



SOS

# Survivors of Suicide Loss

a publication of Fresno Survivors of Suicide Loss, Inc.

Survivor support and suicide prevention education programs

2585 East Perrin Avenue #102, Fresno, CA 93720

Telephone: (559) 322-5877/FAX (559) 322-1140

www.fresnosos.org

SOS

Linda Ginise, Newsletter Editor

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## SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

### Fresno

Hope Lutheran Church Conference Room  
Northwest corner of Fresno & Barstow  
(Enter parking lot from Fresno Street)

WHEN: TUESDAY\*\*

December 20th, 7-9:00 pm

\*\* (3rd Tuesday of every month)

### Visalia

Rainbow/Sawyer Industries  
Conference Room,  
536 S. Lovers Lane

WHEN: WEDNESDAY

December 21st, 6:30-8:00 pm

Information: Carla Sawyer, 786-1525

\*\* (3rd Wednesday of every month)



### **SOUP FOR THE SOUL**

*Try to view your life as a passenger on an amazing journey. Realize that you are MORE than petty or narrow judgments about yourself. The destination is the journey as much or more than the journey simply leading to a destination.*

Kirk J. Schneider, Ph.D.

*If you have children you feel would benefit from meetings, you are welcome to bring them. However, if your child is under 15 years of age, you may want to consider the Footsteps Program at St. Agnes, or Hind's Hospice, 248-8579; 12-week sessions include services for children as young as 3 years old.*

**Ever wish you had back copies of the newsletter? They are now available for \$10, including issues back to 2002, on a CD in Adobe Acrobat format. Contact the office.**



**Leann Gouveia**  
Executive Director

## **SOS LOCAL GROUP NEWS**

### **Support Meeting: Candlelight**

Larry and Judy Cottom will be hosting the December support group meeting. This is a holiday ceremony including a candle lighting program. We are asking survivors to bring a photo of their loved one and a dessert to share. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Hope Lutheran Church.

### **Got Stuff? Auction Fundraiser**

This will be our theme for the auction that we will hold early each year in cooperation with Fresno Auction Company. Last year the auction was in March, and we hope to have it around that date again next year--but we will definitely have it.

Good news! We have donated storage space and are able to take those gently-used items off your hands and out of YOUR space.

We can use almost anything, even larger items such as couches and living room/den furniture, bedroom furniture, appliances, electrical equipment, clothing, yard equipment-- in short, just about anything.

Please also ask your friends, relatives, and neighbors to remember us. Do you know someone who is moving? Call and ask to be their designated charitable group for any discards.

As a reminder, these items need to be saleable, so they must be in usable condition--thus the term "gently used."

We are thinking about making up an 8x10 information flyer for use on company bulletin boards or other suitable places; would you be willing to place those at your workplace?

Please call the office to make arrangements for pick up. And speaking of pickups, do you have one? Do you have access to a truck that could be used? Would you be willing to help out occasionally with this project? Let us know that, too!

### **Donations**

Thank you to the following generous donors this past month—you make our many programs possible!

- *Larry & Judy Cottom*
- *Dick & Sandy Gallagher*
- *Leann Gouveia*
- *Jimmy & Julie Herd*
- *Helene Peard*
- *Skip & Janice Winjum*
- *Connie Hanson*
- *Tony & Stacy Fazio*
- *James & Janice Goertzen*
- *Kelly & Connie Brooks , in memory of Erin Bray*

## **S.H.A.R.E.S Card**

If you have the S.H.A.R.E.S Card for SaveMart, Smart Foods, Food Max, and Lucky, please don't forget to use it! If you don't have one, please call the office and we will mail one to you.

This card costs you nothing, but if you use it when you purchase groceries at the above stores, we will receive a donation of 3% of your purchases. **DON'T FORGET TO USE YOUR CARD.** Donations to date from this program:

**\$9,088.80**

- *Mike Hogan*
- *Dennis & Eva Meisner*
- *Linda Ginise*
- *Sam & Linda Lucido*
- *Jeff Lawton, California Quality Printing*

### **TCF 2011 Worldwide Candle Lighting**

Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting during holiday season remembers all children who have died; the fifteenth Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held on December 11, 2011.

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the

memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting started in the United States in 1997 as a small Internet observance but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting gives bereaved families everywhere the opportunity to remember their child . . . that their light may always shine!

### **Call If You Need to Talk**

If you are not comfortable talking in a group—as at our monthly meetings—and prefer to talk one-on-one, call the office, (559) 322-5877. Leann will arrange for someone to get back to you as soon as possible. (Remember that we do not have full-time staff in the office, so you may have to leave a message.)



### **FROM OUR LIBRARY**

We have a large collection of books on a variety of different approaches to grief and the grieving process. Some books are written by mental health professionals, but there are a large number of books written by survivors as well.

If you would like to check out a book, or just check out our collection to see what might interest you, please call the office. And do, please, call before you go; we do not have full-time office personnel.

**SOMEONE MAY NEED THE BOOK YOU HAVE**  
**PLEASE RETURN ALL BOOKS IN A TIMELY MANNER**



### **IN LOVING MEMORY**

*In loving memory, and in celebration of the lives of:*

**Judy Steelman (December 1, 2010), mother of Dawn Sibley**

**George Boatman (December 4, 1995), father of Brenda Boatman-Swank**

**DeVonna Lyn Rodriguez (December 4, 2000), wife of Chuck Rodriguez**

**Roger Woods (December 5, 2002), husband of Susan Woods**

**Samantha Joann Stevens (August 19, 1992 to December 5, 2008; 16 years of age), daughter (see sisters) of Doug Stevens**

**Samantha Joann Stevens (August 19, 1992 to December 5, 2008; 16 years of age), daughter of May & Doug Stevens; sister of Danielle & Allison Stevens**

**Eric D. Grove (December 7, 2004), stepson of Katie Grove**

**Joanna Lee Astin (December 9, 2003), best friend of Jennifer Boyd**

**Robert “Bobby” Lynn Winfield, Jr. (December 9, 2003), brother of Rebecca Cardenas**

**Martin Arambula (December 10, 2001), husband of Sonia Arambula; son of Virginia Silva; brother-in-law of Maria Chavez**

**Shelby Anne Ruether (October 13, 1971 to December 12, 1999; 28 years of age), daughter of Linda Ginise; daughter of Ron & Diane Ruether; sister of Rebecca Ruether; granddaughter of Oneta Motsenbocker; niece of Gary & Sharon Motsenbocker**

**Gilbert Lee Saul, Sr. (December 14, 2006), husband of Lupe Saul; father of Isabel Lewis and Brandi Navarro**

**Peggy Leslie (December 16, 1976), mother of Vickie Thaxter**

**Rayanna Lee Ward (November 17, 1982 to December 16, 2006; 24 years of age), daughter of Allen & Melody Thornburg**

**Omar Diaz (December 17, 2008), son of Joe & Linda Diaz**

**Sandra Bullard (December 19, 2005), friend of Stephanie Witham**

**Richard Sheppard (December 20, 2001), brother of Kathy McFadden**

**Anne Marie Pyles (December 21, 2000), friend of Al Hadjiloo**

**Sandra (Sandy) Smith (December 25, 1973),  
mother of Patrick Smith**

**John Joseph Cuddy (December 26, 2000),  
husband of Nicole Cuddy**

**Marvin Lee Wilson (December 26, 2000),  
Husband of Joellen Wilson**

**Rosemary Hidalgo (December 26, 2005),  
girlfriend of Lewis Martinez**

**Arsenio De La Cruz (December 26, 2009),  
father of Sandra De La Cruz**

**Frank Galaviz (December 27, 2001),  
husband of Sylvia Galaviz; brother of  
Juanita Galaviz**

*During this holiday season, and as the year draws to a close, we would like to remember those who made the decision to end their lives during 2011. Our thoughts are particularly with their survivors.*

**Amy Smith (January 27, 2011), wife of Jim Smith**

**Glenn Temple (March 15, 2011), brother of Jennifer Deis**

**Jessica Aguilar (March 19, 2011), niece of Judy Hafliker**

**Rory Bain (April 1, 2011), grandson of Lars & Patt Hansen**

**Christopher J. Sheldon (April 18, 2011), son of Debbie Sheldon**

**Teresa Hakanson (May 10, 2011), sister of Patty Denson**

**Ellen H. Hall (July 11, 2011), wife of Blaine Hall**

**Garth Simpson (July 13, 2011), son of Marshall & Lois McCall**

**Jimmy Miller (August 13, 2011), boyfriend of Alyssa Miller**

**Lisa Williamson (August 19, 2011), wife of Dean Williamson; mother of Samantha Williamson**

**Keith Pipes (August 28, 2011), husband of Sue Pipes; father of Jordan, Justin, and Joshua Pipes**

**Mike Bryant (August 30, 2011), husband of Rita Bryant; father of Ryan & Erin Bryant**

**Sam Stockwell (September 1, 2011), friend of Natalie. Quintero**



## **ARTICLES**

*Every year at this time we publish ideas and reminders on coping with what is supposed to be a joyous season, but often is not for those who are grieving. Even those of us who think we have come to terms with our losses are sometimes surprised when emotions that we believed were under control pop up, seemingly out of no where. Remember that you are in control, things don't have to happen a certain way just because they always have, and you do not "have" to do anything that is uncomfortable for you. Don't be afraid to try something you have never done before during the holidays. Charitable acts, for example, have the power to bring us out of ourselves and to help us feel a part of the greater community. As we well know, grief--and I think in particular grief over a suicide--can be an emotion that makes us feel very isolated. I say particularly suicide, because there are many others who have experienced grief, of course, but most have no understanding of suicide.*

*Remember that others are grieving as well, and as little consolation as it seems at times, there are others who have suffered more than we have. I will always remember a lady I worked with at the time my daughter died; she shared the story of her FOUR children killed in a house fire when she and her husband were away! I remember thinking that what I was feeling was relatively small in comparison with what she must have gone through to get past that tragedy. Children ARE NOT supposed to die before their parents!*

### **Tips For Handling The Holidays**

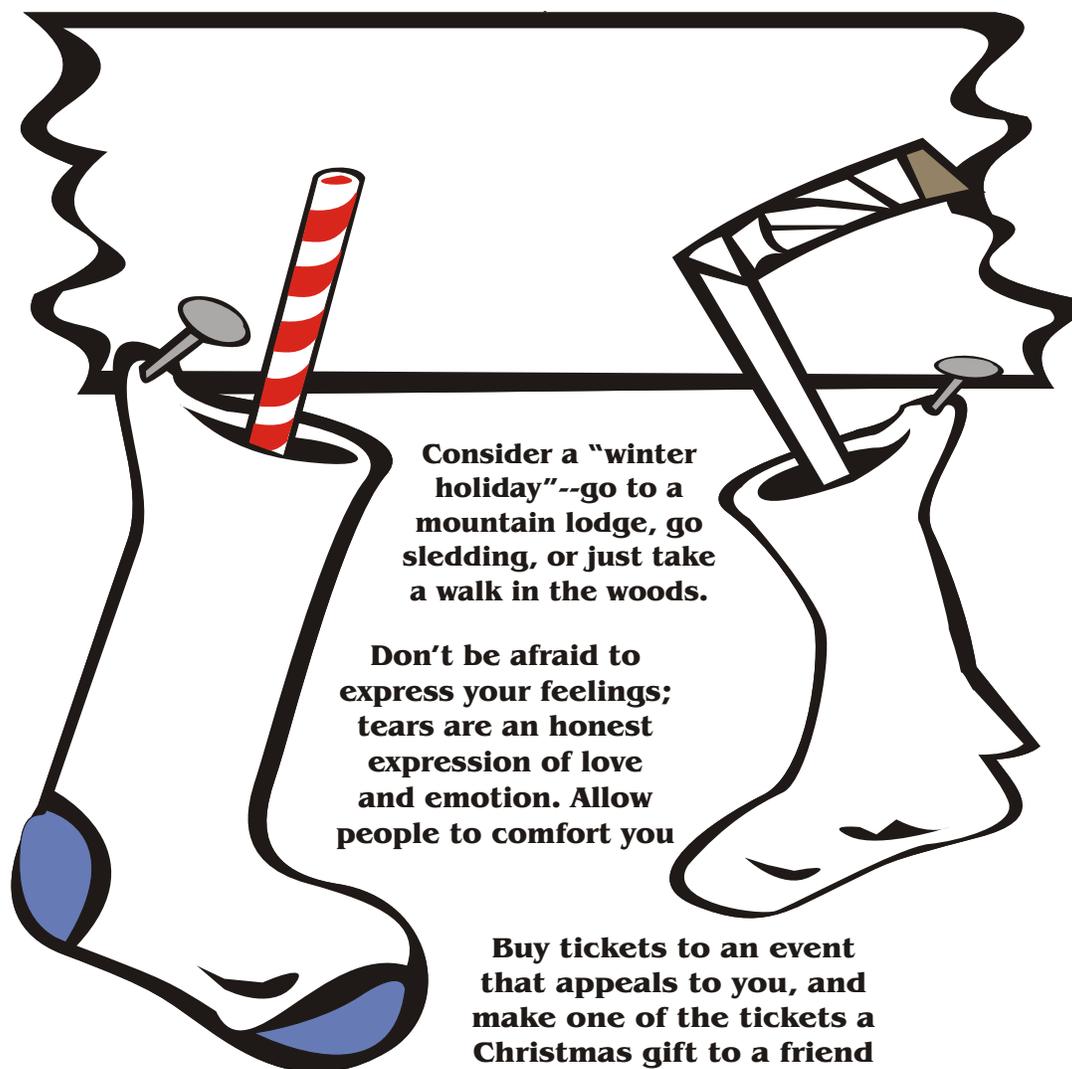
- Decide what you can handle comfortably and let family and friends know.

- Can I handle the responsibility of the family dinner, etc. or shall I ask someone else to do it?
- Do I want to talk about my loved one or not?
- Shall I stay here for the holidays or go to a completely different environment? Make some changes if they feel comfortable for you.
- Open presents Christmas Eve instead of Christmas morning. Vary the timing of Chanukah gift giving.
- Have dinner at a different time or place.
- Let the children take over decorating the house, the tree, baking and food preparation, etc.
- Re-examine your priorities: Greeting cards, holiday baking, decorating, putting up a tree, family dinner, etc.
  - Do I really enjoy doing this?
  - Is this a task that can be shared?
- Consider doing something special for someone else.
- Donate a gift in the memory of your loved one.
- Donate money you would have spent on your loved one as a gift to charity.
- Adopt a needy family for the holidays.
- Invite a guest (foreign student, senior citizen) to share festivities.
- Recognize your loved one's presence in the family.
- Burn a special candle to quietly include your loved one.
- Hang a stocking for your loved one in which people can put notes with their thoughts or feelings.
- Listen to music especially liked by the deceased.
- Look at photographs.

- If you decide to do holiday shopping, make a list ahead of time and keep it handy for a good day, or shop through a catalog or on the Internet.
- Observe the holidays in ways which are comfortable for you.
- There is no right or wrong way of handling holidays.
- Once you've decided how to observe the time, let others know.
- Try to get enough rest — holidays can be emotionally and physically draining.
- Allow yourself to express your feelings.
- Holidays often magnify feelings of loss. It is natural to feel sadness.
- Share concerns, apprehensions, feelings with a friend. The need for support is often greater during holidays.
- Keep in mind that the experience of many bereaved persons is that they do come to enjoy holidays again; there will be other holiday seasons to celebrate.
- Don't be afraid to have fun.
- Laughter and joy are not disrespectful. Give yourself and your family members permission to celebrate and take pleasure in the holidays.

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Did you know this? Suicide statistics are undoubtedly low. Often a suicide is disguised as an accident, sometimes for religious reasons or because of life insurance considerations. Also, in many cases, unless the proof of suicide is indisputable, officials are reluctant to place the word "suicide" on the death certificate out of consideration for the families involved.



Consider a "winter holiday"--go to a mountain lodge, go sledding, or just take a walk in the woods.

Don't be afraid to express your feelings; tears are an honest expression of love and emotion. Allow people to comfort you

Buy tickets to an event that appeals to you, and make one of the tickets a Christmas gift to a friend whose company you'd enjoy.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP: TOGETHER  
WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!**

**Donations:** One-time cash gifts, or gifts designated for a special event or project.

**Memorial Gifts** made in memory of a loved one.

**Honor Gifts** made to remember a birthday, anniversary, or special occasion.

**Planned Giving** through your will, trust, stocks, real property, or life insurance policy.

**In-Kind Gifts:** Valuable personal property such as heirlooms or antiques, arts, vehicles, or personal/business equipment can be donated for our benefit and the benefit of the community.

Our expanded programs—both those planned and those in place—require funding. Our goals include the support of survivors of suicide, and the education of the general public regarding depression and suicide. Our focus is educating the public and saving lives. Contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated, and are tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_