching trucks that will go to twin boys. What a great Christmas these two boys will have thanks to *Vincent and Nikecia Ingram*!" Valerie Scholovich, coordinator, after 2004's donations.

Bring a *Holiday Donation* to one of our meetings or events, and you will receive a holiday keepsake with your baby's name on it.

- * Holiday children's books
- * Holiday clothing
- * Holiday toys

Leah Perry ~ SHARE Atlanta's New 2006 Newsletter Editor Kim Shiflett to edit "Remembered with Love"

Leah joined our group after the loss of Dorian Rose on July 19, 2002. She did a reading for our 2004 Memorial Service, and we are blessed to have her as our new editor. Her written response to me was: "Of course I would be honored to help with the newsletter. In my former professional life, before becoming a mom, I wrote and edited trade healthcare newsletters for a publishing firm and am in fact just beginning to freelance a practice management newsletter for a medical consultant in Publisher, so I think the timing is good!"



Leah reading at 2004 memorial.

Many of us know *Kim* and her wonderful site, BraceletsofHope.com, full of her creations for helping parents heal. Her site is in memory of Hope Elizabeth, September 10, 2004, and her angel siblings. We are excited that she will bring her loving spirit to our group in, yet, another way!

SHARE Atlanta welcomes both of these talented ladies!

SHARE Atlanta's 4B's ~ Outreach for Healing Project & The Holidays



In February, Julie Franklin, Kimberly Hallmark, Allison Egger, Coretta Monroe, Julia McClure, and Kelly Mishkoff (pictured), Thea Hodges, Kim Schulte, Debbie Bader and Marcia McGinnis came together for our first Blankets of Love gathering.

Kelly, our coordinator, taught us how to make these darling blankets, and Debbie and Thea did lots of fabric cutting. Each woman brought her favorite pattern of fleece so we had some unique and beautiful blankets for Kelly to take to Piedmont, our first hospital. Kelly had a positive response from them.

The 4B's cards that are included with our donations provide a place for the maker's of the blanket (or item of clothing) name. They also include information about SHARE Atlanta so the bereaved parent will realize as soon as they receive our gift that they are not alone, and that we are here to reach out to them.

If you or someone you know would like to make a blanket or item of clothing for a wee baby and his/her family, please visit our website for more information (patterns, "how to," and many ideas) or contact Kelly (email or call our line). We will be having several 4B's Workshops during the fall and winter. The dates will be posted on our website or in our groups. In our next newsletter, Kelly will describe how the senior citizens and several church groups have also contributed to this project. A special thanks to Kelly and her friend, Jennifer, who started this project. Also, a big thank you to Debbie who has donated and spent much time cutting fleece for the senior citizens to use to make our baby blankets.

4 B's Holiday Outreach

If you have made items and would like to donate them for a family, please bring them to any of our Memorial Services, groups or mail them to us. Make sure your name, phone number, and, if you did the item in memory of a child, include that information, and Kelly will make sure your outreach of comfort and support is shared with a bereaved family. This could be a very special outreach for you during the holiday season.

Subscription Renewal Information

Please check the date on your mailing label. It indicates the last month you will get a newsletter. The first year of the newsletter is free; after the first year we request a \$6 per year donation to help cover mailing and printing costs. If you wish to continue receiving the SHARE Atlanta newsletter, please fill out the form below, make your \$6.00 check out to "SHARE Atlanta" and mail it to: SHARE Atlanta, PMB 212, 9925 Haynes Bridge Road, Suite 200, Alpharetta, GA 30022. You can also use this form if your address has changed.

Name _____

Address _____

***If you are making a donation at the same time, it is not necessary to write separate checks. Thank you!*

SHARE Atlanta Meetings

Directions are in our Parent Packet: request one - 770.928.9603

www.shareatlanta.org/parentpacket.htm

**There are NO December meetings except for Subsequent Pregnancy
All Meetings are from 7 to 9 p.m. No charge for our programs. Non-denominational**

**For Parents, their Family
And Supportive Friends**

Southside
Location to change late fall
Call or email Karen for info.
1st Thursday
Karen

Summit Baptist
Acworth, GA
2nd Thursday
Lynne

Cascade UNITED Methodist Church
Faith based information.
Atlanta, Ga 30311
4th Thursday - call for November's details.
Robin

**For Moms, Grandmoms,
Sisters, and Girlfriends**

Women's Group Meeting
Dunwoody, GA
3rd Wednesday
Marcia

For Pregnant Moms

Subsequent Pregnancy Support
Dunwoody, GA
2nd Wednesday
Polly

Parent Packet:

- * Booklist
- * Meeting and Program info.
- * Directions to Meetings
- * Email Contacts
- * Grief Information



**SHARE Atlanta
PMB 212
9925 Haynes Bridge Road,
Suite 200
Alpharetta, GA 30022**



**October is
Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month
Are you wearing your pin and/or bracelet?
Advocacy and Awareness Info Inside**

Grief Support for ***healing*** after a miscarriage,
ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth or newborn death.