



Losing a loved one, pregnancy or pet and grieving their absence is a tragic reality. Time does not heal all. How we decide to **live** determines the strength and health of our hearts. We are offering guidance and support for your journey.

## Homeless Receive Care Packet from Stillborn Angel

by Diana Gardner-Williams



Larry at a busy intersection

A plastic bag full of crackers, juice and cookies lay on the back seat of my mother-in-law's car. My 10 year old vehicle breaks down quite often, so my husband's mother loaned me her zippy little car for a few days. I thought what a great idea, snacks and a beverage for when she's stuck in traffic.

I forgot to inquire about the snacks; however, the subject came up in her bible study class days later. My mother-in-law's friend stated that she was rather uncomfortable giving money to the homeless. Whatever the case, the vote was unanimous that we all had similar thoughts of uneasiness by giving just cash.

My mother-in-law packs up goodies for the homeless people standing at the intersection we pass daily, going into Greensboro. Juice boxes, granola bars, crackers, cookies and chips are placed into a see through plastic bag. Nothing in them will melt from our intense North Carolina heat.

I love the idea of helping out the less fortunate in this "out-of-the-box" manner. I decided to participate. It makes me feel good and I hope to add a little nourishment for someone less fortunate than myself. Giving back to the community in this fashion may touch the heart of a homeless person in a positive way. One never knows when they are making a memory, but it's worth trying. I insert a little piece of paper with Tanner's name in between the snacks. This act of kindness gives me the opportunity to write my stillborn angel's name many, many times. Bereaved parents never forget their children. Larry Wayne McCraw was the recipient of the snack bag one rainy day.



A see through snack bag from an angel

## Can We Close Their Business Down?

by Basil Augusta



"Our goal is to work ourselves out of business," says Martha Kaley of Friends For An Earlier Breast Cancer Test®. The number one goal of this organization is identifying a biological test for breast cancer. Once the goal is reached, the doors will close.

Martha H. Kaley was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992. It was a complete shock for her and her family. Fortunately, Martha's family has a history of persistence and ingenuity instilled by her inventor father and industrious mother. These qualities led Martha to found Friends You Can Count On®, the nation's only non-profit organization devoted exclusively to funding research seeking an earlier biological detection test for breast cancer, based in Greensboro, North Carolina. In 2003 the organization was re-named Friends For An Earlier Breast Cancer Test® to more accurately reflect their mission.

A pink ribbon is worn by those supporting FRIENDS and those honoring friends and loved ones who are survivors or have passed because of breast cancer. If you have tried to turn their ribbons upright they will tell you it is pinned correctly. The story of the upside down ribbon reflects a personal connection to a young woman named Mandy, who died at the age of 31 due to the disease. The altered orientation of the ribbon was suggested by Mandy because of the new and different perspective of the organization.

Now Martha is a 24-hour-a-day advocate for Friends For An Earlier Breast Cancer Test®. The new research will detect breast cancer, before a tumor has ever formed. Mrs. Kaley is certain that the potential for science to succeed is imminent. Funding this research is a necessity and the community can help. Friends has funded over \$2.5 million in research grants since their inception in 1995 and a large portion of Friends supporters are from within our own community.



Photograph by Drew Pearson

Divine Weddings and Beyond™ Helping Friends

Divine Weddings and Beyond™ hosted a Wedding Fashion Show in October where all proceeds collected were donated to Friends For An Earlier Breast Cancer Test. Another Wedding Show is scheduled for April 29th at the Emerald Event Center where all proceeds will be donated again. Please contact Friends for an Earlier Breast Cancer Test® at PO Box 29524 Greensboro, NC 27429-9524 or email kmcburney@earlier.org to set up an event together.

Laura Williston (pictured lower right) was the organization's representative at the event.

## Starlights

- \* Local support groups found at <http://justacLOUD.wordpress.com>
- \* February is Heart Disease and Aids Awareness Month
- \* February Gemstone is Amethyst
- \* Share your story of loss, love and your journey towards a brighter day by contacting Diana for an interview

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# Pearly Gates Open for Pudge

by Basil Augusta



Keepsakes of a pet who won Faye's heart

We walked on a golden floor of autumn leaves, under an arbor to a heart-shaped garden with silver stars twinkling overhead. In the center was a raised area edged in sea shells, adorned with an angel statue and plaque with a water fountain serving as a headstone. Faye Floyd, a local hair stylist, lost her beloved pet Pudge after 14 years of companionship on July 23, 2009 due to age and diabetes. The memory garden for Pudge is located 40 feet from her back door where she can see it from inside the home.

Faye and her seventeen year old son, Brad Marley fell in love with the underdog of a friend's litter. The fuzzy and pudgy chow mix puppy quickly became a full-fledged part of the family. He slept in Faye's bed, ate at the kitchen table and road shotgun in the car, not to mention having complete run of the house. Faye started and ended her day with Pudge by her feet.



A memory garden for a woman's best friend

On a chilly afternoon August 22, 2009, 35 guests attended a memorial ceremony in Faye's backyard to honor Pudge's life. The high number of attendees was a true testimony of the love for Pudge and the support



14 years of companionship

for Faye. There were 3 readings, a song sung and composed by Brad with the entire ceremony videotaped by a friend. The lyrics and readings touched on the love, memories and the hope of seeing him again. When I asked Faye what helped her through this difficult time she said reading a book titled, "Cold Noses at the Pearly Gates," building his memory garden and the support of family and friends who knew of their unbreakable bond.

## The Grieving Person's Bill of Rights

(Part 1 of 2) by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., C.T.

Though you should reach out to others as you do the work of mourning, you should not feel obligated to accept the unhelpful responses you may receive from some people. You are the one who is grieving, and as such, you have certain "rights" no one should try to take away from you.

1. You have the right to experience your own unique grief. No one else will grieve exactly the same way you do. So, when you turn to others for help, don't allow them to tell what you should or should not be feeling.
2. You have the right to talk about your grief. Talking about your grief will help you heal. Seek out others who will allow you to talk as much as you want, as often as you want, about your grief.
3. You have the right to feel a multitude of emotions. Confusion, disorientation, fear, guilt, and relief are just a few of the emotions you might feel as part of your grief journey. Others may try to tell you that feeling angry, for example, is wrong. Don't take these judgmental responses to heart. Instead, find listeners who will accept your feelings without condition.
4. You have the right to be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits. Your feelings of loss and sadness will probably leave you feeling fatigued. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. Get daily rest. Eat balanced meals. And don't allow others to push you into things you don't feel ready to do.
5. You have the right to experience grief "attacks". Sometimes, out of nowhere, a powerful surge of grief may overcome you. This can be frightening, but is normal and natural. Find someone who understands and will let you talk it out.

For more information, please contact:  
Center For Loss & Life Transition

www.centerforloss.com • DrWolfelt@CenterForLoss.com • office 970-226-6050

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1 Peter 1:22  
So love each other deeply with all your heart.  
You have been born again, and this new life  
did not come from something that dies,  
but from something that cannot die.

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