



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

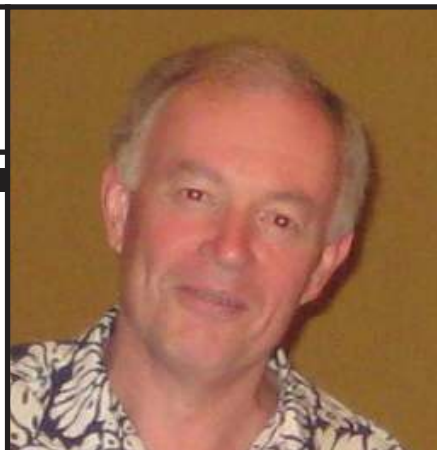
Dear Twins,

It's said that it takes a village to raise a child. Similarly, it takes a village to run TTSGI. There are many volunteers, who give freely of their hearts, time and talent, to be an organization for twinless twins to find. It allows us to convey a simple but profound message. You are not alone on your twinless journey.

As the holiday season approaches, I wish to express appreciation to all of these people in general terms. Any omissions belong to a faulty memory and not intent. For non twin volunteers that help whether it be at a conference or throughout the year; for twins who help facilitate media interviews to allow us to cast our net wider; to our Facebook moderators who provide a safe and orderly forum for over 2,000 members; volunteers that help moderate breakout groups; to our regional coordinators who reach out to twins in pain and hold regional meetings; to twins that make a newsletter regular and possible; to a twin who shepherds our RCs; to a twin who almost singlehandedly has replenished the scholarship fund through her efforts; to a professional Board/ED who administer and guide the organization in a quest to constantly improve in our sensitivity and vision; and to our financial donors, because without you, all of the above would not be possible.

At mass this morning, the priest discussed volunteerism, in relation to a certain church activity that needed additional help. He urged us to not be conflicted by polarizing sentiments. One voice is telling us that we have no time. The other voice recognizes that we all have the same time and how we should/could spend it. I appreciate every volunteer who listened to their better angel.

Ray Boyle, President



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MISSION

TTSGI provides a safe and compassionate community within which twinless twins can experience healing, understanding, and the opportunity to help others cope with the loss of their twin.





THE EMPTY CHAIR

by Sandy Goad, twin to Jim

PASSED AND PRESENT

How do we learn to integrate our twins that have died into our lives?

Recently, I was introduced to a book entitled *Passed and Present* by Allison Gilbert. Allison has heard thousands of stories about grief and recovery and has discovered that “individuals who talk about a death soon after it occurs, who continue to honor the memories of their loved ones, who allow those people to remain present in their lives, almost always fare better emotionally over the long term than those who attempt to avoid those actions after a loved one dies”.

In her book *Passed and Present*, Allison offers 85 inspiring ways to celebrate family and friends you never want to forget. She offers practical, accessible and economical tips for surviving a loss in her list of “Forget Me Nots”. One reviewer says, “This is a book about loss and also about celebration; about the past, the present and a future that embraces happiness, the people we miss and all they still mean to us.” It gives us a chance to celebrate our twin’s legacy as we move forward by offering creative ways to keep the memory of our twins alive. A few of those creative ways she suggests are listed below:

Fabrics can be repurposed into new items

Your twin’s favorite jacket, sweatshirt, T-shirts and jeans can be made into pillows, totes, bean bags, and even outdoor decorations. You can also transfer photographs of your twin to fabric. I actually used a plaid shirt of my twin brother’s and put it on a scarecrow that was placed in my garden every fall. Jim would have loved it! It made me smile and brought back memories of all the fun we had together.

Create a Memory Magnet for your refrigerator

A CBS News poll in 2013 identified how Americans love refrigerator magnets. 87% of those responding adorn their refrigerators with magnets of photographs and other collectibles that provide insights into what is important to us. I just counted nine photos on my refrigerator!

Show and Tales

Remember “show and tell” in kindergarten? This is a grown-up version. Ask your twins who attend regional meetings to bring an object that is related to their twin and tell their story. This is a great idea for your TT meetings! I have used this idea in my grief group meetings here in Summersville. Also you might want to ask your family members to bring something that reflects their connection to your twin at your next get together.

Websites to help memorialize your twin

www.forevermissed.com,
www.legacy.com,
www.rememberingzazz.com

Generate a wave of light

You can bridge time zones by asking your friends and family to light a candle in memory of your twin no matter where they live. For example, on our 50th birthday, I selected friends and family from around the world to light a candle in memory of Jim at 7pm in their time zone. It was a beautiful way of bringing us together to remember Jim and spread the light round the world! I received many emails and calls about their experience!

Do a random act of kindness in memory of your loved one

You can find many ideas at www.missfoundation.org. About 15 years ago, I began to do a random act of kindness in memory of Jim. It gives you opportunities to talk about their lives and helps someone else in the process.

Throwback Thursday

This is a social media trend that encourages users to share favorite memories on a weekly basis. It provides a perfect opportunity to post pictures of your twin.

When it comes to keeping the memory of our twin alive, maybe that work is up to us. To discover more of Allison’s 85 ideas to keep memories of your twin alive, you can find her book on several websites. We all need to find outlets for remembering that make us feel happy and connected to the people we miss the most. This book gives us beautiful ideas to help do just that!

TTSGI GUIDING PRINCIPLES: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

TTSGI has four guiding principles:

1. Once A Twin, Always A Twin
2. You Are Not Alone
3. Healing by Helping
4. Journey to Healing

The Winter Edition will focus on the second one:

You Are Not Alone — Twinless twins need to be heard and to know they are “not alone” in their feelings. Every twinless twin has a history and a story to tell, a sorrow to express, a pain to endure, a twin to remember, and a life to continue to live. TTSGI encourages the sharing of stories and feelings in a mutually supportive environment without judgment or unsolicited advice. Members of TTSGI offer compassionate listening and emotional support for sharing and telling these stories. Information shared among twins is held in confidence in mutually supportive group settings.

Below is a story of a twin that illustrates what it means when you are not alone.

You Are Not Alone: Wombmates Who Mourn

by Mitch Carmody, twin to Sandy
www.heartlightstudios.com

Most people recognize me as a bereaved parent for the death and physical loss of my son and for my workshops that I present across the country that honors his life. His death was the impetus for my book “Letters To My Son” and the resulting workshops that I conduct.

What many do not realize is that I am also a bereaved sibling and a Twinless Twin. A year before my son was diagnosed with cancer, my twin sister Sandy and her two young sons, Travis and Jason, were killed in an automobile accident. Three members of our family were gone in an instant from a horrible crash that precluded the use of an open casket for the wake and funeral. The grief was then beyond my comprehension, and I grieved hard for my best friend and wombmate and her boys. She also left behind a set of 18-month old boy/girl twins who I vowed would know their mother through my active participation in their life.



Growing up my sister and I were treated as a single unit and referred to by most everyone as simply “the twins”. We were different as night and day and we each had our own set of friends that we shared. I loved it, and although we had our differences we were the best of friends. Ten days after our 29th birthday together I became a twinless twin. It does not matter when it happens; twins who lose their twin at birth know all too well that it affects them for the rest of their lives. Singletons will never truly get it; they cannot unless they themselves have had a wombmate.



The grief for my sister is incomprehensible, she was my other half and even though we were boy/girl twins, we were joined at the soul. We grew up as a unit and because that is all we knew, the depth of the loss is not apparent until it happens and we discover the gaping hole in our soul impossible to fill.

When my son was diagnosed with terminal cancer, I had to put my grief on hold to pour all my energy into helping my son in an 18-month battle with his killer. I could not grieve for my sister when he was fighting for his life, and when he died my newfound grief overshadowed the grief for Sandy and her boys. I was on grief overload and numb from head to soul for a long, long time.

My first Twinless Twins conference two years ago was extremely healing for me. To be in the presence of so many other twins who “get it” was an amazing experience. I could feel the twinsynergy in the room and could mourn my loss in public 30 years overdue. This is a life changing conference for those who mourn the loss of their twin or multiple. Our twinship is honored and recognized for the splendiferous enigma that it is. It is loss like none other; together we heal.



KEVIN'S CORNER

By Kevin Mullen, twin to Brian

MY 2016 CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

My trip to the conference in Michigan was put to the challenge this year because first I had to head to Boston. I was elected in April to an Officer Role, 3rd Vice President in the Vermont Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). In Boston, I attended the 126th SAR Congress with members from all over the world. I went down a couple days early and was able to hook up with my cousin Val and her husband Dan. On the last day, I spent the night with my childhood best friend and classmate Ed and his wife Lucy. Thursday morning it was up early for the flight to Detroit to be met by another cousin who brought me up to Ypsilanti.

While checking in at the hotel, a member asked me why I was late getting to Michigan, since some people were worried as I usually arrive early, but I had a great story to share.

It was great seeing old friends Dena Stitt, Lea Eriksen, Michelle Getchell, Casey Pope, Becky Sehenuk and Emily Slosberg and so many others. Crystal Shaw Strickler stopped in for a brief time. I really missed Matt Vierling, Mary R. Morgan, Sean Joyce, Kevin Johnson and Justin Clarke this year. Some of the new twins I met were Marcus Willinger, Jennifer Niswender, Michael Rattigan, and Jacob Yurich. My friend Ed Wasko, a recent twinless twin, came for a few hours - it was nice to see him before Twins Day.

The Angel Award was presented to Joan Angelis for her tireless work as the Regional Coordinator for the North Central region.

See you all in Tucson, Arizona next year!



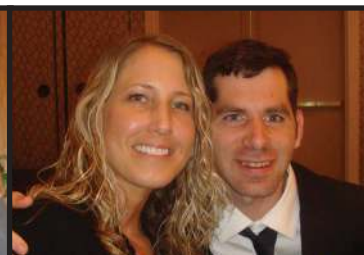
Kevin with his cousin Val Moody Carroll



Casey Pope, twin to Cody with Kevin



Ed Ballard with Kevin



Becky Sehenuk, twin to Jenny with Kevin

NEW ENGLAND CONNECTION

by Kevin Mullin, twin to Brian

Continuing along the ancestry lines from my previous story, I thought it would be a fun idea to see if there were any connections to me in my region, since I can trace my family to Colonial New England. I looked into Linda Pountney's (twin to Paula) family tree and found, not one but two, common ancestors - they are Edmund Rice and Thomasine Frost and Dolor Davis and Margey Willard who are my 10th great grandparents. They are also Linda and Paula's 10th great grandparents as well!

I wrote to her about what I had discovered and she was thrilled to find out about our distant cousin relationship. It's fun to see what you can discover on Ancestry.com. If you are ever interested in looking into your past and need help, please contact me. I love the past and history.



HOLIDAY GIVING – GIVING SO THAT OTHERS MAY RECEIVE

As the Holidays approach, we would like to ask you all to consider giving this season to TTSGI in memory of your beloved twin.

Year after year TTSGI has been here for each one of us, for the twinless friends we meet at conferences and meetings, and for all new twinless twins reaching out for compassion and healing for the first time.

But the non-profit organization that supports us in our time of need also needs us to be there too!

TTSGI provides us with first-class quarterly newsletters, conference planning and coordination, communication services via our website and email, financial management, a board of directors to provide guidance, regional coordinators, who are there for you, and so many “behind the scene” services. And, just like any organization or household we have a budget to meet, and we have a “wish-list.” *TTSGI can continue providing support and services with the loving help of all of us!*

How can we help? By sending TTSGI your donation or by making a pledge to give on a regular basis – monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, whatever plan works best for you. *By setting up a giving-plan you give TTSGI the gift of financial planning – and the essential resources to help us thrive and grow.*

Once again this year, we are fortunate that anonymous donors of TTSGI are generously matching all year-end donations received, so please give, knowing that your donation will be doubled for TTSGI.

If you agree that giving is receiving, please complete the donation form in this newsletter and send it to Michelle Getchell. She'll make the arrangements to deduct the amount stated from your bank account or credit card as instructed by you. Alternatively, you can send a check to Michelle on a regular basis. Alternatively, donating online at our website is quick and easy. Any amount is welcome (but please “stretch” if you can!)

You can make a donation or pledge in memory of your precious twin – it's a gift that only you can give – so that TTSGI can continue to give back.

In Gratitude – Margaret Daffin, Fundraising Coordinator



GIVE WHILE YOU SHOP

You can shop online and give to TTSGI at the same time!

iGive.com

iGive.com will link you to hundreds of popular retail websites. A portion of your online purchases will go directly to Twinless Twins. To date, over \$711 has been raised from you all using this site.

GoodShop

Use GoodShop.com when you shop online – they work with more than 2,500 major brands, have over 100,000 coupons and donate a percentage (up to 20%) of every purchase you make to us.

AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

A LONE TWIN'S BIKE RIDE FUNDRAISER FOR THE LONE TWIN NETWORK

by Janet Baird, twin to Margaret

As described above Alison Equizi, a twin in the Harrogate Lone Twin group completed a 1,000 mile bike ride from Lands End to John o'Groats in June. This is a photo of Alison Equizi before her challenge – she is with the famous Scottish band, the Proclaimers. They are twin brothers! They helped raise awareness of her bike ride and also Lone Twins.

Alison's next ride is even more challenging. Grand Canyon to Las Vegas in 2017. I wrote this poem to celebrate Alison finishing the ride. She made Lone Twin badges for the group to wear as they rode over the finish line.

BADGE

45 of you ride,
With badge, over
The finish line,
At John o'Groats.
Knights in bikes,
Warrior women,
Mighty men.
All of you survivors,
Riding the hills.
12 long days,
End to End,
Up the UK.
You made it,
You did it.
You finished it.
And you wore our
Badge, you
Remembered us.
Lone twins,
Two on a bike,
Two as one.



NEWS FROM OUR UNITED KINGDOM AFFILIATE, JANET BAIRD, TWIN TO MARGARET

Nine twins attended the Harrogate meeting on Saturday October 15th, at St Michael's Hospice. It was a glorious autumn day so we could go out on the terrace and look at the beautiful view. After introductions we had reports from the visit to Hettie's in July and the American twins conference in Detroit later in July. We then discussed future meetings. The next Harrogate meeting will be on February 18th 2017, at St. Michael's. We are all going to bring along a book which has helped us on our twin loss journey. Lunch was next. We had a new twin so it was an ideal time to talk informally. After lunch Alison gave an inspiring talk on her bike ride from Land's End to John o'Groats last summer. She did the bike ride to raise awareness of Lone twins. Alison gave Jill a cheque of £750, which she raised by doing the ride. The ride was 1,000 miles over 12 days with no rest days. What an achievement! We finished up with more tea and coffee and Jan's excellent lemon drizzle cake! Then we headed up the road to the Park Inn at Hornbeam Park, to end the day off. We all said goodbye reluctantly but agreed it had been a magic meeting.

Dates for next year:

February 18th Harrogate

March 11th Manchester

April 1st Annual General Meeting, Birmingham

June 17th Birmingham, new Midland meeting



AN AFTERNOON WITH JOAN WOODWARD AND JILL DEELEY OF THE LONE TWIN NETWORK, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

by Margaret Daffin, twin to Josie

In late August 2016, I traveled from London to Birmingham to meet and have lunch with my dear friend, Joan Woodward, Founder of the Lone Twin Network (LTN), and to finally meet, Jill Deeley, now Chairman of the LTN.

It had been some years since I last saw Joan and as she turned 90 this year, I very much wanted to spend some time with her again. She chose the Birmingham Botanical Gardens for our luncheon, which were beautiful and the weather cooperated – not always the case in England!

When I arrived at the gardens by taxi from the train station, Joan and Jill were waiting outside for me. After many hugs and hellos, we found the restaurant and settled for a nice lunch, overlooking the grounds of the gardens. After lunch, we walked through the gardens and chatted along the way. Joan might be 90, but she is as sharp as a tack and still driving herself around.



Joan has been a very instrumental part of my twinless twin journey. After Josie was murdered in London in May, 1996, I made contact with Joan and the LTN for guidance and comfort. Joan is a psychotherapist and a twinless twin herself. She lost her twin at aged three. I remember we met in her brother's flat in London and spent about two hours together. At that time, just weeks after Josie's death, I was a total disaster – broken and lost and I needed someone to understand how I was suffering, and Joan did. She offered whatever help she could, and the one thing I remember so clearly from our time together, is that she made me realize the type of man my Josie was married to – possessive, jealous and cruel – a wife beater. She pointed out to me that had Josie left him many years earlier, he would have killed her then – he would never have let her go. So, in some ways it was a comfort to know that we had her in our lives for as long as we did, until she got up enough courage to finally leave him and be free, unfortunately, for a very short time!



My love and thanks will always go out to Joan Woodward for being there for me at the beginning and for the many years following.

I also had the opportunity to get to know Jill Deeley and to hear first hand some of the differences in the running of the LTN compared to TTSGI. I have been a member of the LTN for the past 20 years, but I am never in England when they hold their Annual Meetings.

It was a very special afternoon, with two lovely ladies and here are two photos from my time with them.

The one standing is: Joan Woodward on the left, Jill Deeley on the right
The one sitting is: Joan on the left, Margaret on the right

OUR TTSGI FACEBOOK (FB) GROUP: YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!

by Michelle Getchell, twin to Missy

Did you know that TTSGI has a FB group, which has almost 2,000 members? This FB group consists of both TTSGI members and non-members. We use this FB group as an outreach for TTs looking for support. On average 20 new contacts a week are joining our FB group. Our goal is to encourage and provide a safe haven for TTs to share honestly and candidly about their twin loss. Our FB group also serves as a way to help TTs (when ready) to get involved in the bigger community of TTSGI and become a member. Twinless twins from all over the world, with losses ranging from days to years, are participating in conversations, sharing their story, and offering their support – demonstrating “Healing by Helping”. We invite you to join our FB group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1403443829969016/>

This FB group is moderated by eight of our amazing, faithful, dedicated TT members: Alice Bailey Ward, Dawn Barnett, Sarah Beebe, Wilmette Combs, Rob Fitzmaurice, Carol Gutmann, Jane Malcolm, Beverly Smyk – Thank You Moderator Team!

Questions? Please contact one of the moderators or send your email to contact@twinlesstwins.org and we will pass it to a moderator for you!

A TREE OF REMEMBRANCE

by Rob Fitzmaurice, twin to Lisa Fitzmaurice



Here in England, we sponsor a Tree for my Beautiful Twin Lisa Fitzmaurice who passed away a little over three years ago from Liver Cancer. The tree is based in the Centre of the Country here in England at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA).

First, we need go back a few months, beginning of this year. They were ready to build a new multi million pound visitor centre and had commissioned a photo artist to make a People's Picture. This artist makes large pictures using only photos.



People were asked to send in photos in the hope of being included in the eventual Permanent Picture which would be housed in the new building, with a brief story of the photo, obviously I sent in quite a few photos. I had one of my Twin Lisa visiting the NMA some years ago smelling the roses, so off that went with baited anticipation that it would be chosen.

Then, I did something else - I basically "stole" some of my Twinless Twins' photos from their Facebook pages and sent them in too, without telling them.



On the People's Picture website they would post up daily photos of the ones chosen, and one day I came across mine and another Twinless Twin's I'd sent in. I was ecstatic and over the moon about it, but then my face changed to horror, I had to inform my fellow Twinless Twins of what I had done. I was extremely nervous about this and it took me several days to pluck up the courage to tell them, so you can imagine my relief when Beverly Smyk and Cayla Samsing were both over the moon too about what I had done.

Beverly's picture was of the one depicting herself and her Twin Donna she had commissioned by our fellow Twinless Twin and artist Monique Richards; Cayla Samsing's was of a photo of herself and her precious Twin Darla Sky (I call it their Audrey Hepburn look!)



One of myself was chosen too, but there was no sign of Lisa in the list, so I decided I need to be happy with what I'd achieved, this was, after all, going to be a permanent fixture for decades to come, so I was marginally happy.

Moving on to the 21st of October and the Official opening of the new Visitor Centre, so, like so many times, I asked my Dad if he fancied going to the opening day, and so myself, my Dad and my Step Mum Linda went into the new centre.

We were amazed to see the final Picture, or trees just like Lisa's.



There is an interactive touch screen tablet you can use to search the picture and plot exactly where each photo is located on the big picture. It is such a wonderful site because as my dad was searching the tablet he spotted Lisa - I'd only told him that morning that I'd sent Lisa's photo in, so you can imagine how thrilled he was.

Not only that, but I actually found that all of our pictures are included Twice!!! A real Twin Experience.

So, if anyone ever comes to Central England, it's a must visit. I'll gladly be your guide.

2016 DETROIT TTSGI CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to all who participated in the Detroit 2016 conference survey. The results will be used by both the board and the conference planning committee in planning next year's conference in Tucson, Arizona.

THE RESULTS ARE IN

TTSGI Conference Survey

Total attendees who took the survey: 56

Note: Attendees were not required to answer all the questions

Based on your experience would you attend another TTSGI Annual Conference?

Yes - 55

No - 0

Unsure - 1

Was this your first TTSGI Annual Conference?

Yes - 15

No - 41

How satisfied were you with the keynote speaker, Allie Franklin?

Somewhat satisfied - 6

Very satisfied - 50

Did you feel the conference gave you hope/tools to help you on your healing journey?

Yes - 55

No - 1

Did you attend one or more of the breakout groups?

I attended one - 41

I attended more than one - 15

What was the name/subject of the breakout group(s) you attended? *List all that apply*

Lingering Illness - 18

Writing about your twin - on Friday - 14

Sudden - happened as an adult - 10

Murder - 5

Suicide 4

Sudden - happened as a child - 4

Just for parents - on Friday - 1

In-utero or shortly after birth - 0

Family and friends - 0

Overall, how satisfied were you with your breakout group?

N/A - 1

Not satisfied - 4

Somewhat Satisfied - 19

Very satisfied - 29

2016 DETROIT TTSGI CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

TTSGI Conference Survey Cont.

What were the top TWO conference experiences that you enjoyed the most?

Welcome reception for 1st time attendees

Allie Franklin's Friday keynote talk (creating a legacy) - 22

Memorial Walk around the lake -10

Breakout groups - 10

Closing ceremony (bead bracelets) - 10

Allie Franklin's Saturday talk (different ways people grieve) - 8

Dinner and auction - 8

Self-Intro time - 6

Balloon release - 3

Free time - 3

What was your least favorite conference experience?

Self-Intro time - 7

Closing ceremony (bead bracelets) - 7

Free time - 5

Allie Franklin's Saturday talk (different ways people grieve) -5

Breakout groups - 4

Memorial Walk around the lake - 2

Balloon release -2

Dinner and auction - 2

Did you feel the cost of the conference program was worth the registration fee you paid?

Yes - 53

No - 3

Did you find the business meeting informative/helpful with understanding how TTSGI operates?

Yes - 27

No - 1

N/A - 10

2016 DETROIT TTSGI CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

- Breakout groups should be more focused and facilitated rather than just telling the stories again.
- Large breakouts break into smaller groups.
- Have breakout groups that guide us in how we learn to live as an individual
- Only spend 5-10 minutes for the facts of death in breakouts and then the rest of the time discuss common psychological effects.
- I liked the memorial walk a lot - incorporate walk/exercise into the weekend a bit more.
- Thank you so much for doing this conference! It was a life changer for me. I was asked about 25 times to talk about my twin! I never had been granted permission/blessing to speak of the pain so much and to see people nodding and saying...I know what you mean. I tear up just thinking of it now. Pain shared is diminished; joy shared is augmented."
- The breakout group leaders need more training.
- Too many people in my breakout group. I would like to see the sudden group broken into sudden non-vehicle accidents and vehicle accidents.
- I have found from my experience attending 6 conferences that the deep connecting and sharing happens during free time where twins share more freely and uninhibited. Have an early-organized event for those attending pre-conference start.
- The keynote speaker needs to be able to relate more to the tt audience.
- Random table seating at banquet would be a great time to meet and chat with someone you hadn't had a chance to meet before.
- More mixers
- Adding a breakout for twins who lost their twin years ago, maybe about what other twins are doing to keep the memory of their twin alive,
- More options for breakout meetings.
- The banquet meal was the best thing
- The cost of raffle tickets and 50/50 tickets were too pricey this year.
- Loved that we could use debit cards at the sale table.
- I missed having drinks available, (coffee & sodas) during meetings.
- The twin bags were great for people to carry their stuff around in.
- I would like more opportunities for break out groups.
- Thank you for all you do. Bring it back to Michigan when you can. Twin hugs!!
- Would love to have Anna Van Der Wee as the speaker
- Some people do not do the balloon releases, and some people may have allergies to latex, perhaps there could be bubbles as an alternative
- I'm very pleased with how the suicide breakout session worked out, after a problematic start.
- I enjoyed returning to the conference this year. I think after being gone for so long the group has been able to maintain Dr. Brandt's idea of the small groups and helping by healing.
- Larger breakout groups may need to be broken down more to allow each twin to speak or allow more time for those loss types with a break.
- I did like the keynote speaker's presentations. She talked about the legacy we take.
- Add a legacy wall at the conference – a place that members can write down legacy examples.
- Have a group/breakout for returning twins who have had time to deal with the loss.
- Have a breakout that discusses other issues associated with the twin loss: marriage/divorces. Our loss develops and changes once we have healed some - expand on the grief journey.

2016 DETROIT TTSGI CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

- Biodegradable Chinese lights instead of balloon release
- The most valuable conference ever. Keynote speaker ace, venue ace, new twins ace. What more can I say!!! THANK YOU!!!
- I felt that the auction went too quick, meaning that before the pieces (auction item) got all around the room, they were already sold.
- Allie Franklin was great - would be interested in having her speak again in the future.
- Thank you to everyone that dedicated their time and hard work in putting this conference together
- The conference is by far the most helpful and healing part of my grief journey.
- Add another breakout small group, for people whose death was drug-related.
- Add more free time. I believe that is the best time that I am able to bond with other twins. I feel like the more that we are able to show that life does go on, helps a lot.
- Allie was a decent keynote speaker, but I feel like I did not take anything away from what she said.
- Start on Wednesday. A lot of the twins are there on Wednesday.
- Add a breakout with how to deal with your loss, how to get through angelversaries, how to get through birthdays, how to get through firsts, how to make sure our kids know about their aunt/uncle. "
- Thank you!!! I wish it never ended
- The whole program was very good. It was had to pick just two.
- I guess the auction items need to be locked in a hotel safe
- Another wonderful conference!
- In the big breakout session I would like to see smaller breakout sessions covering different subjects of a more positive nature.
- Some suggestions for groups during self-intro time: favorite twin memories, how twinless twins honor their twins, how twins handle b-days and angelversaries, dealing with singletons who aren't supportive
- I would like to thank every single one of you that make these conferences possible. You deserve so much praise for all you do to help us heal. Thank you!
- I appreciate all the hard work the committee puts into the conference.
- It was truly an amazing experience and I met so many great people to help with my healing process.
- I felt the conference was too expensive and disappointed it only included one meal.
- Longer breakout time 1 1/2 hrs was not enough time and would loved to of got to know these people more.
- I enjoy people on Facebook twinless twin people that wrote To Me

2017 CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER: NANCY WEIL

Nancy Weil is a leading authority on the relationship between humor and grief and is known for her energetic, entertaining and content-rich programs. Nancy is the founder of The Laugh Academy and serves as Director of Grief Support and Community Outreach for Veterans Funeral Care in Clearwater, FL. She has certifications as a Grief Management Specialist, Grief Services Provider, Funeral Celebrant and Laughter Leader. Besides blogging for Legacy.com on grief related topics, she is also the author of the book *If Stress Doesn't Kill You, Your Family Might*. For more information, visit: www.TheLaughAcademy.com.

Nancy has mastered the ability with her humor, fun loving, and enthusiastic way to give us the tools to manage sorrow and give us the practical healthy ways to cope with grief. You can't help but walk away feeling light hearted, happy, higher energy level and grateful for taking the time to sit in on Nancy's program. She is a master of laughter and humor. I believe everyone should take the time to meet this dynamic woman and experience one of her workshops.

Beth Gerrish, Dengler Roberts Funeral Home



SAVE THE DATE: 2017 CONFERENCE

Twinless Twins Conference to be held
July 15-17, 2017 in Tucson, Arizona.

More Information to follow and online registration will open on January 2 with a limited time "early bird" rate of \$199 at www.twinlesstwins.org/events.

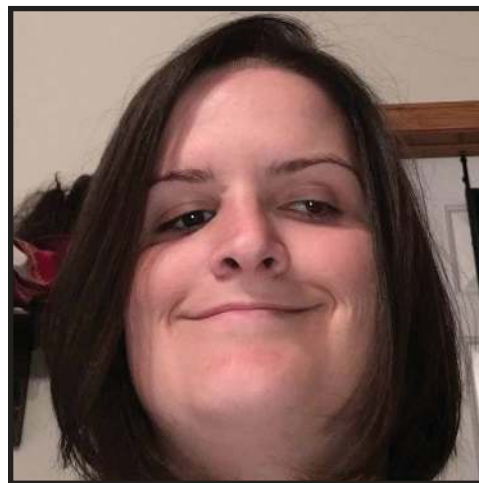
From a Twinless Twin who attended the Conference: "I expected to mostly sit and listen and to hear what to do to survive. What surprised me, though, was how the other twins genuinely wanted to hear my story. They asked about what I loved and missed so much about my twin. It was this love, in the simple gift of listening, that gave me my first feelings of hope."



JANUARY 18TH

by Jennifer Okell
Dedicated to Rebecca Lynn Okell (her twin sister)

Big birthday for my twin sister and I.
Another
Year
Older
Today.



NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL GATHERING

By Garry Rayno, twin to Jerry

With traces of snow lining the highways leading into Brattleboro, Vt. the New England chapter of Twinless Twins Support Group International gathered for its fall meeting Oct. 29 to discuss their journeys through grief and the progress or setbacks they experienced.

Fourteen twins attended the meeting along with three support people. One twin attended her first meeting, although she lost her twin when they were one-year old.



During the meeting, the degree of support shown by family members after losing a twin was discussed. Some twins received significant family support but most believe their families had difficulty coping with the loss as well and the unique grief experienced by surviving twins. Many noted family members told them either 'You need to get over it,' or "you need to move on," while noting other members of the family are grieving too.

The group also discussed how they remember their twins, ways to keep those memories alive and what they admired most about them. And those gathered discussed how their twin influenced their life and how their impact continues today.

The meeting was facilitated by Linda Pountney and Garry Rayno.

Brattleboro is a new site for the New England regional meeting which was held in a former laundromat converted into performing arts and community gathering space. Some twins and their spouses stayed overnight and met in the evening for dinner and more conversation.

The small city along the shore of the Connecticut River has many enticing stores, galleries and eateries to explore and those attending said they would like to return for another regional meeting.

Left to right Garry Rayno, Linda Pountney, Lori Payne, Bob Yarmey, Amber Mariani, Michelle Thomas-Monteiro, Jim Dambach, Erin Centauro, Cindy Welch-Moriarty, Tricia Dannhauer, Ewa Nasiadek and Deborah Short.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETING

By Dawn Barnett, twin to Daryl

For those twins who live in larger cities you're lucky because you can go to a regional meeting near you. But for Arkansas twins who live in a state whose population is less than the city of Dallas and it's a six hour drive to get there where a meeting is held once a year - the only way we can get together is to have an area meeting. And that's what we did for the first time a few months ago. Terry Morgan Norris and Jean Sisk who live in northern Arkansas came to my home in central Arkansas, each driving three hours in foggy conditions on winding curvy mountain roads. We talked for hours, shared pictures, had lunch then ended the meeting with a balloon release at one of the eight lakes here in the village. I have been in touch with at least ten twinless twins in Arkansas and one of these days I hope all of them will be able to go to a meeting. I hope to try to have one in both central and north Arkansas at least once a year.





NORTHEAST REGIONAL MEETING

By Carolyn Shane, twin to Cary

The NY/NJ Region is fortunate to be able to meet four times each year alternating between the New York area and in various towns in New Jersey. An email is sent to everyone weeks prior to a meeting for a vote to be taken as to which dates provided will work best for the members of the region. The most popular date wins and the meeting date and location is set and a follow-up communication is then sent to everyone informing them of the meeting date details. The date of Oct. 30th won the vote and we were fortunate to have 14 members and 3 supporters who attended this meeting on Long Island at the beautiful and comfortable home of Laurie Everitt.

We begin each meeting at noon time with everyone bringing something for the group to eat and an hour is spent having lunch together and chatting informally. At 1 pm everyone is gathered together for our formal time together. We start by lighting two candles; one in memory of our twin and one for us, to be blessed with peace of mind, body and spirit. Fred Donegan then leads us in a prayer which sets the tone for our get-together. After the initial part of the meeting where we review the rules and procedures of the afternoon, discuss the past and upcoming conference, and remind everyone that it is important that we as Twinless Twins support our organization, we go around the room and we share our name, if appropriate our twin's name, and the circumstance of their death. Depending on the number of attendees, this portion of the meeting can take an hour or more. We then take a 15 minute break to eat a bit more and to connect with each other in support, after our sharing time.

When we reconvene, there is always a chosen topic to be discussed. On Oct. 30th, the topic was 'How has being a twin affected your life positively and/or negatively?' Everyone participated and shared at their own comfort level. Part 2 of the discussion was 'What have you done /are doing/or plan to do to make a positive impact on others and yourself to honor the loss of your twin and to help you in your healing process?'

We ended the discussion by quoting Dr. Brandt's belief and one of TTSGI's motto: "Healing by helping others." I also distributed the following quote by Dr. Phil which we read in unison: "The depth, breadth, and longevity of your grief are not a reflection of how much you cared about the person. Celebrate everyday of their life instead of grieve the moment of death."

Our meeting ended with a universal thank you to everyone who came and by their participation made this meeting very special, indeed. And of course, the meeting was not complete without our photo moment. Thanks to Burt and Steve, two of our supporters who took what seemed like 14 cell phone photo moments.

Standing left to right:

Steve Bergman, Joseph Klein, Carol Pendroff, Diane Mandell, Laurie Everitt, John Palladino, Tabatha Rivera, Maryann Mank, and Fred Donegan

Sitting left to right:

Carolyn Shane, Susan Riddle, Vivian Delman, Sandy Masnick, and Sheri Parham

NOTE: UPCOMING REGIONAL GATHERINGS ARE LISTED ON OUR WEBSITE AT [HTTP://WWW.TWINLESSTWINS.ORG/EVENTS/](http://www.twinlesstwins.org/events/). PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY AS EVENTS ARE HELD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL MEETING

By Alia Lizotte, twin to Rebecca

The Mid-Atlantic regional members met for their fall meeting in Frederick, MD on Saturday, October 22. Several twins arrived on Friday evening and met for dinner at a restaurant close to the hotel. We had a chance to catch up with each other and share twin stories.

On Saturday morning, ten twins sat together in a circle for our morning meeting. I opened the meeting by discussing information about our schedule for the day and discussed the TTSGI 2017 National Conference in Tucson, AZ.



Then, I explained that I had been raised in Canada and they had just celebrated Thanksgiving. (It falls on the same day as Columbus Day here.) I had been thinking of ways we could honor our twins during the holidays and asked the group to share their ideas or traditions. Below are a few ideas that were shared:

- When having a holiday meal set a place for your twin
- Ask people to share their favorite stories of your twin
- Place a photo of them on the table
- Donate items or time to a charity on their behalf
- Visit one of their favorite places or watch a favorite movie and include their friends or do it by yourself

If you would like to honor your twin, but it may be upsetting to others, do it in quiet way. Serve one of their favorite dishes or decorate with their favorite flowers for example.

After our break, I discussed “memory chains”. For our activity, I handed out, in a basket, colored paper that was already cut into 8” by 1” strips. I asked each twin to take some strands of the paper and write a few words that represented a memory or a gift their twin had given them on each strip. Then they linked them together. They can use their memory chain to decorate doorways, windows or even a holiday tree. All twins enjoyed the activity, and one twin discussed how he could use this activity to help teach his twins’ grandchildren about the grandfather they had never met.

During our “sharing time” everyone had an opportunity to talk about their twin and issues they are facing due to their twin’s death. This is an essential part of our regional meeting. It is vital to give each twin an opportunity to talk about their twin experience and share their feelings in a place where they know they will be listened to and supported.

We concluded our meeting by standing in a circle and holding a lighted candle in memory of our twins. Following the meeting, six of the twins went to a nearby restaurant in downtown Frederick for lunch where we continued to share our cherished twin stories.

The date for our spring meeting is not scheduled at this time, but usually is held in late March or early April. As soon as the date is set, we will post the information on the TTSGI web-site and our Facebook page and you can mark your calendars! Until then, I encourage everyone to stay in touch with their twin friends so we can all continue to support and encourage each other.

From left to right: Leslie Kole, twin to Linda; Laura Grandstaff, twin to Tamara; Ruth Selig, twin to Rollyn; Alia Lizotte, twin to Rebecca; Jennifer Gonzalez, twin to Jeanette; Mike Karbeling, twin to Howard; Sandy Goad, twin to Jim; Jennifer Roberts, twin to Ellen; Betty Brinker, twin to Louise; and Bobbi Klein, twin to Betty.



THE 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING, ATLANTA, GA

By Margaret Daffin, twin to Josie

The Board of Director's of Twinless Twin's Support Group, International met in early November in Atlanta, GA. at the Emory Conference Center Hotel - a great venue for our board meeting and somewhere we had visited before. Renie Hallford, Board Emeritus, had arranged the weekend for us all to be in Atlanta, including a wonderful dinner on Saturday evening at Renie and LeAnn's country club - thank you both.

As always, Saturday was crammed with an all-day board meeting, covering many topics for the organization - making necessary decisions for the future of TTSGI. Fortunately, we are a very congenial group! Two board members could not join us this time - Dena Stitt and Venice Lacy, but they were connected via Skype, but we did miss them both.

We look forward to seeing you all in July at the 2017 Conference in Tucson, Arizona.

Those pictured from Left standing, Renie Hallford, twin to Ernie; Becky Sehenuk Waite, twin to Jenny; Terry Lewis Foor, twin to Sherry; Ray Boyle, twin to Jimmy

From left sitting, Margaret Daffin, twin to Josie; Michelle Getchell, twin to Missy; Dave Jones, twin to Dennis; Lea Eriksen, twin to Eve; and Renee Manger, twin to Stephen. Not pictured Venice Lacy, twin to Toni and Dena Stitt, twin to Dean.



CANADA REGIONAL MEETING

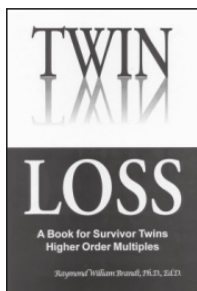
By Beverly Smyk, twin to Donna

Just back home from a wonderful twins meeting at Ray's home. We enjoyed another taste of Ray's cooking with a pasta lunch and his famous potato salad. Some of the twins even raided his vegetable garden! After a great luncheon we each shared our stories and got to know each other better. For those that couldn't make it, you were certainly missed and for the new twins that came I'm so glad you did.

Pic 1:

Front Edwina Taborsky, Beverley Smyk, Mary Stephens, Naomi Stein, and Ami Hoyt
Rear Karen Shields, Pat Wilbee, Ray Boyle, and Rudi Chan

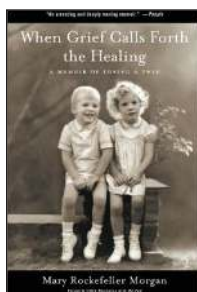




“TWIN LOSS”

By Raymond W. Brandt, PhD

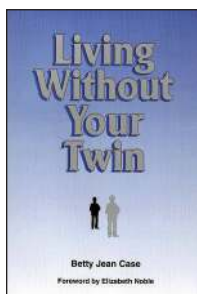
Dr. Brandt was the founder of Twinless Twins Support Group International and was considered by many an authority on twin loss. The 400-page book discusses all aspects of the loss and also speaks to the family members on how to help the survivor twin.



“WHEN GRIEF CALLS FORTH THE HEALING”

By Mary Rockefeller Morgan

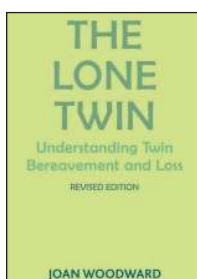
In this startlingly frank and moving memoir, Mary R. Morgan struggles to claim an individual identity, enabling her to face her twin brother Michael’s death and the huge loss it engendered. With remarkable candor, she shares her spiritually evocative healing journey, which moves her forward into a life of new beginnings and meaning, especially in her work with others who have lost a twin.



“LIVING WITHOUT YOUR TWIN”

By Betty Jean Case

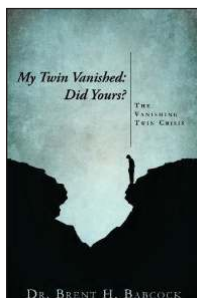
TTSGI receives a donation each time one of author Betty Jean Case’s books is purchased through us. Betty was a twin, who grew up with twin siblings and had a set of twin grandsons. This 150-page book discusses how to keep living without your twin and best friend by your side. It also explores the uniqueness of twin loss.



“THE LONE TWIN: A STUDY IN BEREAVEMENT AND LOSS”

By Joan Woodward

The reader is taken through the closeness of being a twin, including its negative aspects and twins’ need to be different to one another. But what happens when twins are separated, especially by death? The text examines death and bereavement of twins, including the parental attitudes to the surviving twin, the surviving twin’s guilt, coping, bereavement in childhood and adulthood. The book also covers the psychological effects in later life for children who lost their twin at birth. Throughout, the book is illustrated by the words of lone twins themselves. This book is available through the TTSGI website or through the distributor, International Specialized Book Services (<http://www.isbs.com/partnumber.asp?pnid=307963>).



“MY TWIN VANISHED DID YOURS?”

by Dr. Brent Babcock

A survivor himself of a vanished twin, Dr. Brent H. Babcock is sharing with the public for the first time his knowledge concerning the vanishing twin.

TWINLESS TWINS SUPPORT GROUP, INTERNATIONAL™

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Raymond Boyle – President (2019)

Dena Stitt – Vice President (2018)

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TWINLESS TIMES BY MAIL

We hope you are enjoying the full color electronic copy of the Twinless Times. However, if you are still interested in receiving the Twinless Times as a mailed hard copy, please send your name and address to Michelle Getchell at contact@twinlesstwins.org and she will mail it to you. Please note that the holiday issue will still be mailed to everyone.

WRITE FOR THE TWINLESS TIMES NEWSLETTER

All members are invited to submit articles for publication in the Twinless Times. The email subject should be “Twinless Times Submission.”

Submit to: twinlesstimes@yahoo.com

Stories about you and your twin are always welcome and rewarding to see in print. Our founder, Dr. Brandt, encouraged the act of writing as a means to healing.

We value articles about twin meetings, conferences, your healing journey, twin book reviews, poems, or words of wisdom. Photos can be emailed with your article in JPEG format. Please be sure to identify each person in your photos.

All articles should be sent as a Word document and we ask that you keep any article to 500 words or one page.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring Issue: February 10th

Summer Issue: May 12th

Fall Issue: August 11th

Winter Issue: October 27th

Submissions should be emailed to:
twinlesstimes@yahoo.com

**Twinless Times Co-Editors:
Lea Eriksen & Emily Heekin**

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