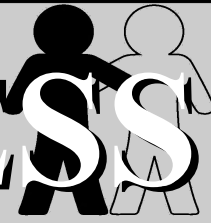


TWINLESS TIMES



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FALL 2012



President's Corner

Dear Twins,

The 2012 Conference in Dublin, Ohio has now come and gone. There is a lot of preparation and planning that goes into creating an annual conference. A conference would not be possible without the dedicated labour of the Conference Committee composed of Carolyn Shane, Sandra Brown, Dena Stitt and Michelle Getchell. Through the effective work of this committee, attendees moved seamlessly into the programs, breakout groups, etc. unaware of their work and planning.

We had a large number of first-timers this year, numbering almost 30. I believe many found that they were not alone in their feelings. The first-timers also had an opportunity of meeting each other at the opening of the conference. There were also a significant number of first-timers from the Minneapolis conference that returned this year.

This was the first year that the organization changed hotels. I think most of our twins were very pleased with the Embassy Suites. With the fabulous complimentary breakfast and ample room to enjoy it, twins comfortably gathered to enjoy each other and their breakfast.

Time seemed to be a precious commodity throughout the conference and when we had our annual business meeting, financial details were skimmed upon for that reason. On that basis, the Board has recommended that our financial position be shared with the membership. Our statement of income and expense for the period ending July 28, 2012 will be found inside this newsletter.

Time has not stood still. As I write, Michelle Getchell has just returned from Los Angeles, site of our 2013 Annual Conference, to review hotels for our important time together. The selection of hotel will begin the process once again of planning an annual conference.

For those who attended Dublin, I hope it was a memorable conference and I look forward to seeing many of you next July in L.A.

Ray Boyle, President ♥

VOLUNTEER!

If you are interested in volunteering for TTSGI, there are many opportunities available to you!

We are looking for volunteers who can assist their Regional Coordinators.

Please contact your Regional Coordinator using the website's "Contact Us" map in your area.

Go to: www.twinlesstwins.org ♥

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THE EMPTY CHAIR

“ANOTHER ‘FIRST’ ... THE FIRST TTSGI MEETING”

By Sandy Goad, twin to Jim

I would like to share with you a “first” that, for me, was a life-saver. That would be the first time that I went to a TT meeting. I went 3 months after my twin had died. I remember after I heard that there was such a group specifically for TT, I counted the days until that meeting. I desperately needed to be around other people who felt the same devastation as I did. I needed to see that there were others who weren’t going about their daily lives as if nothing had happened. I knew somewhere there must be other twins who could comprehend how hard it was to get out of bed in the morning and start another day without their twin.

However, even though I eagerly awaited that first meeting, when that day actually came I began to feel apprehension, for a number of reasons. I suddenly realized that I really had no idea of what to expect. Rather than camaraderie with these other twins, would I feel worse after I heard their own tragic stories?

When I pulled into the parking lot of the meeting place, I sat in my car for what seemed like forever. When I finally made the decision to go inside, I trudged up the sidewalk and saw a sign in the lobby telling me where we would be meeting. By entering through that door and going to that meeting, I was acknowledging that I now was eligible to be part of a group of people that I had hoped never to be a part of ...the reality was that I was now one of “them.”

I remember my heart pounding as I dragged myself into that meeting room. It wasn’t long before my fears were calmed. The twin who had greeted me at the door gave me a comforting hug. After hearing my story, she led me to another woman who had also lost her twin suddenly in an accident just as I had and I knew for the first time, I WAS NOT ALONE. All went around the circle and introduced themselves; some had been there as long as 10 years! Some were even laughing! I thought to myself, these people couldn’t have lost their twin for I knew that I would never laugh or find joy in living again. Maybe this was a hopeful sign. Maybe this meant that I too would survive the “worse loss” and that I too would find reasons to laugh and smile again.

It didn’t take me long to realize why there were still people who had been there for so many years. They were there to give support back to the newly twinless, showing them that there was still life after the death of a twin. I will be forever thankful for the compassionate twins who helped me to take those first wobbly steps down the grief road and continued the journey with me.

I left that meeting wishing I could go back the next day, and the day after that. I felt safe there; I felt understood there.

I am so glad that I took that chance that day back in 1999 and walked through those meeting room doors. I have been doing the same ever since, rarely missing one. I have met people there whom I cherish and know will be life-long friends. When I tell one of them that I am having a difficult day, they don’t chastise me, but rather understand the emotional roller-coaster ride of a grieving twin and offer me their support. When they say, “I know exactly how you feel” I know they truly do.

Years from now, I still plan to be there to greet the newly bereaved twin with an empathetic and reassuring hug, just as I had been welcomed years ago. I know that I will look into their eyes and see the same hollow look mirrored in my own when I was newly twinless. And I will be there to let them know that if I have survived the unthinkable, they will too. ♥

TWINLESS TWINS CONFERENCE JULY 2012

Linda Pountney's Experience

Rebuilding Your Foundation and Workshop Discussion

Grief can go silent – it will wait for you forever. After loss, the feeling part goes dead; in this frozen state we can still function for up to two years. Grief becomes a series of choices... do we get support or stay in the depression and anger? Early loss twins are born into grief, with “shadow memories” of their twin.

Your twin is a part of you, a thread in the fabric, to be woven every day.

Honor the pain! We have to find the joy. Laughter is wonderful. For a twin, laughter starts in-utero. Each of us grieves alone, but we are not alone, with the support of other twinless twins. We are living a legacy of love, not loss.

Birdhouse Project by Kris Munsch: The audience is actively engaged in creating a cardboard birdhouse, representing their journey through grief, including a foundation, walls, roof, and perch. The goal of the process is to explore our emotions, and put them in perspective, while expressing our strengths, weaknesses and desires by symbolically rebuilding our life. Writing inside the pieces of our birdhouse before construction, connects us to our foundation, goals, safety, trust, and positive affirmations. By identifying regrets and crisis events, we are encouraged to still respect and honor them.

Early on, we may want to leave our house because life becomes shattered after a devastating loss. The pieces don't fit anymore; we don't fit. Rebuild your life from the ground up. This includes your twin legacy of love, as part of

your foundation. Smell is processed on the right side of your brain, the creative part, as is music, and there is no time limit on remembering. Things in our foundation are never lost to us, although grief can cloud our view. Our job in grief work is to find the things in our foundation.

Live your grief and create “the new normal”. Grief is static – it ebbs and flows. One day we will wake up and remember that our twins lived, not just that they died. At some point the anger is not worth it anymore... it becomes neutral to us. Forgiveness plays a role. Our twins still have a relationship with us. They occupy emotional space within. Joan Woodward calls this “becoming with the power of two”.

You are the only one who knows everything about YOU. Trust yourself. Create your own future. You have choices in grief. Find a new path. Build your new life on your foundation. The only thing that closed was the casket. If a tough memory comes up, have a good memory in your pocket (not to replace it; “good after bad”).

During this exercise I was encouraged to bring my twin Paula into my house and move in. On my crisis wall sits my loss of twin communication. I honor this and know its truth. Being a twin is part of my foundation. Noticing how my twin closeness shines out in other relationships portrays a benefit from my twinship, making me smile. It is carried forward.

I learned that my twin is a huge part of my house – the foundation, roof, and many of the walls. By nurturing myself, examining and accepting the elements of my grief, I am able

to move forward to trust others by giving them a place to stand on the perch of my new house. Grief is not static; we are welcome to add words to our house (sticky notes work well). The birdhouse experience helps me to own my grief, my joy, and my life. As grief washes upon my shores once again, I can acknowledge its presence, and feel safe looking toward the future.

“Grief doesn't have to make sense to make it real... awareness is the victory”.

These words entered my life with perfect timing. A bell rang. The “why” of every thing isn't the issue. Awareness of what is happening is key. Efforts have recently consumed me to define an ending to my journey through loss, fearing there wasn't one. I determined it was too sad for my life to be affected for so long. Starting to write again, I probed analytically, coming up with no concrete answers (or too many to recount) as to why I was feeling grief again. I observed that being mindful of my experiences removes the hold they have over me.

Crisis (left wall) helps to define us... it is a part of us, to be remembered. Many people get stuck in guilt and regret (right wall). At times writing and recognizing helps the hurt to go away. The goal is to detoxify and neutralize it. It is not worth our energy anymore, better to focus on aspects of our twin's life and LIFE.

Who is it hardest to forgive? Self. Guilt and regret can be difficult. The value of guilt is that it changes how we live; we say, “I love you “ more often, and don't stay mad. Instead of saying goodbye, pick a star in the sky and say, “I love you”.

Affirmations (back wall) affirm each other and self, giving your house strength. Goals and aspirations (front wall) are what you see leaving the house. Short and long term goals are valuable. Meaning can come from loss, such as helping others. Ask yourself what you need from other twinless twins to attain your goals. How would happiness look? Does it include more crying or less? To be known for your joy is an example of a long-term goal. “You honor your twin by the way you live your life”.

Your house will stand without a roof, but not withstand the elements. The roof keeps out the elements and other people. Self-focus, taking care of your self and your needs, will provide shelter. One part of your roof is the memories in your twinship.

The perch is the most difficult part of your house. “Hope is not a destination”. The destination is really your journey. Keep it going with other twinless twins. Pass it on!



{Photos} - New twin Ami Hoyt Watanabe and her daughter Tori painted her birdhouse after she returned home, and shared it on our Facebook group. ♥

“MY TWIN AND I”

by Judy Harding Valdez, twin to Linda Ann

Last July marked 50 years that I have been a twinless twin. I remember the day she died like it was yesterday. It was the middle of July, 1962. We went to the lake for a Sunday afternoon outing and she drowned. The accident was totally preventable which just made it harder to accept. I was admitted to the hospital for near drowning and was discharged two days later, the day of her funeral. I remember sitting by my parents at the funeral home while



person after person came up to hug my parents and said “Well you still have Judy” like it was okay to lose one twin because they had another. I kept thinking “What do you have to say to me? What do I still have?” They did have something to say. It was “Now you have to be Judy and Linda both.” Many people said that. I kept thinking “I feel like half a person and I an expected to be two?” The math just wasn’t going to work. When we were getting ready for her funeral and I was putting on my dress that matched the one she was being buried in, all I could think was “We are dressing alike for the last time”. I wondered if anyone would notice. I guess they did.

We were a Christian family, raised to believe that God takes care of His own. When she died we really felt betrayed. Our religious beliefs were shaken to the core, and it took a long time to recover. When a child dies, especially in an accident, there is frequently the double

burden of grief and guilt. To say that my life has been difficult would be an understatement. I miss her every day. I think about the man she would have married, the children she would have had, and the person she would have been. I have to admit that I am envious of twins who had their twin until adulthood or old age. My twin missed so much dying so young. I lost so much losing her when we were so young. When a child dies, you lose the future. I felt like I had lost my future as well.

After she died I wanted to find out about other people who had suffered a loss like mine. I read books about wives who had lost husbands, husbands who had lost wives, children who had lost parents and parents who had lost children. I read about people who had died young and families that had suffered a multiple loss - like in disasters, etc. I read a book by a man who had lost his wife and all four children in a forest fire. What I didn’t read was books about twins who had lost their twin because there was nothing to read. There were no support groups, no grief counselors, nothing designed to help people

like me and not much to help any grieving person. Grief counseling and support groups have evolved over the past forty years.

I learned about TTSGI quite by accident some 38 years after her death. My mother and I were watching a documentary on twins on public television. The show focused on the types of twins, famous twins, conjoined twins, separated twins, and super twins. At the end they talked about twin loss and showed a man walking alone looking down at the road. That man was Dr. Brandt. He was interviewed and talked about the support group he had started for twins (and other multiples) who had lost their twin. He gave the name of the organization and website. I looked it up and wrote him the next day. He

(Continued on page 5)

(MY TWIN AND I—Continued from page 4)

answered, sent me literature, and asked for my twin's name, her age, date and cause of death and wanted a picture. I sent all of the things he asked for, joined TTSGI, started receiving the newsletter and literature, and made plans to attend a conference. I couldn't go for a few years because I was taking care of my mother who had dementia and couldn't be left alone. I attended a regional meeting in Houston and the annual conference a couple of years later when it was in San Francisco. I didn't know that Dr. Brandt had terminal cancer until after he died. I really wanted to meet him. I regret that this organization existed for so many years before I found it. I could have known Dr. Brandt personally. TTSGI has helped me so much in understanding twin bonding, and the grief that twins suffer. It was helpful to finally have my feelings validated. For all of my life alone I have felt like part of me is gone. I have felt that my grief was different because my relationship was different. I felt that I was never able to make people understand my loss so I quit trying. Trying to explain the loss of a twin to a non-twin is like trying to explain a sunset to a blind person. Now I know other twinless twins, and that they have the same feelings of loss. It has been so helpful to hear how other twins cope with their loss and the things they do to remember their twin.

I remember my twin by donating to my church and to organizations in her memory. I was a CPR instructor for many years and silently dedicated my classes to her. I always emphasized accident prevention, especially drowning prevention in my CPR classes. Drowning was and still is the leading cause of accidental death for children under the age of five and one of the leading causes of death for all children. I have tried to make my life meaningful and accomplish things we both wanted to do. I still talk about my twin to those interested in hearing our story. I now have all of the books on twin loss, some fifty years after the fact. I just finished reading Who Moved the Sun? I read the Twinless Times as soon as I receive it. I find the stories helpful and encouraging. I hope to attend another conference soon. It seems like every year something comes up to prevent me from attending. I want to see the people I have met at the conferences I have attended and meet new twinless twins.

This year the anniversary of her death was on a Sunday, the same day of the week that she died. I spent the day reflecting on my half century as a twinless twin and remembering two lives once lived: my sister's short life and my life as her identical twin. ♥



THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL COORDINATORS

We at TTSGI would like to thank and acknowledge three wonderfully dedicated Regional Coordinators who are leaving us. Ron Cawthron, Doris Giroux and Kim Hafner have all with enthusiasm wholly committed themselves for a term of three years to help twinless twins in their area. Ron in the region of Australia, Doris in Canada and Kim in the Northeast comprising of New Jersey and New York. Most members are unaware of the hard work that encompasses being an RC: take calls night and day from newly grieving twins who have lost their twins and counsel them, send materials out to new members, schedule meetings two or three times a year for groups, meet individual twinless twins at home or a restaurant, attend a conference, etc. They have volunteered their time and efforts to forward the cause of TTSGI and mentor those new tt's and encourage them to become members. We thank you and give you all a big applause for a job well done!!

Dawn Barnett

Former Board Member and RC ♥

FINANCIAL REPORT

By Ray Boyle, President of TTSGI

At our recent annual conference in Dublin, Ohio, our members felt that they would appreciate seeing our statement of income and expenses. I have already sent the report to those conference attendees. The Board feels it is important to share this information with our full membership.

On the next page is the year-to-date July 28, 2012 statement of income and expense. For comparative perspective, presented alongside are the 2012 Plan, 2011 and 2010 actual results. These comparatives are for the fiscal year.

In our spring issue, I will ensure that our full year audited results are included. I believe our twins will appreciate and realize that our organization needs our continuing financial support.

To bring insight into our year-to-date results, some explanations are integral.

Our main sources of revenue are membership renewals, conference registration, conference events (auctions, raffles, memorial walk, sales, etc) and individual donations.

Our main sources of expenses are conference costs, executive director and professional fees.

Our current cash balance is \$19,737. Additionally, we have IBM shares which were donated to TTSGI with a mark to market value of \$9,034.

This is currently a healthy balance which should ensure the core viability of TTSGI for a number of months to come. However, there are reasons why we currently have this balance, some which are not presented in this financial statement:

Each Regional Coordinator has an annual budget of \$1,200. Most RC's use very little from this budget, allowing a significant positive variance (currently \$9,731).

For fiscal year 2012, the Board had approved an amount to "modernize" our outdated website. Through

good fortune and the time and talent of two of our twins, Matt Vierling and Becky Sehenuk, our new website was donated to the organization. The Board felt that many twins find us through our website necessitating a "current presentation" which all would find welcoming.

Our annual membership fees of \$50 are currently at \$5,965. This clearly is insufficient to run this organization.

The organization relies upon the generosity of our "angels". Some of our twins have generously donated over the years allowing for the continuance of TTSGI. It wasn't very long ago (2007), when the organization was unsure if it would be able to continue due to the near depletion of our funds. As we all know, positive cash flow allows organizations to continue.

Conference events. This can be a volatile amount. Sources are the live auction, silent auction, raffles, sales and the memorial walk. This amount can fluctuate wildly from year to year.

Conference registration/costs. The goal is to break even. In prior years, depending upon the host hotel, these costs could be quite high. The result was conference registrations did not cover the hotel/speaker' costs. In 2012, we successfully had a positive spread of higher registration over costs.

With the exception of our Executive Director, we are an organization of volunteers. I do believe that without our Michelle, this organization could not exist and be poised to "thrive". In a future report, I shall detail the essential duties of our Executive Director.

It is important to appreciate that often times our organization hangs on by a thread. As it currently stands, through the generosity of all, we can continue to respond to our twins who find us in their most vulnerable state. ♥

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

TTSGI

Statement of Income and Expense

Year-To-Date July 28, 2012

		2012		2012		2011		2010	
		Year-to-date (Jul 28)		Budget (Full Year)		(Full Year)		(Full Year)	
Income									
	Membership		5,965		10,000		8,759		9,434
	Conference Registration		14,992		18,000		15,288		22,336
	Conference Assistance		300				850		775
	Contributions		12,780		18,000		22,561		18,403
	Interest		0						
	Books and Postage		608		1,200		823		1,087
	Online Sales		186		500		186		381
	Conference Events		<u>12,642</u>		<u>8,000</u>		<u>4,165</u>		<u>9,561</u>
			47,473		55,700		52,632		61,978
Expenses									
Office	Executive Director		9,600		19,200		12,100		14,502
	Assistant		1,372		2,400		1,300		2,200
	Postage		1,833		1,000		1,149		3,183
	Printing		2,044		1,200		1,078		2,061
	Office Supplies		662		600		531		1,810
	Professional Fees		3,455		4,500		7,148		1,400
	Telephone		255		1,000		840		1,011
	Bank Charges		411		900		946		535
	Petty Cash		168		300		708		724
	Refunds						2,025		238
	Internet		254		1,000		738		80
	Inventory				1,000		1,337		
	Misc		<u>110</u>	20,166	<u>1,000</u>	34,100	<u>241</u>	30,140	<u>1,428</u>
									29,170
Program	Regional Directors		2,269		12,000		2,850		1,218
	Authors and Books				500				
	Conference		10,448		18,000		18,706		14,655
	Website		78		1,000		22		120
	Outside Services		350		1,000		1,185		494
	Speakers		<u>2,791</u>	15,935	<u>2,000</u>	34,500		22,762	
									16,487
Administration	Board Meals				1,000		24		657
	Board Meeting				500		466		892
	Insurance				1,500				3,510
	Travel		<u>355</u>	355	<u>1,500</u>	4,500	<u>1,229</u>	1,720	<u>5,362</u>
									10,422
Total Expenses			36,456		73,100		54,622		56,079
Net Gain/(Loss)			<u>11,018</u>		<u>(17,400)</u>		<u>(1,991)</u>		<u>5,899</u>
Cash and Equities									
	Bank balance as at July 28, 2012				18,737				
	IBM Shares (rec'd as a donation) market value as of July 27, 2012				<u>9,034</u>				
					<u>\$27,771</u>				

2012 Memory Walk Donations

Betsy Miller, in memory of her twin Meg and in memory of Robin Gibb of the Bee Gees
Cathleen Dunn, in memory of her twin Christine Wheeler Garner
Ruth Osterweis Selig, in memory of her twin Rollyn Osterweis Krichbaum
Pamela Fender, in memory of her twin brother Steve Pepper
Virginia Holleman, in memory of her twin Betsy Katz
Carolyn Reed, in memory of her twin Carol Sgarzi
Judy Wilson, in memory of her twin Jane
Phyllis Ashliman, in memory of her twin brother Phil
Sandy Goad, in memory of her twin brother Jim
Gale Erlewine, in memory of his twin Dale Erlewine
Linda Burke, in memory of her twin Lee
Eileen Jensen, in memory of her twin Elaine
Terry Lewis-Foor, in memory of her twin Sherry Lewis
Jean Benner, in memory of her twin Jane
Carolyn Shane, in memory of her twin Cary
Vikki Huntwork, in memory of her twin Valerie Felton
Lillie Terry, in memory of Valerie Felton
Julia Nellett OP, in memory of her twin Dominica (Jennie) Nellett OP
Grand Rapids Dominicans, in memory of Dominica (Jennie) Nellett OP
ExxonMobil Foundation – matching grant from Margaret & Paul Daffin
EOG Resources – matching grant from Elizabeth & Joe Ivers

The following donors gave in honor of Margaret Daffin, in memory of her twin, Josie Wilson:

Paul & Margaret Daffin	Sharon Michaels
Tanya Turner	Michael Ameen, Jr.
Albert & Carol Knowlton	Elizabeth & Joe Ivers
Dr. Mark & Rajada Fleming	Jacqueline Fetzer
Brandon Biss	Christine & Kevin Brown
Wynette & Ken Stuntz	Jane Borst
Dr. Martin & Susan Nusynowitz	Eleanor & Ken Jicha
Phuong Vuong	Adriana Boretti & Pedro Jaldin
Susan & Mike Klaveness	Kathleen Reid
Sandra & Glenn Peters	Amelia & Ray Tobin
Patrick Walsh	Marion & Dick Dare
Afram Sawma	Angela McCarthy
Janeil Bernard	Michelle Berg
Marion & Gary Geer	Howard Molofsky
Dr. Susan Williams	Gloria & Jerry Fastrup

The following donors gave in honor of Kevin Mullen, in memory of his twin Brian Mullen and Thomas Joyce, twin to Sean Joyce:

Sue Mullen	Sharon Little
Joan Finlay	Shannon Baldwin
Matt Mullen	Terri Zink
Donna Blackburn	Deb Goetz
Renea Finlay	Kevin Mullen ♥

2012 MEMORY WALK, DUBLIN, OHIO

Approximately 80 twinless twins, family members and friends walked in warm weather at a nearby park from the hotel on Saturday afternoon in the 4th Memory Walk held by TTSGI. This walk was initiated by Sandy Goad in 2008 in Toronto and has become a favorite ever since. We all donned our bright green TTSGI tee-shirts, took the school bus and walked the one mile around the park in memory of our twins. As a finale to the event, we wrote messages to our twins on colored balloons and then released them into the air and

watched as they climbed and climbed into the blue sky. Sandy Goad hosted the balloon release where music and words were heard and many tears were shed. Each year, the memory walk is held as a fundraiser for TTSGI and this year we raised approximately \$8,000! Thank you to all who walked and supported this wonderful event.

Margaret Daffin, Host of the 2012 Memory Walk ♥

2012 TTSGI CONFERENCE, COLUMBUS, OHIO

RAFFLE AND AUCTION DONATIONS

Phyllis Ashliman	Joan Garcia	Jane Malcolm	Susan Schneider
Dawn Barnett	Michelle Getchell	Stacey McMahon	Carolyn Shane
Jean Benner	Jacquie Goldman	Mary R Morgan	Joy Shiller
Mary George Beyer	Paul Heiden	Kevin Mullen	Marcella & Ron Slawson
Ray Boyle	Vikki Huntwork	Alfredo Ojeda	Emily Slosberg
Dana Bridges	Eileen Jensen	Bob Osterholt	Beverley Smyk
Sandra Brown	Kevin Johnson	Brent Parker	Dena Stitt
Margaret Daffin	David Jones	Alia Pfeiffer	Tina Takach
Paul Daffin	Mary Lou Krebsbach	Linda Pountney	Camille Wissmann
Cathy Dunn	Venice Lacy	Shyam Rai	
Lea Eriksen	Barb Leavy	Pamela Roberts	
Susan Eriksen	Terry Lewis-Foor	John Rohrer	

Thank you to all who participated in the raffle and silent/live auctions at the 2012 Columbus Twinless Twins Conference. Your generosity and willingness to give is so appreciated.

If your name is not listed above, we apologize and offer our heartfelt thanks. ♥

TTSGI “ANGEL AWARDS”

By Kevin Johnson



Matt Vierling and Becky Sehenuk
2012 Angel Awards Recipients

The 2012 Angel Awards were presented to **Matt Vierling**, twin to Mark, and **Becky Sehenuk**, twin to Jenny, for their dedication and hard work in redesigning of the TTSGI website.

Originally, from Los Angeles, California, Matt currently resides in Houston, Texas. Matt came to his first conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2011 and willingly contributed his computer knowledge and skills to help develop a website that is organized and easy to navigate.

Becky Sehenuk, also from the Los Angeles area works in graphic design. She too attended the conference for the first time in Minnesota and has graciously volunteered her time and talents in design and organization of the website. During the 2012 Columbus conference Becky willingly helped out as needed and became the “token” photographer.

It is with great pride and deep appreciation that we honor them for their skill, knowledge, and desire to present a website that is user friendly to all.

CONGRATULATIONS to Matt and Becky - this year’s **Angel Award** recipients! ♥

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS SINCE SPRING 2012

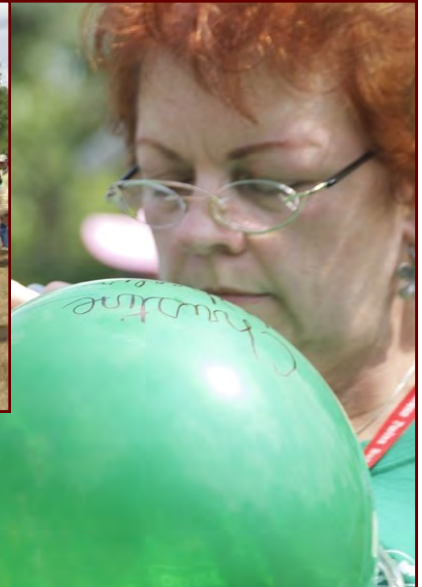


Mary George Beyer – in memory of her twin Georgia Mae
Raymond Boyle – monthly pledge and conference assistance in memory of James Joseph (Jimmy)
Sandra Brown – conference assistance in memory of her twin Sammy
Margaret Daffin – quarterly pledge and donation in memory of her twin Josie
EOG Resources Inc. – matching gift – Elizabeth Ivers
ExxonMobil Foundation – for volunteer hours and matching grants by
Margaret Daffin in memory of her twin Josie Wilson
Carol Finley
Joan Garcia – in memory of her twin Jane DeLaCruz
Goodsearch – website search engine
Emily Gotsch – for Tim Reichel
Renie (James) Hallford - donation to be used at Board's discretion
Celia Homer – donation for services rendered for Summer 2012 newsletter
IGive.com – money earned from online searches
Elizabeth & Joe Ivers – general fund, in honor of Paul & Margaret Daffin
Madleen Katkauskas – in memory of both Kathleens
Venice Lacy – World Run Day Donation in Honor of Toni Lacy
June Loertscher - Memorial to Jeanette twin to June
Renee Manger – in memory of her twin Stephen
Elizabeth (Betsy) Miller – in memory of her twin Meg - I cannot believe it has been 10 years and to Robin Gibb,
who did not have to live through the 10th anniversary of the loss of his twin, Maurice
Mary R. Morgan – general support in memory of her twin Michael
Sheri Parham
Brent Parker
Jennifer Paschke – in honor and memory of Carla Paschke
Julia Ramey – monthly pledge for general fund
John Roberts Motor Works Company
Joan Sandherr – in memory of her twin Jean Sandherr
Ruth Osterweis Selig – gift of stock in memory of Rollyn Osterweis Krichbaum
Howard & Janet Shainheit – in memory of Rebecca Clark
Carolyn Shane – general fund – in memory of Cary and Michaela
Beverly Smyk – monthly pledge and conference assistance in memory of her twin Donna
Margaret Spicer – in memory of her twin Barbara
Dena Stitt – donation for conference speaker and travel expenses
Twinless Twin – in memory of her twin Lee Summerell
Kathy Walczak – in honor of her son Marc Reichel, twin to Tim
Judy Wilson – general fund – in memory of her twin Jane
Camille Wissmann – in memory of her twin Carmen
Joyce Woodman



We apologize if we have missed your name in this listing.
Please let us know and we will recognize you in our Spring 2013 newsletter.
Contact Margaret Daffin at medaffin@aol.com ♥

TWINLESS TWINS SUPPORT GROUP INTERNATIONAL
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JULY 12—15, 2012
DUBLIN, OHIO



A Breath Away



How do you explain a void so deep
it's blacker than any night
I think of you first thing each morning
but your absence is felt more
in the profound quiet of darkness
I haven't figured out how to be one person
and for now...no one seems to have the answer
I wait....

My phone will forever remain silent
our voices muted...all secrets lost
Sometimes when I'm looking in the mirror
I can almost feel you behind me
To know I will never hear your laughter again
will be my eternal sadness
Our brother isn't the same
even though he pretends otherwise
To lose a Mother twice
is a heavy burden
But just so you know
he was a valiant protector
I'm trying so hard to be happy
but half of me is gone
However, I will hold on to the promise
that on our final walk with God
Our souls will meet again
for eternity....
And God is never wrong

May 26, 2011

For you Suz, twin to Victoria Louise Oatis

CONFERENCE 2012 PICS



CONFERENCE 2012 PICS



I AM A TWINLESS TWIN

by Diane Fisher

I turned to *writing therapy* as an outlet to vent and find closure after my twin brother disowned me and I wrote a memoir called “Once Upon a Time.....*Never Comes Again.*” Although it did help for a while, I still felt that I needed therapy. While in therapy, my therapist informed me that she had been a twinless twin who lost her twin at a very young age. I owe it to her for leading me in the direction of finding the twinless twin website (www.twinlesstwins.org). From there, my first contact was Kim Hafner, Regional Coordinator. Kim’s passion as a twinless twin in helping others gave me the encouragement I needed to be part of the group.

I remember telling Kim that “*maybe I will not fit in with the group. After all, everyone in the group has lost their twin in death and my story was different. My twin disowned me.....does that still make me a twinless twin?*” She was right on point when she answered “*Diane, for you it’s even harder because you live every day in hope that your twin brother will call or come back to you. For the twinless twins that lost their twin in death, for them it’s final.*”

My first meeting with the twinless twins was held in the home of Lorraine Arcella in Queens, NY, who opened her home and heart to all of us. I walked in knowing *no one* but within a very short time I came to feel bonded with everyone in the room. It was an instantaneous connection with these new strangers in my life. We all needed a place to vent and tell our story. We all searched for healing. We all shared something that most people who are not twins fail to understand. Twins have a bond for life, even in death, even in disownment. Our loss is real and all that we are left with is a shadow of an image that was once half of us.

I miss my twin brother deeply and look for him wherever I go. If the phone rings, I live in hope that it will be him. If the doorbell rings, I run to it thinking it will be him. I learned that if I am ever asked if I have any siblings, it’s okay to say “*I am a twinless twin.*”

I may not ever escape from the agony of being disowned by my twin, but I am no longer imprisoned in that hell hole of feeling that I am all alone.....thanks to the support of my newly founded Twinless Twins. ♥

NORTHEAST REGIONAL MEETING



The photo was taken by Bob Arcella.

In the photo L-R bottom row: Maria Lucian, Diane Fisher, Mona Kidd

Second Row: Steve Bergman, Renee Anzelone

Third Row: Jacquie Goldman, Roberta Margolin, Lorraine Arcella, Bella Siegel

Top Row: Kim Hafner

Not pictured (but so important anyway!): partners and spouses: Bob Arcella, Sam Goldman, Reggie Johnson ♥

A VISIT TO STANBROOK ABBEY, NORTH YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

By Janet M. Baird

It isn't every day you have the chance to visit a monastery — let alone an eco friendly monastery, perched on the top of Sutton bank, near Thirsk, in North Yorkshire, England. It was the Harrogate lone twin group's day out and instead of our usual June meeting we had been invited by Sister Julian, a lone twin who is a sister at Stanbrook Abbey.

Two car loads of us left Harrogate after meeting briefly at the Hospice while others made their way there from as far as Newcastle. The Harrogate convoy steamed (literally) up the one in three gradients to the top of Sutton bank and eventually (ok, so I led us astray...) we turned into the bumpy lane leading to Stanbrook Abbey. The sisters in the Benedictine community moved there three years ago from their monastery in Worcestershire. The new monastery is very eco friendly, with a sedum roof, solar panels, water harvesting and a wood chip boiler. More about that later....

Sister Julian came wind milling down the path to greet us with hugs+ and made us so welcome. We went through the air conditioned reception area to the parlour, where we had bone china mugs of tea and chocolate paradise biscuits.

There was time for some brief introductions before we walked outside round to the chapter house for a short service at 12.30 pm. As we stood with the sisters and listened to their beautiful singing we could see the view from the windows — the views from the monastery across the Vale of York are stunning. It literally feels like you are on the roof of the world. Sister Julian had told us we were above the snow line — they had two really hard winters there when they first came to Yorkshire. The service or office at 12.30 was short but moving. The sisters hold six services a day — as did the original monks at Fountains and Byland Abbey, nearby. The fields around the monastery are dotted with grazing sheep. The sisters have adopted two orphan lambs which are bottle fed — named suitably after two saints, of course — Catherine and Gertrude.

Then it was time for our picnic. We piled up our plates with food in the parlour and then ventured hopefully outside. Sister Julian joined us, which was so lovely. All too soon a dark cloud with our name on it loomed up— although it only seemed to rain on one side of the picnic, much to our amusement. We had to retreat indoors where we continued our discussions and told our

stories. We all laughed so much as Sister Julian had so many hilarious stories to tell us about life as a sister. The Abbess came into welcome us and I think we helped to show her what the lone twin movement is all about and why it is so important to us. After she left we carried on with our discussions — maybe it was the peaceful surroundings or the presence of Sister Julian, but our words seemed so meaningful as we shared our feelings about what it really feels like to be a lone twin.

Sister Julian then took us around the monastery to the wood chip boiler, down some steps in the cellars of the monastery. The sisters look after all the installations themselves and are very techie and clued up. After checking no lone twins had been left down in the cellar — and that all the vital switches were still on... we were shown around some more of the monastery, which was such a privilege. Even though the building is very new, it has a special peaceful feeling — the role of Stanbrook is to console (the Abbey motto is 'Consolamini — be consoled.)

We certainly felt that as we made our way back to our parked cars for the way home. We left with much waving and promises to meet again. It seemed symbolic that the heavens should open up and the A19 became flooded as a wave of water as big as the Red Sea washed across from the other carriageway. We just made it through and eventually made it back to Harrogate around 5pm. It had been a very special day out and one I am sure we will all remember for a long time. Our special thanks to Sister Julian for making it happen and for letting us have a glimpse of her life. ♥



TWIN GATHERING IN ST. CATHERINES, ON



Hi, what a great feeling to be all reunited with twin friends again and meeting new ones! The Canadian twinless twins had another gathering in St. Catherines, Ontario on May 26th. We all met at Linhaven, which is a Long Term Care Home where we were able to use their facilities and beautiful grounds for our event. We started out with a documentary that was written by a twinless twin named Anna Van de Wee from Belgium, whom we had met from one of our previous gatherings in Barrie a few years ago. She was visiting in the area looking for other twinless twins for her documentary. It had been recently aired on TV. Since one of the twins interviewed lived in St. Catherines, I decided to have the gathering in his home town. Graeme was one of the main twins being interviewed along with his parents. After the film, we mingled a little before the food arrived. The rest of the day, twins were meeting other twins, sharing stories as well as exchanging contact info. It was a great day for all and I have to thank Darlene Moore for helping me so much with organizing this event. She also managed to help place an article in the local paper where we had a couple of walk-ins attend.

Among the twinless twins who attended were: Maureen, Graeme, Heather, Jackie, Pamela, another Heather, Mary, Karen, Darlene, Wendy, Patricia, Beverley, Ray and myself.

Thanks to all the twins and family members and friends who have attended. Your presence made the day worthwhile. For the ones who couldn't attend, I hope to see you one day at another gathering. Until next time.....

Doris, *twin to Dianne*
Canadian Regional Coordinator for TTSGI ♥

OHIO 2012

By Janet M. Baird

I knew it was going to be a great conference from the minute I arrived at the Embassy Suites in Columbus. As I gazed up eight balconied floors rising up from the impressive atrium-with fountains- it was all looking good. When I heard about the complimentary hot breakfast - and the manager's reception complete with a free drink and snacks- it got even better.

I had a pleasant couple of days getting over my jet lag after my flight from the UK. Susan Schneider, who lives in Columbus, whizzed me around in her super red car to the local eating places and we also spent a morning at the conservatory gardens, butterfly watching.

The next morning the RCs met and I had a chance to listen to a live broadcast of an interview with Mary R. Morgan and Susan Schneider on the radio. There was a big article in the local paper on the conference, which attracted a number of 'walk ins.' There were 26 new twins at the conference. A new buddy system had been put in place so that the new twins could have a guide to show them around the sessions etc. and take care of them.

The conference began on Friday morning as always — with a moving Inspirations session led by Sandy Goad. The room was packed and we all stared at the candle labeled 'Hope' in the centre of the circle. Then we met up at the breakfast table with some twins that most of us hadn't seen for a year. It seemed strange but soon we had caught up on all the news.

Darcie Sims, who many might remember from last year, did the keynote speech. Last year was so good — but this year was even better as she showed us how to put together a tool box so we could build a firm foundation for our recovery and healing from losing our twin. The task was to literally build a bird house. Each of us was given a paper pop up bird house to make. We had special messages to write on the base, sides and roof. For example, one of the walls was regrets and guilt about losing our twin. It was amazing how many emotions were released as we built our bird houses and Darcie

asked for some twins to share what they had written down. We all ended up with a complete bird box- although some of the less craft- enabled people had to ask neighbours for help! After Darcie's session I opted for Mary Morgan's session on identity and focus — as I wanted to work more on this area. The beauty of the Twinless Twins conference is it works on any level you want to work at. You can just come to observe and listen, or share — or take your own journey a stage further.

Saturday started with Inspirations again and the music Sandy played — “You Raise Me Up” — moved me to tears. I felt tired and emotional just from being with all the twins- a feeling I recognised in other twins- but we agreed it was expected! The groups that morning were particularly good and I would happily have gone to either Darcie's session on the continuation of



Janet Baird and Mary George

rebuilding a foundation- or Mary's on moving forward after we have lost our twin. Mary gave us some questions to think about- for example how did we manage to function right away- what helped us? Who and what had helped us to move forward? Of course we were all at different stages but the replies shared were just so valuable and deep.

(Continued on page 18)

(OHIO 2012—Continued from page 17)

The twin walk was at 2.30 pm. A yellow school bus took us to a nearby trail and we walked around a mile past a lake, bearing the 2012 conference banner, signed by every twin there. It was a moving experience — and very hot! The balloon release was equally moving. We wrote messages to our twins on the balloons with Sharpies and then craned our necks as the balloons soared high up into the sky. Sandy played some music and Alia read the quote from Jack London — the one her twin loved. (It was in the summer newsletter.) I felt a massive burst of grief but also of union and felt so moved to be there, with all the twins around me. I also wrote a message for Janet, Jennifer Rudd's twin- as Jennifer couldn't be at the conference.

The banquet was excellent and the Angel Awards seemed extra special this year as they were awarded to Becky and Matt for their service to the new website — and many other areas too. The auction next — fast, furious and fun! It also raised lots of money and just to see Dave Jones in action as the auctioneer was a treat in itself.

The conference, to me anyway, is a reason to keep going, to keep me on my journey. As is it now my third conference I find the positive changes in other twins are evidence of the magic of the Twinless Twins organisation and especially the conference. There is a change year to year but also a visual change is apparent in the new twins. Most of them were smiling, relaxed and interacting with other twins by Saturday evening at the banquet! ♥

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL MEETING

LINDA POUNTNEY, ACTING REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Thirteen twins and ten other friends and family members attended the June gathering of Twinless Twins which was held in the parish hall of the First Parish Congregational Church in York, Maine. It was amazing that given such terrible weather, so many came!

Everyone shared about their lives and their great loss. The beautiful and delicious cake Garry Rayno and his wife, Carolyn, brought summed up the reason for our gathering on such a stormy day: *Always a Twin*.

Host Caryl McIntire Edwards, *twin to Bobby* ♥



NOTES AND NOTABLES ...



Peter Kroneman, twin to *Eric*, will be married to **Trynda Oberg** on September 15, 2012 at Evangel United Methodist Church in Rochester Mn. Peter served as RC twice and has been an active member of TTSGI. We congratulate him on his marriage and wish him and his bride, Trynda, much happiness for their future. ♥

TWIN LOSS THROUGH ADOPTION

A twin recently wrote looking for a connection with any other twin who has lost a twin through adoption, as opposed to death, and the day-to-day struggles that relate to this.

If any of our members can help or know of a twin that can help, please contact the following:

Joan Angelis
North Central Regional Coordinator
sea.angel@mchsi.com
612-741-6583 ♥

CANADIAN RC SAYS, “FAREWELL...”

Hi,

With sad regrets I will be stepping down as Regional for Canada. It was a great experience for me which I truly enjoyed meeting, helping, as well as spending quality time with twins. Taking this position has helped me tremendously in understanding my position as a twinless twin. In helping others, I felt truly rewarded to be able to help them in a position that I remember how that felt when I was in the same state. I do have to thank all of you in helping me through this. It was truly an honour to be a Regional. It wasn't a position for me, it was an aide.

This past year was a huge experience for me that I really needed to attend the conference because of things opening from the past. I did manage to spend some time with twins who were available for me, which helped me. Unfortunately, I could not find the time off to attend the National Conference. I do intend on going next year in L.A. I have never been there!

But that is not the reason I am stepping down. Recently I had a gathering in May and one of the other twins had helped me plan this event. She was an answer to my prayers and continued to support the twin connection thereafter. You may have heard about her through Facebook as well as chat lines. Her name is Darlene Moore and lives here in Innisfil (near Barrie, ON). I have asked her to take over the position as Regional Coordinator for Canada. She has accepted and I will begin to exchange information to her. She will not be doing this alone, I guarantee this. I, as well as others will be there to support her in any way, because frankly, Canada is far too large for one person!! You will not be disappointed in Darlene.

I will send the info to Michelle about Darlene. She is a member and has been one for about 3 years now.

Take care twin friends!

Doris, twin to *Dianne*
twintodi@hotmail.com
905-584-6450 ♥

DARLENE MOORE

NEW REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR CANADA

My name is Darlene Moore and I am 51 years of age. I am a twinless twin. I have very recently been appointed Regional Coordinator for Canada for which I feel very honoured. For those who do not know me, I would like to share my story.



On March 23, 2004, my twin brother, David was diagnosed with cancer. I lost my best friend, protector and the one who gave me unconditional love on April 28, 2008. Part of me died that day and I began to feel very alone in my grief. I sank into a deep depression and it wasn't until I was on a second leave of absence from work in 2010, that my boyfriend suggested I search for others who had also lost a twin. I could not believe that I had not even put that together. Instantly I found the Twinless Twin International Support Group and my real healing began. I only this year found a counsellor (sorry for the Canadian spelling), and my third one, who truly wanted to understand this particular loss. She read my journal, read *Living Without Your Twin* and even stated that she didn't know where I would be at in my grief had I not found other twinless twins. True validation like I was not receiving anywhere else no matter how much I tried to relate it to singletons; including close friends and family; no one else understood.

Very soon after finding the website, I was invited to a gathering where there were five other twinless twins

waiting outside on the doorstep to greet me with open arms and say, "we're so glad you've come Darlene...come on in and tell us all about your twin, David". Those were words I hadn't heard in a very long time. The connection was instant and I now have twinless twin friends who I can talk to and who understand what I am feeling. I feel they are my new twin, where I receive unconditional love like nowhere else.

It has been a very difficult and long journey to where I now feel able to continue with my new twinless life, but more importantly I have learned that "once a twin, always a twin" and that what I need, for me, is to continue sharing my twin like I always had. I am now able to feel grateful for the 47 years I was able to spend with him through others' stories, and through those who never were able to live those memories, I now relive those memories often and smile through them. I can now laugh and smile and not feel guilty for living my life like I promised him I would and that I am okay. Now I only look forward to helping any other twinless twins feeling so very alone in their grief and misunderstood by those around them. The motto from the Twinless Twin Organization rings true "healing by helping others". We are there for each other doing whatever we can to help each other through a difficult journey and I never forget where I was when I lost my twin. I only hope that I can be as supportive as those who were and are there for me in those times I need them most.

Twin hugs,

Darlene, Twin to David 1961-2008
Regional Coordinator, CANADA
email: sf49errice@rogers.com
Phone: (705) 294-0060

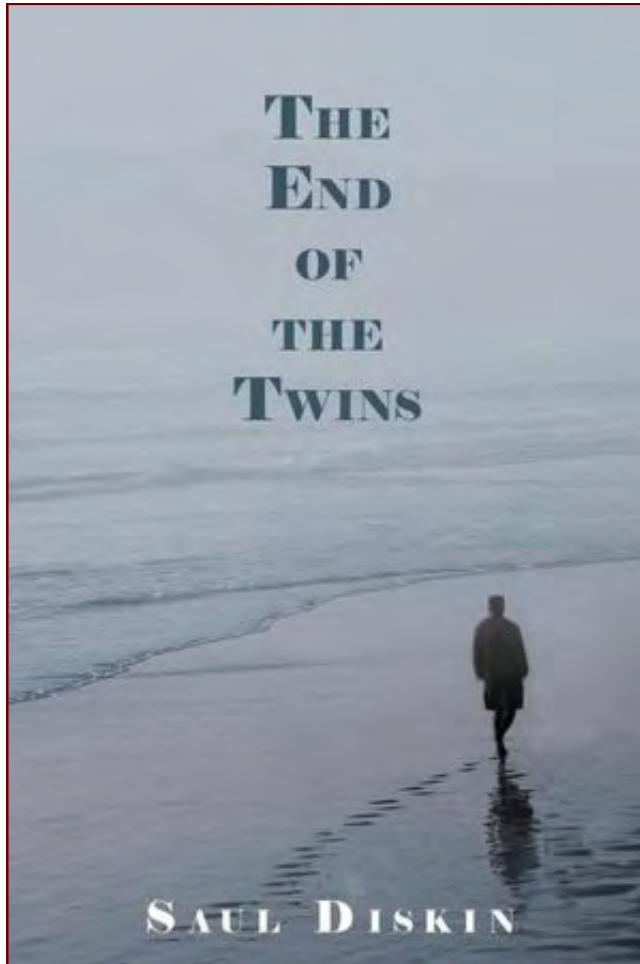
***Editor's Note:** The Board of Directors would like to welcome Darlene Moore as the new Regional Coordinator for Canada and thank her for assuming this position.*



THE END OF THE TWINS: A MEMOIR OF LOSING A BROTHER

BY SAUL DISKIN

Reviewed by Dawn Barnett



came to a new land of prosperity. After the third grade they started forming separate friendships. While Saul grew up on the East Coast and later moved to California, settling in Arizona and had a career in real estate investments, Marty stayed on the East Coast, traveled to Mexico and Latin America and became an expert in Latin American studies, teaching in college and became an advocate on the complex problems of Central America. At age 36 Marty was diagnosed with leukemia, 22 years later going through a bone marrow transplant with his twin, Saul, being the perfect match, his donor. In much medical detail Saul tells of Marty's several-year struggle trying to get ready for the transplant that would either cure him of the cancer or help him live longer.

A story of true twinship and what it means to a twin survivor to be left behind. The terrible loneliness and empty feeling that ensues after the loss of a twin.

You can order *The End of the Twins: a Memoir of Losing a Brother* at Amazon.com for \$10.70 (hardback) or directly from the publisher at www.authorhouse.com

Dawn Barnett
Twinless Times Book Reviewer ♥

Saul Diskin has captured twinship in real life and death events in *The End of the Twins: a Memoir of Losing a Brother*. "Marty and I did virtually everything together. We arose in beds separated by two feet, dressed exactly alike and ate breakfast together, complaining with equal fervor about the mandatory dose of cod liver. We went to the same school, the same classroom. After school we came home together and either played with the same friends on the street or read books together, lying on our bellies on the floor next to each other."

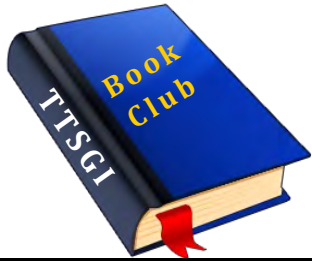
The book spells out in detail the twins' growing up in Brooklyn, NY, whose parents were immigrants who

SAVE THE DATE:

TWINLESS TWINS CONFERENCE

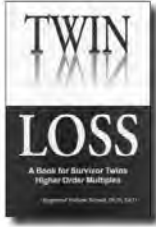
JULY 18-21, 2013

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE for the 2013 Twinless Twins Conference to be held July 18-21 in Los Angeles at a hotel near to the airport - more information to follow soon. ♥



RECOMMENDED TWIN BOOKS

www.twinlesstwins.org/store/books



"TWIN LOSS"

By Raymond W. Brandt, PhD

Dr. Brandt was the founder of Twinless Twins Support Group 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.

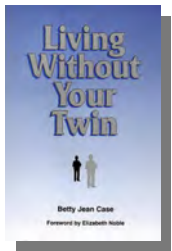


"BEGINNING WITH THE END"

By Mary R. Morgan

In this startlingly frank and moving memoir, Mary R. Morgan struggles to claim an individual identity, enabling her to face 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.

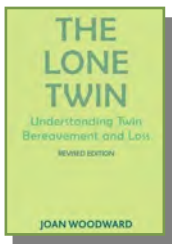
All proceeds from the sale of "Beginning with the End" will go to TTSGI as requested by the author, Mary R. Morgan. The book can be purchased through Amazon for \$26.95.



"LIVING WITHOUT YOUR TWIN"

By Betty Jean Case

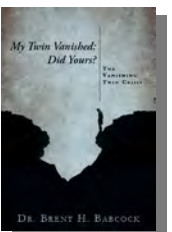
Author Betty Jean Case generously makes a donation to Twinless Twins each time one of her books is purchased through us. Betty is a twin, grew up with twin siblings, and had a set of twin grandsons. This 150-page book discusses how to keep living without your twin and best friend by your side. It also 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
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TWINLESS TIMES BY E-MAIL

If any of our members are interested in receiving the Twinless Times via email as a colored .pdf file instead of the regular mailed hard copy, please send your name and email address to Ray Boyle at: boyle@firstline.com. He will forward this to you.

Thank you.
Margaret Daffin, Co-Editor

**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:
Margaret Daffin and Celia Homer



Golden Lion Tamarin Twins

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INTERNATIONAL***

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***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. ♥

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