

FORGET-ME-NOT NEWSLETTER

Emily's Entry

BY EMILY DORING,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*"Out of the mountains of
despair, a stone of hope."*

This quote by Martin Luther King Jr. jumped out at me as we were looking for this year's Elegant Evening to Remember Gala theme. It perfectly summed up the essence of what our Gala is all about, honoring individuals who have gone beyond the scope of their duties or practice to provide trauma-informed and empathetic care that has empowered families on their grief journeys. They became that "stone of hope."

Our 10th Annual Elegant Evening to Remember Gala, in addition to honoring individuals, is a fundraiser that supports the programs of WNYPBN. This Gala will feature a social hour, raffles, silent auction, sit-down dinner, and honoree awards. For more information, visit www.wnyppbn.org or scan the QR code on page 6.

All of the following honorees have been nominated by individuals or families who have personally witnessed this extraordinary care.

Physicians of the Year

Dr. Heather Florescue, MD
*Star Legacy Foundation,
Western New York Medical
Chair, Womens's Gynecology
and Childbirth Associates*

"Dr. Florescue is not only a trailblazer for stillbirth prevention, but she is also a strong voice for families who experience pregnancy and infant loss. She is one of the most requested OBGYNs in the area for patients who are experiencing a pregnancy after loss because of her phenomenal care and compassion for patients who have experienced pregnancy loss. Dr. Florescue donates countless hours to educating individuals who care for pregnant patients including but not limited to OBGYNs, nurses and doulas about bereavement care and stillbirth prevention. She was the creator of the Western

NY Chapter of Star Legacy Foundation's Bereaved Book Library Program and has personally donated every book cart in memory of stillborn babies. This program serves Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse and surrounding areas. In addition to working full time at Women's Gynecology and Childbirth Associates, Dr. Florescue is the Medical Chair of the Western NY Chapter of Star Legacy Foundation and also serves on the National Board. Her impact on this world is felt at the local level and nationally as well."

- Christina

Dr. Millicent Trevett

Suburban Women's Healthcare

"Within the past two years, my sisters have each suffered pregnancy losses with additional complications and Dr. Trevett has been a caring and dependable presence throughout the difficult process. While in her care, my sisters were reassured by her intelligence, professionalism, and willingness to consult

Continued on page 6

In this issue:

- Emily's Entry
page 1
- Forget-You-Nots and Safe Arrivals
pages 2 & 3
- Letter from the Editor
page 4
- Kristen's Page
page 5
- Fundraisers & Events
pages 6 & 7

FORGET-YOU-NOTS

Michael Anthony Anderson

April 5, 2005

Always, always in our Hearts! Love, Nana and Papa xxxooo. We love you always! Love, Mommy, Daddy, & Mia
Parents: Michael and Kelly Anderson

Lilya Raine Arena

September 26, 2009

Hugs to the sky, baby! Mama, Daddy, and little sister, Willow love and miss you.
Parents: Kelly and Michael Arena

Jivae Andrea Báez

December 28, 2012

Our beautiful baby girl... we love and miss you every second of every day. Thank you for your sweet baby brother Jamari. All our love all our life. Love, Mommy and Daddy.
Parents: Evelyn and Jarred Báez

Benjamin Matthew Brightman

March 25, 2021

We see you everywhere we go - thank you for giving us those hopeful signs. Until we see you again, Benjamin. You are so loved! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Emma and Millie
Parents: Kurtis and Carrie Brightman

Cecelia Rose Callea

December 16, 2018

You are our shining moon and shooting star. Thank you for inspiring us and always watching over our family. You are so loved and so missed. Love, Mama, Papa, Thomas, and Matteo
Parents: Tom and Mary Callea

Rily James Croce

March 8, 2010

Gabrielle Irene Croce

August 3, 2010

Baby Croce

December 9, 2013

Parents: Lena Kingsbury

Joy Aubrey Damberger

May 11, 2023

Parents: Jenna and Andy Damberger

Kayonna Marie Darrell

October 16, 2018

Kingston Antonio Darrell

April 27, 2021

We Love You Always! Not a day goes by that we don't think of you both! You both will forever be in our hearts!! We are sad that you both are not here with us, but it helps knowing that you have each other!! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Big Sisters Elana, Avianna and Savannah. Big Brother Brandon
Parents: Ashley Hunt and Wendell Darrell Jr

Baby D

March 11, 2013

Selah Grace Doring

October 30, 2013

We carry you in our hearts - Forever & Always, Mommy, Daddy, Preston & Kendra
Parents: Emily and Todd Doring

Tyler Farris

June 25, 2020

Here on earth for a short time my darling baby boy. Never far from our thought and prayers.
Parents: Kayla Marvin and Carl Farris

Eli Robert Godios

June 25-Sept. 13, 2022

Parent: Eric and Amanda Godios

Baby Casey

May 18, 2022

Our sweet Casey, we love and miss you so very much. We should be celebrating your first birthday, but we know you are safe in Heaven. You are always in our hearts and on our minds. Love always, Big Brother Elias, Little Brother Owen, Mommy, and Daddy.
Parents: Ashley and Steven Gruhalla

Reid Hamilton

April 18, 2021

We miss you more and more each day. We think about you every minute of every day. We know you are watching over us. We love you so very much. Love, Daddy, Mommy, Pierce, Rory, Burke, Reagan, Riley, Seamus, and Padraig
Parents: Molly and Andrew Hamilton

Baby Girl H

October 15, 2019

Baby H

December 28, 2022

We know you're both in heaven with our other loved ones who have passed on. We know you both watch over your sister as her angels now. We miss you everyday and think of you often. We love you both!
Parents: Erin and Todd Hoeltke

John Paul Jerebko

November 18, 1999

Our little angel! Love, Mom, Dad, Jakob & Jackson
Parents: Peter and Lisa Jerebko

Baby Boy Jonathan

June 8, 2018

Miss you more and more everyday!! Forever missed, never forgotten, loved forever and ever!! Mom, Dad, Big Sisters Krysten, Kaytee, Kamden, Big Brother Klyde, Nephews Kortlind, Kreesee, Delltoh, and Nieces Kenzley and Emileigh Blue
Parents: LaRue and Leilan Jonathan

FORGET-YOU-NOTS

Marina Kim

August 3-4, 2005

Ella Grace Kim

June 8, 2007

We love you and think of you often. Please watch over us... now and always.

Parents: Dawn and Mark Kim

Baby Joy Love

February 15, 2020

Baby Hope Love

March 26, 2021

Baby Bliss Love

November 8, 2021

Livenzo Sol Love

March 16, 2023

My sweet boy, my perfect son, my miraculous full term child, Livenzo Sol. I carried you in my womb, held you in my arms and love you dearly forever. I miss you so much. To each of my precious babies, you are a blessing to me, gone too soon and always in my heart. With all our love ~ Mama, Grandma and Ambrosia

Parent: Christina Love

Angelo Thomas Marchetti

January 31, 2022

Mommy, Daddy, and your brothers love you and miss you beyond words. We feel you here with us everyday. I will see you again one day my sweet baby boy.

Parents: Katelin and Mark Marchetti

Baby Angel Matam I

October 12, 2021

Baby Angel Matam II

January 23, 2022

Chiara Snehama Matam

Nov. 21, 2022 - Dec. 16, 2022

To our two beloved babies that we never met and held - we can't wait to meet you and hold you in Heaven. To our beloved Chiara - you are the strongest and most beautiful person we have ever known, and we are so honored to be your mommy and daddy. We think of all three of you every day and miss you every moment. We love you beyond words. Until we can hold you again, we know Jesus is holding you.

Parents: Joshua and Lexi Matam

Bud Charles Mott

September 12, 2005

Theresa Marie Mott

September 12, 2005

"Blueberry" Mott

January 21, 2014

Baby Mott

December 23, 2014

Miss you with all of our hearts, Theresa, Bud, "Blueberry" and Baby Mott. God knows our pain and sadness. We know that someday, we will see you again. All our love ~ Daddy, Mommy & Allison

Parents: Timothy and Beth Mott

Noah Navarrette

Feb. 12- Sept. 12 2021

Te amare para el resto de mi vida mi amor. Siempre.

Parent: Alexa Mancilla

Michael James Quigley

October 24, 1992

Miss you more and more! 'Til we meet again! Love, Mom

Parent: Debi Zmuda

Caleb Jonathan Schmeelke

March 18, 2022

My sweet boy, You made this world a brighter place and brought our big family together. Daddy and I love you more than we could ever say. We think about you every day. We are so proud to be your parents, little Cub.

Parents: Krystal Rivers and Cameron Schmeelke

Jacob Wesley Scott

May 27, 2000

We love you and think of you everyday! Butterfly kisses, buddy!

Love, Mom, Dad, Thomas, & Mandy

Parents: Phillip and Christine Scott

Steven James Serrano

March 16, 2006

Parent: Lisa Graziano

Aubrey Marie Stuber

May 7, 2023

Aubrey Marie "lil' bean" - God needed you for reasons we may never understand but we are thankful to have you watching over us. We love you forever, our beautiful guardian angel.

Parents: Larry & Sarah Stuber

Nicholas Mark Weld

April 25, 2019

You are my darling, my angel, my star, and my love will find you, wherever you are. Love, Mom, Dad, Benjamin, Amelia, & Johnny

Parents: Nate and Joanna Weld

Margie Faye Willis

May 22, 2019

Parents: Katie and Brandon Willis

Grace Lee Zimmer

April 12, 2012

Until we meet again, fly sweet butterfly, fly! A moment in our arms, A lifetime in our hearts. Love, Mom, Dad, Hunter and Luke

Parents: Donna and Russell Zimmer



Safe Arrivals

Kaya Faith Darrell was born Aug 26, 2023! Overjoyed and Blessed! We know her siblings, Kayonna and Kingston, are watching over her and keeping her safe!

Parents: Ashley Hunt and Wendell Darrell Jr

Vera Snehama Matam was born on April 22, 2024. We know that Baby Angel Matam I, Baby Angel Matam II, and Chiara Snehama Matam are watching over her.

Parents: Joshua and Lexi Matam

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY JOANNA WELD

On April 25th, my family and I celebrated the fifth anniversary of Nicholas's passing. It felt like such a significant milestone and an especially heavy day.

As I sat down to work on the newsletter, I was still trying to sort out how I was feeling, so I went in search of words that could better articulate my emotions. I came across this article from *Still Standing Magazine*, written by DeAndrea Dare, and felt that it so beautifully expressed the difference between the rawness I felt immediately after losing Nicholas and the way that my grief has changed and evolved over the past five years. If your loss is recent, I hope you find comfort in knowing that your sadness won't always feel so intense, that eventually it will transition into more of a dull ache. I know that this feeling of grief will always be a part of me, because, as the article states, we grieve because we love.

As we head into the season of Mother's Day and Father's Day, I wish you peace and I hope you give yourself permission to celebrate, or not, in whatever way feels right to you.

Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome. If you are interested in sharing your story, publishing something you have written in honor of your baby, submitting a memorial, or announcing your Rainbow Baby, please email Joanna at Newsletter@wnypbn.org.

A Note To Myself Five Years Ago: 9 Things I've Learned

Five years ago I did not think I would make it through *this*. Five years ago I struggled more than I ever had in life. Five years ago I could not imagine that I would survive. Five years ago I did not dream I could ever feel joy and happiness again. Here are nine things I wish I could have told myself five years ago when my son died.

1. It's OK not to be OK. You are not the same person that you were before. I know you can hardly look at yourself in the mirror. You do not feel the same; your outlook has changed, nothing feels right. Because it isn't. You feel like everyone wants the 'old' you. The one with the loud laugh, the constant smile, the encourager and the energy that rarely stopped. It is OK not to be OK right now. Sit with the sadness and know that you will not always feel this way. Yes, you will always have a hole in your heart and a piece of yourself missing, but the sun will shine again and you will find pieces of yourself that you recognize. You do not believe me now, but I promise you will. For now though, it is OK not to be OK.

2. It is OK to laugh and smile and even feel happy. I know you feel guilty to feel this way but you do not have to. There are still good moments in this life, and when you encounter them it is OK to feel them. I know you feel like you wish you would have died instead of him, so you think you do not deserve to feel happy. But, you do. Little by little you will smile again. You will surprise yourself when you laugh; when it comes, lean into it. You might just feel him laugh with you.

3. It is OK to share your story. Your story is sacred. It is a story of love and life. No, it is not the story you wish you could tell, but it still has meaning. Do not let anyone stop you from sharing. If they cannot handle listening to it and sitting with it then it says more about them than it does about you. Never let anyone stifle one of the greatest stories of love ever written. It is your story to tell, so when you are ready, share it.

4. It is OK to guard your heart. Sometimes sharing comes with unexpected responses. People do not know what to say, some say stupid things, others run the other way and yet some are so caring and appropriate. When people ask how many children you have, you tell them what you can. If you cannot tell the full story on that day, it is OK. Not everyone can be trusted with our stories. You will come to know who will hold them just as sacred as you. It is OK to protect your heart in whatever way that means for you on that day. Block stories on Facebook, avoid certain places and people, etc. Your heart is raw and although it will not always be this tender, for now, guard it in whatever way you need to.

5. Your husband, he cares; he is grieving, just not in the same way you are. I know you feel like you are drifting apart but try to talk to each other. Listen to him. He may not be saying what you want him to say or doing what you wish he would do, but he is saying and doing what he feels and thinks is right. He is trying in his own way to grieve and be present...

6. You will be surprised by those who stand by your side. And you will be surprised who cannot. You will find out who your true friends are. You will see who can sit in the mess with you and then walk with you as you find your way. Some of those are complete strangers to you now, others you have known a long time... Your new friends may be with you for the rest of your life or they may walk through this season and then move another way. It is all OK. Be grateful for those who have been with you, are with you now and those who will come in the future. Friendship is a gift no matter how long it lasts.

7. I know it hurts now and feels like life is over. It will continue to hurt, but in different ways and at different times, but life will be good again. You said it feels like you have been knocked over by a tsunami. I can tell you now it feels like the tide comes in only on certain days. You will find your footing again. It is unsteady and unnerving, but your life isn't over. You are writing a new chapter. A chapter that knows pain and heartbreak and grief, but a chapter that knows undying love that always carries on. His story is not over. Neither is yours.

8. Love is a powerful force and can do amazing things. You are so full of love right now with no outlet to express it. You want to cradle a baby, feed a baby, get up in the middle of the night for a baby. You want to care and comfort and right now you have nothing. No baby. No dreams. No future. But, you do have love. We grieve because we love. Sit with it, let it envelope and cover you. It is a love you will never share with anyone else other than your child. Love will transform you, propel you and lead you forward. You have no idea what it can do, but hold on to it. You will see. I promise.

9. You will make it through this. It will be hard. It will be messy. It will be beautiful. It will be life-giving. Take it minute by minute. Hour by hour. Day by day. Hold on to those who can walk the journey with you. Let go of the things that do not matter. Your perspective has been enlarged. Your heart has shattered but it is becoming a new creation. The sun is going to rise again and you will rise with it. You will be surprised. But you will make it through this. I promise. You will.

-written by DeAndrea Dare for
Still Standing Magazine

<https://stillstandingmag.com/2018/08/27/a-note-to-myself-five-years-ago/>

KRISTEN'S PAGE

BY KRISTEN SMITH, FAMILY SUPPORT COORDINATOR

What is hope?

In the context of grieving a loss, hope is a belief that healing is possible. It's also a belief that though today may not be the day you feel healed, there will be a future day that the feeling will happen. To quote my mentor Dr. Alan Wolfelt, "Hope is an expectation of a good that is yet to be."

Ways to find hope:

- Hearing stories from people who have experienced a loss similar to yours.
- Do something with linking objects (physical things that connect you to your loved one-jewelry, stuffed animals, etc.)
- Develop a mantra ("I will show up." "One breath at a time.")
- Gauge your timing and pace your grief (be honest with yourself, re: what feels right in the moment)
- Look for good things happening around you, especially ones that are unexpected (random acts of kindness)
- Getting nudged by someone who loves you (personal cheerleader)
- Borrowing hope (engage in counseling, join a support group, lean on your spiritual community for additional support)

taken from "Finding Hope When Grief Feels Hopeless" by Reid Peterson

-Kristen Smith, Family Support Coordinator and bereaved mother of three

Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

Tiniest Angels Support Group

1st Thursday of each month
In Person @6pm
Resurrection Life Church
2145 Old Union Rd
Cheektowaga, NY 14227

3rd Thursday of each month
Virtual via Zoom @6pm

For More Information Contact:
Kristen Smith
Family Support Coordinator
Kristen@wnypbn.org
(716) 222-2150 Cell (716) 626-6363 Office
visit www.wnypbn.org or scan the QR code

Share your story of loss and find support among other bereaved parents



"After the fire"

You ever think you could cry so hard that there'd be nothing left in you, like how the wind shakes a tree in a storm until every part of it is run through with wind? I live in the low parts now, most days a little hazy with fever and waiting for the water to stop shivering out of the body. Funny thing about grief, its hold is so bright and determined like a flame, like something almost worth living for.

-Ada Limon

Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

Parent-to-Parent Peer Support


Are you interested in speaking with another parent with a similar loss to yours?

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Early infant loss
- Ectopic
- SIDS
- TFMR

Connect one-on-one on a deeper level.

Discover a more personal support from others who have walked their own grief journey.

If interested, please contact:
Kristen Smith
Family Support Coordinator
(716) 222-2150 or
kristen@wnypbn.org



If you are interested in either benefiting from this program as someone in need of a peer mentor to walk through your grief with you, or are at least one year post-loss and interested in becoming a Peer Mentor, please reach out to Kristen for more information at kristen@wnypbn.org or 716-222-2150.

FUNDRAISERS & EVENTS

Emily's Entry

continued from page 1

other professionals in order to offer the best possible treatment. On several occasions, she called both of my sisters to check up on them. She was very generous with her time, despite the pressures of running a very busy practice.”

- Joanna, mother of Nicholas

Nurses of the Year

Cyndi Beck, RN

NICU at OISHEI Children's Hospital

"Above and beyond" is an understatement when it comes to Cyndi. She took care of Chiara during the day shift on many days. Cyndi bought Chiara a Christmas onesie, made her a Christmas blanket, and put an assortment of bows on her head. She was the nurse who pushed us to hold Chiara as much as we could, once we learned that time was not on our side. Sometimes, holding Chiara was her idea and she would gather a team of nurses and respiratory therapists to move our little baby from her bed to our arms.”

-Lexi & Josh, parents of Chiara

Melissa Montgomery, RN

NICU at OISHEI Children's Hospital

“Melissa is one of the sweetest and strongest people I have ever met. She was our daughter's night shift nurse. One night when she was there, I woke up and heard her talking to Chiara. She was whispering softly to her and saying things like "I love you" and "you have the cutest nose". I cannot express how much that meant to me as Chiara's

mom. She was assigned to be with us the day that Chiara passed away. She had such a difficult job that night, but she handled it with grace and did not rush us at all.”

-Lexi & Josh, parents of Chiara

Volunteers of the Year

Tara Petty

Former Family Support Coordinator of WNYPBN, Volunteer

“Her groups helped us process our loss and find meaning and hope during a difficult time. For 18 months, Tara virtually sat with us every month. She listened, sometimes for much longer than the allotted group time, and she provided a place where everyone understood exactly how you felt. Without this space, I know our journey would have looked much different.”

- Rachel, mother of Eliza

Joanna Weld

Editor of the Forget-Me-Not Newsletter, WNYPBN Board of Directors

“When we needed a new editor, Joanna jumped at the chance, not only because English and writing are passions of hers, but it is also very meaningful as an outlet of love for her son, Nicholas, who passed away. She puts her heart and soul into each publication. We have received so many positive and wonderful comments about the new newsletter. Despite a very busy schedule of being a mommy and wife, she teaches at Niagara University and is studying for her Doctorate”

- Emily Doring

Community Service

Sondra Dawes

Pricilla Project,

Road Community Health Center

“Sondra's role as the Director of Maternal Health Programs, specifically the Pricilla Project, is representative of her dedication to aiding in the support of underserved and bereaved families. The Pricilla Project helps to combat the anxiety and fear of seeking medical support during pregnancy through uplifting the voices of women that have been systemically overlooked. Thus, helping to reduce the prevalence of infant loss from preventable issues. Her commitment to supporting others, through training women to become Doulas to better support women in their own cultures and community, as truly trauma-informed and inspiring.”

-WNYPBN



Western New York
Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.
invites you to the 10th Annual

Elegant Evening to Remember Gala

Saturday, May 18, 2024
6-10pm

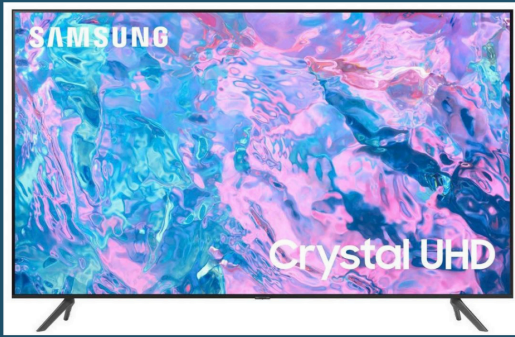
“OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN OF DESPAIR,
A STONE OF HOPE” - MLK

Salvatore's Italian Gardens
6461 Transit Rd.,
Depew, NY 14043



FUNDRAISERS & EVENTS

65 INCH TV RAFFLE



WIN A
SAMSUNG 65"
CLASS CRYSTAL
4K UHD TV!

**\$10 EACH OR
6 FOR \$50**



SCAN TO
PURCHASE
TICKETS ONLINE!



Drawing May 18th

All proceeds benefit
Western New York
Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

The Western New York Perinatal
Bereavement Network, Inc. presents...

THE ANNUAL WINGS OF LOVE Parents Day Brunch



Saturday, June 1st, 2024

Classics V Banquet & Conference Center
2425 Niagara Falls Blvd, Amherst, NY 14228
10am - 12:30pm

\$25 per Adult (13+) \$15 per Child (5-12) 4 & Under free

For those who have lost a baby, Mother's Day & Father's Day
can be a sad and emotional reminder of loss.
Come together with other bereaved parents to honor and
remember our precious babies.

Scan the QR code for online registration or visit
www.wny-pbn.org for more details.



Any questions, please reach out to
Emily Doring, Executive Director
716-626-6363 or emily@wnypbn.org

Sponsored by Angel Gowns of WNY, Inc.

We need your help!

Please scan the QR
code below for
more information
about upcoming
volunteer
opportunities.



We are in the process
of planning a Basket
Raffle event in the
upcoming months.

Please visit our
website at
www.wny-pbn.org
or the WNY-PBN
Facebook page for
more details.



WNYPBN, Inc.

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Our Mission

The mission of the Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. is to assist the community in meeting the needs of people facing the pain of perinatal death. We promote standards of bereavement care intervention through educational support, community programs and referral services to bereaved parents. The WNYPBN supports an established standard of care following a perinatal loss, regardless of location of where the loss took place.

Member Organizations

Angels Gowns of Western New York, Inc., Baby's Sweet Beginning's Breast Feeding and Maternity Boutique (Lancaster), Brooks Memorial Hospital, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, Inc., Catholic Health System (Mercy Hospital, Sister's Hospital, Mount St. Mary's Hospital), Mount St. Mary's Hospital of Lewiston, Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo, Inc- Essential Care for Children, Kaleida Health (Oishei Children's Hospital, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital), Jones Memorial Hospital, Wilson Support System, Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital, Olean General Hospital, United Memorial Medical Center, UPMC Chatauqua, Wyoming County Community Health Center

Board of Directors

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Wilson Support Building
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